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# International Network for Doctoral Education in Nursing

## Newsletter

Volume 8, Number 3

December 2009

### President's Greeting



Dear INDEN Members:

I hope this note finds each of you well at this busy time of year. As we take time to end one year and begin a new one, I wish each of you peace and health.

I'm delighted to inform you that our proposal to continue the International Postdoctoral Mentoring Program in Nursing, jointly sponsored by INDEN and Sigma Theta Tau International, has been renewed for an additional three years. We received word from Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) in early December that they will continue in their co-sponsorship of this important program. STTI is assuming an increased portion of the cost and will provide funding for the costs of two fellowships; INDEN will contribute costs for one fellowship. We are grateful to STTI for their continued and generous support of this unique Fellowship Program. As far as we know, this is the only Fellowship Program of its kind. This Fellowship Program provides opportunities to nurse faculty members in doctoral programs to strengthen their research skills and learn about doctoral education and mentoring in an international context. It is limited to recent doctoral graduates from low and middle income countries who are appointed to faculty positions in doctoral program and who are currently serving, or will serve, as supervisors of doctoral student research. The Fellowships are for a three month period. Details about applications will be available early in 2010. Be sure to watch email and the INDEN website for these details.



In early 2010 INDEN will be conducting elections for Board positions. We will have a call for nominations as part of that process. Please begin now to think of how you might increase your involvement in INDEN by becoming a board member.

We will have positions for doctoral students as well. And, remember that self-nominations are welcomed! Our organization is dependent on the active involvement of our members so this will be an opportunity for you to contribute your talent to global nursing doctoral education.



I also want to remind you to pay your dues if you have not done so to date. One of the major decisions at the Board meeting this Summer was not to increase our annual dues. While we are always in need to additional funds to support current and new initiatives, the Board is sensitive to the current financial challenges that we all face. By maintaining and expanding our membership we raise the necessary revenue to fund important initiatives like the Fellowship Program described above. It is extremely important that all of you renew your membership. If you haven't renewed as yet, please do so today.



Greetings of the Season to each of you!

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## INDEN COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Letter from the Editorial Team



Greetings from the Editorial Team,

The Christmas Holidays and the New Year of 2010 are almost around the corner and we hope that you enjoy reading this third INDEN News-

letter published in December 2009. This year has been busy and interesting for us in the Editorial Team. We pulled together the March issue from the various messages and letter from our readership and the very rich September issue describing the highlights from the INDEN conference in South Africa.

The theme of this last issue in 2009 is the Doctoral Dissertation. The opening remarks are presented this time by Dr Patricia Davidson (Curtin University Australia), Dr Marie Nolan (John Hopkins, United States), Dr Nazy Heidari (Curtin University Australia) and Sarah McGrath (Curtin University Australia). The authors discuss in their paper the different approaches to doctoral degrees and dissertations for nurses and the advantages and disadvantages from academic and practice perspectives.

We have also a paper from Professor Valerie Janet Ehlers. She gave this presentation at the INDEN conference earlier this year in South-Africa. Her paper is without doubt very interesting to our readership: it discusses the many challenges of a dissertation or thesis only doctorate as well as those related to offering this program via distance with students from various nations in Africa. The second paper included in this issue has been written by Dr. Marjorie Muecke. This article is describing the alternate approaches developed at the University of Pennsylvania to accommodate interdisciplinary dissertations and approaches.



The Editorial Team is starting to discover new approaches to engage and inspire discussions among INDEN Newsletter readership in the forthcoming year 2010. We are excited to introduce a new feature in this issue. Polit & Beck have published earlier this year in the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* an interesting article: International Differences in Nursing Research, 2005–2006. This paper reports research from various countries and its compares, for example characteristics of the study participants and authors,

study focus-specialty area, funding, and methodologic attributes. We think that this article is a very interesting starting point for a wider discussion among the INDEN readers and thus we encourage you to share your thoughts and perspectives with us. Laurel Eisenhauer will be summarizing your comments, thoughts and insights about the differences between the countries. Results will be shared in the March 2010 newsletter.

The theme for the next newsletter is “Alternative approaches to traditional doctoral education in Nursing”. We are calling for papers regarding: alternative approaches to traditional doctoral education in nursing including: distance education, e-learning approaches, online doctorates, split sites, collaborations, consortia, summer only programs, overlapping/combined programs (e.g. BS-PHD, MS-PHD). The deadline is February 15, 2010.



Seasons Greetings and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year from

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## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### Approaches to Doctoral Degrees for Nurses and Dissertation Format Options

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Globalisation, workforce shortages and increasing pressure to demonstrate outcomes in both the clinical environment and academy are just some of the issues facing the nursing profession. [1] Increasingly there is a need to prepare graduates who are ready to work in contemporary environments in policy, practice, education and research as well as providing an evidence base for practice. The number of doctoral programs has increased in recent decades to prepare nurses to work in the roles dictated by challenging times and in response to the increasing recognition of the contribution of nurses to advancing health outcomes. [1] Further, the process and practice of doctoral preparation, research supervision, and research student experience and satisfaction is increasingly the subject of debate. The International Network for Doctoral Education in Nursing (INDEN) plays a crucial role in shaping the direction of doctoral education in nursing internationally and we encourage you to contribute to this discussion through our organisation.

#### Professional and Research-Focused Doctoral Degrees

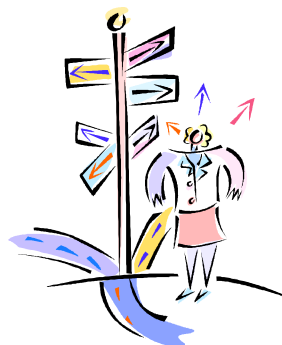
Although internationally nomenclature and curricular approaches to doctoral education in nursing differ somewhat, there is significant consensus on the distinction between the professional doctorate and the more traditional research-focused approaches to doctoral education as exemplified in programs that award a Doctor of Nursing Science and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The professional doctorate aims to produce professionals who will practice with a scholarly knowledge to inform

practice through interpreting evidence, evaluating practice as well as engaging in practice development and research. [2] The benefits of this approach to doctoral education are that it recognises the importance of nursing practice in achieving optimal health outcomes for individuals and communities. In contrast those undertaking traditional doctoral degree programs generally intend to undertake careers focussing on the discovery of new knowledge, independent research and or teaching and scholarship.

The suitability of the doctoral degree approach will depend upon the match between the purpose of the degree and the career goals, educational preparation, and abilities of the applicant. Once the doctoral approach has been selected, choosing the appropriate institution should be driven by the match between the applicant's area of interest and the curriculum, faculty expertise, quality of doctoral students, and resources within the university. [3] Because some applicants may not be thoroughly informed about differences in doctoral approaches and institutional differences, it is important that there be an open and detailed dialogue between the applicant and the prospective supervisor/advisor prior to admission. This discussion should detail the two doctoral approaches, clarify the expectations of the program to which the applicant has applied, and ensure that the applicant has a clear view of his/her career direction. Exploring the range of options available at several institutions regarding fee schedules for courses and availability of scholarships and



stipends is important to ensure that there is a match between student expectations and resources of the institution. It is also important that students inquire as to the resources provided by the institution for course consumables, travelling scholarships and support for scholarly writing and development. Jolley [4] underscores that it is very important to look around, obtain a range of perspectives, engage with the faculty, ask questions on the curriculum content and assessable items before commencing a program.



#### Manuscript Format of Dissertation

The traditional doctorate is an advanced research degree, preceded by basic undergraduate education in the field and is intended to prepare scholars who will advance the knowledge of the field.[5] This approach is often considered to be the peak of scholarly learning and enquiry. [6] The traditional doctorate is a research orientated degree, in which original mostly independent research, is undertaken resulting in the production of a substantial report on the research – commonly known as the dissertation or thesis. [6] The doctoral program of research is directed towards the generation of new knowledge and requires three year full time study (or equivalent part-time) with the student demonstrating capacity for original research and ability to contribute to knowledge. The dissertation or thesis generally consists of a series of chapters including an introduction, theoretical framework, review of literature, methods, results and a discussion. [7] This process usually aims to develop scholars who will lead and support academic developments, research, push discipline boundaries and

ars who will advance the knowledge of the field.[5] This approach is often considered to be the peak of scholarly learning and enquiry. [6] The traditional doctorate is a research orientated degree, in which original mostly independent research, is undertaken resulting in the production of a substantial report on the research – commonly known as the dissertation or thesis. [6] The doctoral program of research is directed towards the generation of new knowledge and requires three year full time study (or equivalent part-time) with the student demonstrating capacity for original research and ability to contribute to knowledge. The dissertation or thesis generally consists of a series of chapters including an introduction, theoretical framework, review of literature, methods, results and a discussion. [7] This process usually aims to develop scholars who will lead and support academic developments, research, push discipline boundaries and

## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### Approaches to Doctoral Degrees for Nurses... (continued)

develop innovative approaches in practice, policy and research. [2, 7] However, it has been challenged that this approach does not necessarily prepare the doctoral candidate for publishing in journals because of the differing writing genres. [7] In addition, although strongly encouraged to publish from thesis, the conversion rates of dissertations to publications is frequently low and as a consequence important knowledge uncovered during the process of doctoral study is not accessible to the broader community. [7] As a consequence many institutions have adopted processes whereby the dissertation or thesis is a compilation of manuscripts- or the thesis by publication option.



The publication option for dissertations was initially introduced in the 1960's in the United Kingdom,[8] and allows for the submission for examination of a collection of papers that have been refereed and accepted (or are in the process of being refereed) for publication in academic journals or books. The publication approach is becoming increasingly popular and the specific requirements will be determined by the university. [7, 9] It has been demonstrated both in Australia and the United Kingdom that between universities there is a lack of consensus on purpose, length or format of the thesis by publication approach. [8] In addition issues relating to copyright are also identified as a consideration as dissertations, which may be a compilation of manuscripts, are often published in formats readily accessible in online media. Therefore it is necessary for students to consider this factor and obtain permission to reproduce this material in their thesis.

These differing approaches to the doctoral degree have implications for faculty as well as students. The chances of publication are increased if students are guided through the editing and revision process by experienced writers. This often means extensive involvement of the advisor/supervisor and other members of the team in the ongoing revision and editing of manuscripts. This approach is beneficial as students develop the required skills needed to publish and lay the foundation of a track record that is crucial for independent research and also assists faculty in achieving tangible outcomes for their intellectual contribution. [7, 10] This approach may also enhance postdoctoral opportunities as it demonstrates that the student has a range of skills and has had previous exposure within the research community.

Robinson and Dracup [7] state that a potential drawback to the thesis by publication approach is that the dissertation may be

structured around what the market demands rather than allowing the student to explore novel approaches and ideas. In addition, this method can alter the direction of the project because once the first article is published, it may be difficult to alter the scope of the work. [7]

Therefore before deciding on a program of doctoral research it is important that faculty and students have a clear direction on the expectations and requirements of both parties. When engaging in thesis by publication this is often of greater importance, due to the need to juggle multiple timeframes – including the time for journal review. Although these processes are often formalised in administrative processes, important considerations for both faculty and students [4, 7, 10] are the:

- specific university requirements for dissertation format
- development of a timeline to ensure research, publication timelines align with the administrative components of the degree
- supervisors'/advisors' attitudes and experience in the format of the thesis approach chosen by the student
- personal capacity and the working style of the student
- subject matter of the thesis
- intellectual property issues
- issues pertaining to co-authorship and commit to deadlines
- access to resources to assist with manuscript development

Although there is an increasing focus on the thesis by publication for research focused programs of research there is also a need to focus on this approach in professional doctorates. Optimally, publication results in dissemination of new knowledge and stimulates discussion and debate. This is an approach to be fostered across all aspects of the nursing profession and in doctoral programs we should lead the way not only in the advancing of nursing science but also the strategies that assist us in preparing nurses who are equipped to meeting the challenges facing our professions. Exploring innovative approaches to doctoral education and also dissemination and uptake of the important new knowledge uncovered in this process is an important consideration. Disseminating the knowledge learnt in doctoral programs of research is an important consideration and responsibility for students and faculty alike to increase the influence and scope of nurses' contribution to the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

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### 2009 INDEN Biennial Conference Presentation: Distance Education Nursing Doctoral Students' Challenges As Encountered By Unisa's (University Of South Africa's) Students

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#### BACKGROUND

The University of South Africa came into existence as an examining centre, known initially as the University of the Cape of Good Hope. Since 1948, the University of South Africa is a distance education institution and had more than 300 000 registered students during

2008. The students can pursue under- and postgraduate studies in many different fields.

#### ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN NURSING

Nurses who pursue distance education doctoral programs, do not need to leave their countries, families, homes, jobs or communities. These students can thus continue to fulfill home, job and community roles while studying. There might be reduced

financial expenses to the student, family, employer because the student continues to live at his/her own home and continues with his/her job performance. Students who pursue their doctoral studies in other cities or countries could incur vastly greater travel and subsistence expenses.

However, the converse of the advantages indicate the potential disadvantages of pursuing doctoral studies by distance education. These disadvantages include that the student is expected to "super-impose" his/her doctoral studies on the existing home, job and community responsibilities, unlike full time students who could have reduced responsibilities during their studies. The expectation to "keep all gears going" throughout their years of studies, could lead to role overload and physical and emotional exhaustion, with low priorities assigned to the studies. This situation is aggravated by the student's physical and geographic distance from the supervisor(s) and from fellow students, making regular personal contact almost impossible. All registered D Litt et Phil students have Internet and e-mail access. However, these electronic communications also pose challenges: Internet access can be extremely slow in Africa,

## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### 2009 INDEN Biennial Conference Presentation: Distance Education Nursing Doctoral Students' Challenges...(continued)

taking up to two hours to download and print one journal article; computer viruses are rife and some supervisors' personal computers have been demolished by viruses that came with students' attachments; electricity supplies are irregular and could be unavailable for up to eight hours, even in South Africa.

Once a student has submitted a document to a supervisor, it can take weeks to get a response, because every supervisor has numerous other teaching responsibilities. Delayed feedback, of three weeks for example, could contribute to students' temporary disengagement with their studies. If this happens five times during one year, the student could lose 15 weeks of being actively engaged in his/her studies, every year. It is up to the individual student to continue with his/her studies while awaiting feedback from the supervisor, but students should be oriented to this self-management strategy.

#### UNISA'S OPEN DISTANCE EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY: ADMISSION AND AWARD OF QUALIFICATION

As Unisa maintains an open distance education philosophy, students do get accepted for their D Litt et Phil studies who might be refused admission at other tertiary education institutions.

The only admission requirement is that the student must possess a relevant (to health studies) master's degree with a minimum of 60% for the dissertation. This implies that some D Litt et Phil students and graduates are not nurses, while all the supervisors are nurses.

The program comprises a thesis only, expecting the student to make a unique and

original contribution to the field of health studies. Currently the student has one or two supervisors who guide the student and who decide when the thesis can be submitted for examination. The thesis is accepted, based on the examination reports of two South African and one international examiner. One of the South African examiners can be an academic person from Unisa (internal examiner), but the student's supervisor(s) can not be appointed as examiners.

Based on these examiners' reports, the student can be requested to implement major or minor improvements prior to the award of the degree. Sometimes a student can be requested to register for his/her D Litt et Phil studies for another year and to re-submit the thesis for examination at the end of that period of time.

#### CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY SUPERVISORS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION D LITT ET PHIL STUDENTS

##### Students' characteristics

The D Litt et Phil students come from many African countries, including South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, the Cameroon and Nigeria. While this offers a unique opportunity to many African countries to enable their healthcare leaders to obtain D Litt et Phil degree, it also poses unique challenges to the supervisors (e.g. students from non-English speaking countries, students with limited computer skills and/or access; and challenges for statistical analyses and interpretations of findings)

##### Academic workloads and time limitations

During June 2009, the Department of Health Studies had 22 academic staff members teaching more than 70 under- and postgraduate modules, in addition to supervising 152 master's dissertations and 54 doctoral theses. Some modules require practical sessions lasting five days, offered by academic staff members at a number of centers throughout South Africa. In addition, practical examinations are conducted at 52 hospitals throughout the country, for students doing the 'bridging course' to become registered nurses. All these activities, take academics away from their offices and contribute to delays in providing feedback to doctoral (and master's) students.

TIME poses a severe challenge to all supervisors: 54 registered doctoral students x 2 supervisors = 108 students divided by 12 supervisors implies that every supervisor is responsible for at least 9 doctoral students, in addition to teaching

under- and post graduate modules, offering practica sessions, and supervising at least 10 master's students' dissertations

Academics' severe time limitations,

and their sustained responsibilities in offering wide ranges of under- and post graduate courses, do impact negatively on the academics' research outputs. Conference proceedings and journal articles, based on doctoral students' and/or academics' research, offer opportunities for international evaluations and networking with researchers in similar fields. Lack of these accomplishments stunt the potential growth of both academics and students – past, current and future. It is becoming standard practice to request the curriculum vitae of a doctoral student's



## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### 2009 INDEN Biennial Conference Presentation: Distance Education Nursing Doctoral Students' Challenges...(continued)

supervisor prior to offering a job to such a candidate. If the academic supervisor lacks academic outputs, his/her academic merits can be questioned. Alternatively if the academic supervisor has limited or no outputs in the student's field of research, such academic expertise will also be questioned – to the potential detriment of the student.

#### Numerous diverse fields of study

In line with Unisa's open teaching philosophy, students select their own topics for their D Litt et Phil research and supervisors are expected to adapt to and grow with these diverse research fields. Topics registered by D Litt et Phil students in the Department of Health Studies for the 2009 academic include such topics as for example: HIV/AIDS; Cancer (breast and cervix), management (job satisfaction; absenteeism; recruitment; retention; emigration; empowerment; restructuring of services), education (clinical learning; critical thinking) and nursing service (spiritual care; mentally handicapped children)

Teaching under- and postgraduate modules whilst supervising master's and doctoral students' research in numerous and diverse fields, leaves limited time and energy and dedication for sustained personal research. It also limits individual academics' scope for developing expertise in any specific research field, to their own and their students' detriment. Academic supervisors face unexpected hugely increased demands on their time, since the rector, Prof B Pityana, agreed that large numbers of postgraduate students from Ethiopia should register with Unisa. Ethiopian students' command of English is poor and foreign with unfamiliar sentence constructions, making it almost impossible to understand these students' English.

The "openness" of admitting doctoral students doing research in numerous diverse fields, could be curbed, and streamlined according to the experience, interests and capacities of specific academic supervisors, by considering national and international research priorities. One word of caution should be uttered concerning the large number of doctoral students engaging on HIV/AIDS-related research. While this is a research priority within Africa, its significance is limited in many parts of the globe, limiting research publications and conference presentation possibilities, as well as the academic marketability of the students and supervisors concerned. The

possibility of 'donor fatigue' should also be considered. One way of engaging with HIV/AIDS-related research in a globally more relevant and sustainable manner would be to focus on an underlying issue, such as adherence to drug therapy. This can be researched in AIDS patients, but compared and contrasted with patients taking lifelong drugs for conditions such as epilepsy, hypertension or diabetes.



#### CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY D LITT ET PHIL GRADUATES: 2000-2008

From 2000-2008 only 35 D Litt et Phil students graduated, implying that an average of 3.88 students graduated per year for this nine-year period (Unisa 2008); providing a completion rate of 7.19% per annum out of 54 registered students. Extrapolating these statistics to the future, and considering that 54 D Litt et Phil students were registered for the 2009 academic year, 13.9 years would be required to enable them to graduate at the current rate of completion.

E-mail and postal questionnaires were sent to all 35 D Litt et Phil graduates. However, only 18 (51.4%), of whom 17 were females, responded. Their average age at graduation was 49.1 years,

but it ranged from 40 to 61. On average they required 4.1 years to complete their theses: all worked full time and studied part time. Thus it could be deduced that they commenced with their D Litt et Phil studies in their middle forties – probably once their family obligations could accommodate their studies. These students could benefit from financial aid, research assistance, domestic help, reduced community commitments, specific "study times", editorial and statistical assistance.

#### Factors promoting successful completion of D Litt et Phil theses

The D Litt et Phil graduates indicated that the following aspects would have promoted their successful completion of their theses: fully paid study leave (94.4%), presenting the proposal to a panel of experts (72.2%) and each chapter (77.8%). Documents are only evaluated by the supervisor(s) concerned: expert qualitative data analysts (61.1%), contact with other doctoral students (61.1%) and computer literacy, statistical services, annually 1-week full time contact with supervisor and other doctoral students (44.4%)

#### POSSIBLE SUPPORT FROM INDEN

International collaboration is essential, since January 2009, for appointing at least one international examiner for every thesis.



## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### 2009 INDEN Biennial Conference Presentation: Distance Education Nursing Doctoral Students' Challenges...(continued)

This collaboration could be expanded if the supervisors could place students in contact with specific centers of excellence and with specific international researchers and students. This possibility should also be investigated at post doctoral level.

Besides acting as international examiners – the INDEN list of experts provides a starting point for some students' international collaboration. International post-doctoral exposure to specific institutions for a period of three months could be feasible even for D Litt et Phil graduates with demanding full time jobs. Such international exposures could be mutually beneficial to the student and the host university.

It can be extremely challenging to publish articles in internationally accredited journals, especially if these journals have few readers from Africa. Yet this is the hallmark of worthwhile research. Consequently, reviewers of international accredited academic journals, are kindly requested to provide "criticism with compassion" – a term passed on to me by Prof Shake Ketefian, a founder member of INDEN, to help develop the potential of students, graduates and supervisors. The Department of Health Studies, published the Africa Journal of Nursing and Midwifery, and it has been accredited by South Africa's Department of Education. Consequently I kindly request all international and national INDEN delegates to subscribe to this journal. Particularly if institutions' libraries subscribe, it boosts the academic accreditation potential of this journal significantly, one of the few publication platforms for D Litt et Phil graduates.



#### FINAL CONCLUDING REMARKS

Distance education doctoral students and supervisors must plan their time and identify opportunities to complete theses successfully. However, postdoctoral journal publications and conference presentations remain non-negotiable outcomes of D Litt et Phil studies.

The Department of Health Studies, Unisa, needs to reconsider and re-formulate its philosophy, admission and qualification policies, academic workloads and postdoctoral requirements in realistic terms. Maintaining realistic expectations, appropriate academic workloads, feasible admission policies, appropriate progress hallmarks, and sustained outputs per academic supervisor could help to make the process of completing a D Litt et Phil thesis more streamlined for students, and more rewarding for academics.



Conversely, the current Unisa open policy of admitting all D Litt et Phil students who meet the minimum admission requirements, and who pursue research in almost any imaginable field with widely divergent under- and postgraduate qualifications and experience, might fail to meet the expectations of future academics. This continued approach might lead to, and perpetuate mere academic mediocrity with academics functioning on the verge of academic burnout, rather than produce graduates and supervisors with internationally recognized expertise and excellence. Unisa, with more than 300 000 registered students, will need time to adjust its policies, but the Department of Health Studies, as an entity within this gigantic distance education institution, should seriously consider limiting the number of students admitted, and evaluate the international caliber of its graduates and supervisors – not only for its own academic survival, but as a responsibility to the future healthcare leaders it proclaims to produce.

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## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### Format of the Dissertation in Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania

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#### Format of the Dissertation in Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania

Review of the requirements for the format dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania (U Penn) School of nursing (SoN) was undertaken by an Alternative Dissertation Task Force composed of Graduate Faculty in the SoN, in Spring 2008. At that time, the traditional 5-chapter format was the School's paradigm, with occasional variations, particularly for history-related dissertations. The Task Force concluded with a rationale for broadening the scope of acceptable formats to allow for interdisciplinary approaches to nursing phenomena. Their concluding statement read: Because humanities (such as historical and anthropological) research evaluates and interprets collected data within the broader historiographical literature, providing both a narrative and substantive analysis, the chapter compilation will vary from one project to another. The specific format of each dissertation is to be determined by the chair in conjunction with the committee.

The U Penn SoN Doctoral Handbook now describes the format of the dissertation as follows:

A variety of dissertation formats are appropriate. The best option depends on the type of research and the choice must be approved by the student's Dissertation Committee. Examples include a traditional five chapter dissertation, in which the first three chapters contain information presented in the Dissertation proposal, the fourth chapter presents the findings, and the fifth chapter the discussion of the results. The historical format option uses established historical methods to identify appropriate sources, and evaluate and interpret data from these sources within the broader framework of historiographical literature using both a historical narrative and substantive analysis. The chapter compilation will be determined by the Chair in conjunction with the Dissertation Committee. The basic science dissertation format may include an introductory chapter



stating the research aims and background, three publishable manuscripts reflecting the research findings, and a final summary chapter that details future research directions. This latter format also may also be used for other types of dissertations as determined by the Chair and members of the committee.

**The substance of the dissertation** is described in the Handbook as follows:

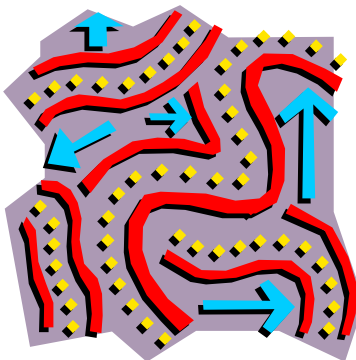
The dissertation should demonstrate a high-level of analytical and research competence and represent an original contribution to the field of nursing science. It is expected that the formation of a topic will begin in the early phases of study in the program and grow out of experience and study in the clinical specialty area. It is also expected that the dissertation topic will build on the research and expertise of two or more members of the [faculty] Graduate Group in Nursing. [bracketed words added by M Muecke for INDEN]

#### The Dissertation Committee at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

After defining the area of research for the dissertation, the student selects a chair of the Dissertation Committee from among the School's research ("Standing") faculty. While the Committee may include faculty from outside the School of Nursing, all members are exclusively from the Graduate Group of faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, and at least two members must be nursing research ("Standing") faculty. "The Dissertation Committee oversees and approves the research proposal, and ultimately, the dissertation" (PhD Handbook, 2009-2010).

#### Final Defense of the Dissertation: (Statement from the PhD Handbook, 2009-2010)

When the written dissertation is completed to the satisfaction of the dissertation committee, an oral defense which has public and closed components will be scheduled for two hours. The examining committee for the dissertation consists of the dissertation committee and two readers from the Graduate Group who are appointed by the Chair of the Graduate Group. This defense is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. All members of the graduate group and doctoral students



## ARTICLES ON THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### Format of the Dissertation in Nursing...(continued)

as well as other individuals who presence is desired by the student are invited to the public component. The public component consists of a brief presentation of the findings and their implications by the student followed by a brief question and answer by individuals who are not members of the examining committee. The following closed component, in which guests are excused, consists of questioning and discussion by the readers, the dissertation committee members, and the student. The dissertation defense is graded on a Pass/Fail basis with the majority of the five examiners necessary for a decision.

The doctoral degree awarded at the U Penn School of Nursing is the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

#### Reference

PhD Handbook 2009-2010 (updated 9/3/09) at [http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/students/Pages/Student\\_Handbooks.aspx](http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/students/Pages/Student_Handbooks.aspx)

**Dissertations completed at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in 2008-2009:**



Brawner, Bridgette Mercedes. Depression and HIV Risk-Related Sexual Behaviors among African American Adolescent Females

Carthon, J Margo Brooks. No Place for the Dying: A Tale of Urban Health Work in Philadelphia's Black Belt 1900-1930

Lee, Christopher S. The Influence of Heart Failure Self-Care Behavior on Health Outcomes and Cardiac Performance

Sumpter, Danica Fulbright. The Relationships between Parenting Stress, Growth and Development in Infants with Congenital Heart Defects During the First Six Months of Life.

Ye, Lichuan. Gender Differences in Baseline Functional Status and Response to Continuous Positive Airway Pressure in Milder Obstructive Sleep Apnea.

Zeitler, Mindy Beth. Ethical Issues and Decision Making Related to Resuscitation of Severely Injured Patients: Perception of Emergency Department Nurses.

## INDEN MEMBERSHIP OPINION POLL

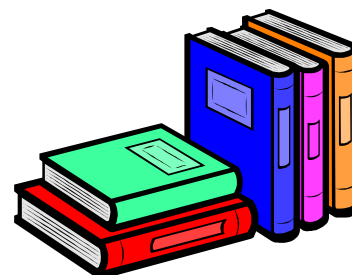


### INDEN Newsletter Readers' Opinions: "WHAT DO YOU THINK?"

A recent article by Polit and Beck (2009) reports on an analysis of 1072 studies published in 2005-2006 in non-specialty English-language nursing journals.

Some of the findings were:

- Research on nurses was especially prevalent in Europe, Australia, and Canada
- Patient-centered research studies were most common in Asian countries and the US
- The countries with the highest percentage of intervention research were Taiwan (24.1), Hong Kong/China (22.8), Belgium/Netherlands (16.7), and US (16.0)
- Qualitative research predominated in the Norway, Sweden, and UK.
- Asian nursing research used mainly quantitative research methods



## INDEN MEMBERSHIP OPINION POLL

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-Only 13.9 % of studies were intervention studies with experimental or quasi-experimental design.

-Those with the highest percent of quantitative/mixed methodology were Turkey (100 %), Korea (89.7 %), "Other European" (83.9%), Canada (84.1 %), and Finland (81.3 %).



Questions for INDEN Membership:

(1) What difference do the differences make/How are these differences reflected on (a) nursing practice and (b) education? What is their significance/ Should we worry of not??

(2) Why do certain countries have a predominance (or low representation) of various research methods and study designs/types of research? (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, patient-centered, nurse centered, intervention)

(3) Do you think it is related to:

- (a) Number of nursing doctoral programs in a country?
- (b) (Number of doctorally prepared nurses? or nurses with a *nursing* doctorate?)
- (c) Types of doctoral programs in nursing, outside of nursing
- (d) Funding sources and availability to nurse researchers?
- (e) Philosophical or theoretical trends higher education/academia in a country or region?
- (f) State of knowledge development and research expertise in a country or region
- (g) Other

Please send/email your responses—up to 500 words to Dr. Laurel Eisenhauer by **January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010**. We will summarize the answers and publish the results in the next INDEN Newsletter. Email: [laurel.eisenhauer@bc.edu](mailto:laurel.eisenhauer@bc.edu)

*Laurel A. Eisenhauer*

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Polit, DF & Beck, CT. (2009). International differences in Nursing Research, 2005-2006. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*. 41:1, 4-53.

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## INDEN BULLETIN

### INDEN Membership Update

Hello INDEN members!

**Please Welcome New Members to Our Organization:** Since September 2009, 3 new members (from Australia, China and Taiwan, R.O.C.) have joined INDEN.

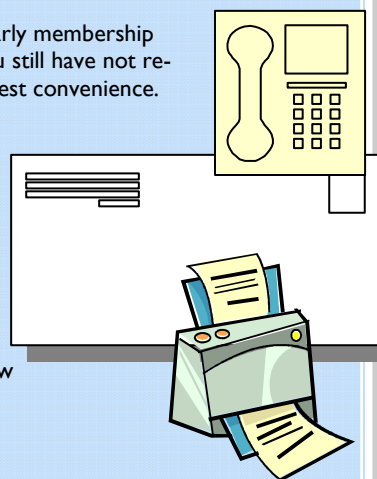
**INDEN Membership Renewal Reminder:** Yearly membership invoices have already been sent out via email. If you still have not renewed your membership, please do so at your earliest convenience. Don't let your membership expire!

**Payment methods --**  
Online payment is still not available at this time and we cannot predict when it will be available. Renewals can only be made via **fax**, **phone** or **postal service**.

For information on how to renew your existing membership (or to apply for a new membership), go to the INDEN website:

<http://www.umich.edu/~inden/>

If you have questions, please contact Janie McMillen, INDEN Administrator, at [janiem@umich.edu](mailto:janiem@umich.edu).



## FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER



### Contribute to the Next Newsletter!

The next edition of INDEN will be published in March 2010. The deadline for submissions is: February 15, 2010.

Please submit your articles to:

[indeneditors@umich.edu](mailto:indeneditors@umich.edu).



## FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER

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**If you would like additional information on the International Network for Doctoral Education in Nursing, please contact:**

**Office of International Affairs  
University of Michigan  
School of Nursing  
400 N. Ingalls, Room 3216  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-0482**

**Email: [inden@umich.edu](mailto:inden@umich.edu)  
Fax: 734/615-3798**

