

DNP Project Documentation Guidelines

This DNP practice improvement project focuses on the student's ability to demonstrate the integration of knowledge, expertise, and DNP competencies acquired across all courses, including clinical experiences, and applied throughout the DNP implementation project experience. Students will incorporate all that they have learned into a scholarly written work that effectively expresses the use of evidence to improve direct patient, and /or system-based or provider outcomes. Students will be guided in selection of an appropriate project and will be required to submit the cumulative written document for completion of the program. This project is designed to provide the foundation for future scholarly contribution to professional nursing.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Clinical Issue and Synthesis of the Evidence

- ***Introduction to the Clinical Issue:***
 - Describe the clinical issue, purpose, and rationale for the project based on the most salient issues in nursing.
 - The introduction should start out broad; discuss how the issue may have an impact at the practice level and through the global level. Establish the framework for understanding the clinical issue, the development of the evidence review and narrowing to the specifics of how this clinical issue is affecting the patient, providers, and/or healthcare system.
- ***Background & Significance of Clinical Issue (Problem Statement):***
 - Context for the impact of the EB clinical project (e.g., description of given population, epidemiological data to support significance, political environment for practice change, professional receptivity to practice change and opportunity to make a fiscal impact). What is the problem and why?
 - Discuss why the clinical issue is significant to nursing, patient outcomes, and quality healthcare using supportive documentation and epidemiological background information to justify that an issue is present.
 - Present a compelling overview of the relevance of the healthcare issue; the PICOT question; the significance of the issue (e.g. why is this question important to you? Why did you decide to use this question?). Support this overview with important reports such as Health Care Disparities, IOM Reports, Quality and Safety in Nursing Education, and Healthy People 2020 Goals.
- ***Purpose: Write a purpose statement to guide the practice improvement and introduce the verbatim purpose statement in each chapter***
- ***Implications for Advanced Nursing Practice and Health Care System Change:***
 - Reflect on why this clinical issue needs to be investigated and a practice change employed.
 - Discuss the strategies for negotiating the system: including legal, ethical, advocacy and health policy, regulations as well as team-based approaches.

- Discuss the issues surrounding quality and safety: including organizational, structural, case processes, financial, marketing, and financial concerns.
- Support how the project could improve patient, provider and system-based outcomes.
- Describe how the project will affect cost, access, safety, and quality of care.
- Discuss sustainability and the complexity of implementing an evidence-based practice project and the leadership roles and innovation that will be involved in the process of the project. Use complexity structures and process map to display projected outcomes.
- Discuss the implications for a practice change. Describe the process for potential implementation of the practice change. Describe theoretical underpinnings that inform the practice improvement.
- Discuss the anticipated impact of implementing evidence-based innovations in the practice and potential to affect other practices.

Chapter 2: Search and Critical Appraisal of the Evidence

○ *Purpose and PICOT Question*

- Introduce the chapter by informing the reader of exactly what will follow.
- Open each chapter with a purpose statement
- Introduce the PICOT (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome, Time) question that will guide the appraisal of the evidence and DNP project.

○ *Sources and Search Process*

- Identify internal and external sources of evidence used. Discuss the reason for choosing them.
- Describe the search strategies used to uncover the evidence: keywords, combinations, and limits (inclusion/exclusion criteria) used for each search and outcomes of each search.
- Include number of articles produced from the search and number of articles used to answer your PICOT question.
- Include a print screen of your search strategy in the appendices. Include number of articles produced from the search and number of articles used to answer your PICOT question.
- Be specific and explain how you got to the body of evidence that will be critically appraised for quality and its use in practice.

✓ *In Appendices: Include print screens of search strategy, number of articles produced from the search, and number used to answer your clinical question.*

○ **Critical Appraisal of the Evidence**

This section is not about discussing each study individually. It is to:

- Evaluate the foundation of research and internal evidence influencing the clinical issue. Discuss the overall strength of the evidence in terms of level of evidence, the validity of the evidence and the confidence to act on the evidence. Discuss the overall strength of the evidence, how and why it would be significant to nursing, patient outcomes and quality healthcare.
 - Discuss your appraisal of the evidence – Evaluate the body evidence as a whole: Including but not limited to: Level of evidence, how well the studies were conducted, and how useful is it to practice. Only use studies in the evaluation table that answer the clinical question.
 - The critical appraisal process includes discussion on the studies: Develop evaluation table with the essential elements. Use Rapid Critical Appraisal forms as a guide.
 - ✓ Validity:
 - ✓ Reliability
 - ✓ Applicability
 - ✓ Portability
 - Discuss the overall strength of the evidence in terms of level of evidence, the validity of the evidence and the confidence to act on the evidence.
 - Compare and contrast findings - reflect on the inconsistencies across studies, major conclusions drawn from each study, clinical implications of findings across studies. Discuss the similarities and differences across studies. (e.g. design & method, sample & setting, and findings & implications).
 - Identify and discuss gaps and controversies that might exist in the literature, generalizability based on evaluation of validity of study.
 - Discuss the applicability of the clinical decision that is based on the body of evidence. This may include, but not limited to, the confidence and feasibility of implementing a practice change. i.e. What practice change is warranted? What does the evidence tell you to do?
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- *Synthesis of the Evidence that Leads to Implementation of a Practice Change:*
 - Transition from appraisal section in summarizing to making decisions based on the evidence reviewed: (Create synthesis tables on items such as but not limited to: level of evidence, study design, findings, interventions, and outcomes.
 - Discuss the synthesis of the evidence and the decision that is made based on the evidence. (Use the synthesis tables to show how decisions were made.
 - What practice change is warranted?

- What does the evidence tell you to do? Intervention, outcomes, and implementation strategies.
 - Findings that flow from the evidence not a restatement of the findings of the studies.
- Discuss the findings that flow from the evidence, the confidence in the evidence and feasibility of implementing the evidence.
 - Describe the process for potential implementation of the practice change. Discuss whether this implementation carries greater harm than benefit.
 - Describe the anticipated impact the project will have on a set population. What outcomes (based on the evidence) are expected?
 - What is the *Purpose of the Evidence-based Practice Implementation Project*?
- ✓ *This section reflects why this is clinical issue needs to be investigated; discusses the overall strength of the evidence in terms of level of evidence, and quality indicator or national patient safety goals and your next steps.*
 - ✓ *In Appendices: Include the search samples, evaluation table and synthesis tables that led to the development of the evidence-based practice implementation project.*

Chapter 3: Project Methods & Implementation

Chapter 3 written in future tense at first, as this is what will be done. A revised Chapter 3 after project completion (DNP III) will be on what actually happened with the evidence implementation project and changed to past tense. Continue to open each chapter with a purpose statement to inform the reader of what will be presented in the chapters. Methods and procedures (measurement, collection, analysis and interpretation of data) to carry out the capstone project and answer practice related questions will be presented. If the project involves data collection on human subjects, then IRB approval must be obtained prior to implementation.

Conceptual Framework/EBP Model use to guide the project:

- Clearly describe the conceptual framework/theory(s) that supported the project and its connection to generation of outcomes/impact.
- Discuss what the implementation project will be and provide details of the implementation plan.
- Illustrate how the selected EBP model/framework are/is interwoven in the development of the plan. (Support with selected EBP Model/Framework and timeline). (Include in appendices)

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- Evidence Implementation:
 - Summarize the implementation project.
 - What are you doing and how will you do it?
 - Ethic approval for project (IRB Approval)
 - Strategies for successfully negotiating systems using systems principles & processes.
 - Discuss negotiating complex systems, intervention strategies that will be employed.
 - Describe the potential issues, challenges, and/or barriers to implementation.

Implementation and Data Analysis Plan (Outcome measurement plan includes Data and Cost Plans):

- Discuss the selection of outcomes (from the synthesis of the evidence) that are appropriate measures to be used to in the implementation project.
 - Data collection methods:
 - ✓ instrument(s)-Validity, reliability, and scoring of instruments if appropriate
 - ✓ outcomes measures
 - ✓ cost analysis plan
 - ***Present a Logic Model:*** Who, What, When, Where, How and Why of your structure, process, outcomes measures.
 - ✓ What data are you collecting and why?
 - ✓ Who is collecting the data?
 - ✓ When will data collection begin and for how long?
 - ✓ When will the data be collected?

- ✓ What are the pre & post intervention data measures?
- ✓ What are the data collection tools/instruments, including psychometrics of established tools?
- ✓ Where will the data be collected, stored and analyzed?
- ✓ How will you maintain confidentiality and store & secure, monitor and destroy the data?
- ✓ What is the level of Data?
- ✓ What are the anticipated analyses of the data? Impact Analysis Plan: Cost Analysis and Outcomes Savings;
- ✓ Sustainability (Social, Environmental, and Ecological)
- Who, What, When, Where, How and Why of your cost analysis plan as it relates to structure, process, outcomes measures.
 - ✓ What is your impact analysis model?
 - ✓ Why is this model appropriate for your project?
 - ✓ What variables (r/t outcomes) are you costing out? Are you measuring?
 - ✓ Where did you obtain your cost and other information (data sources to acquire impact information)?

Address the value-added impact of your EBP Implementation and Project Outcomes Measurement

- Describe data collection or systems assessment strategies surrounding implementation.
- Data Analysis: Statistical analysis,
- Interpretation of results: (Discuss the preliminary results and analysis of project if results are coming in during DNP II).
- Cost analysis plan: Discuss the positive/negative change in outcomes and costs of implementation and outcomes savings/expenses.

○ **Conclusion:**

- Describe overall evaluation of project, including barriers, facilitators, positive change in outcomes (pre- compared to post-) & costs of implementation and outcome savings.
- Describe sustainability implications.
- Provide a brief analysis of the anticipated project impact on health care quality, cost & access, and system change.
- Discuss the strategies used to identify stakeholders; strategies to overcome the challenges & barriers; and how will you make use of facilitators/champions to successfully implement your project.
- Support your analysis and recommendations with references.

✓ *In Appendices: Include EBP model, timeline and cost analysis plan*

Chapter 4: Results and Impact Analysis

Results/Impact Analysis of the Capstone Project including challenges and opportunities for nursing will be documented in this chapter. Outcomes and the impact the project makes on patients/provider and/or healthcare system matters because it quantifies the effectiveness of the EBP implementation project.

- ***Provide an overview of the implementation*** (e.g. strategies for successfully negotiating the systems, synopsized implementation of project, measurement, collection, analysis, and interpretation of data).

- ***Results:***

- Outcomes:*

- Describe overall change in outcomes of the evidence-based practice implementation project.
 - Discuss the results of the project. (Utilize graphs, figures and tables as needed. Place them in the appendices).

- Cost Analysis and Cost Savings:*

- Discuss the costs of implementation and actual or potential outcome savings.
 - Discuss the positive/negative change in outcomes and costs of implementation and outcome savings/expenses.

- Conceptual Framework/EBP Model/Theory:*

- Discuss the application of the framework/theory and established links between conceptual framework/theory and outcomes/impact.
 - Provide an in depth discussion of how the project methods, outcomes and impact connect to the framework/theory.

- *Impact and scalability:*

- Discuss the impact of outcomes through analysis using formative and summative evaluations.
 - Discuss issues that influence the successful implementation of the project (e.g. system or otherwise barriers, facilitators, and lessons learned).
 - Discuss issues that may impact (successful implementation of the project on standards of care and health policy.
 - Locally, Nationally, Globally

✓ *In Appendices: Include impact plan*

Chapter 5: DNP Competencies and Essential Content

- ***Discussion of impact, system change, recommendations, and sustainability:***
 - Discuss issues that affect the successful implementation of the project on standard of care and health policy.
 - Discuss role of leadership, innovation, change, system complexity, and teamwork in project development, implementation, evaluation, & dissemination of project.
 - Discuss the implementation of a policy change that has led to the development of an evidenced-based curriculum, guideline or other structures care methods (pathway, protocol, order set, algorithm) from the evidence-based implementation project (include sample of curriculum, guideline, policy, protocol etc.. in appendix).
 - Discuss how your EBP project improved patient, provider, and/or system outcomes.
 - Discuss how the project implementation had an impact on the six aims of improvement: safe, effective, patient centered, timely, efficient, and equitable patient care.
 - Describe how the project influenced access, cost, and quality of care.
 - Describe impact locally (community), regionally, nationally and beyond.
 - Discuss how the project contributed to nursing practice improvement.
 - How do current regulations influence these next steps (i.e. Healthy People 2020, IOM, CMS, IHI, The Joint Commission, etc...)
- ***Dissemination: Replication/Portability, Sustainability and Clinical Recommendations:***
 - Discuss actions taken while in the program to disseminate the project
 - Describe the next steps that flow from the project for nurses/care providers caring for the given population.
 - Discuss the potential for replication of the evidence-based implementation project.
 - Discuss a dissemination plan of project outcomes.
 - Discuss a plan for future projects.
 - Discuss a dissemination plan of project outcomes in the future.

- ***Document how the Project substantiates how the DNP Essentials and Competencies Core and Common Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Doctoral-Level Competencies October are achieved.***

- Discuss in detail how the evidence-based implementation project substantiates how the DNP Essentials and role population focused competencies were achieved.
- Describe how the project contributes to nursing practice, team-based care, systems-based care improvement.

- ***Conclusion***

The conclusion emphasizes important points, and demonstrates the possibilities for future exploration of the clinical issue and practice change. Although the conclusion should include a restatement of your clinical issue, it should not simply restate the points you made in your paper; the conclusion should enhance to the reader's understanding the impact of this clinical issue, on nursing, patient outcome(s) and quality healthcare.

- ***References***

- ***Appendices***

- All tables and figures should be contained in the appendices and referenced in the text with some connecting information.

- ***Formatting***

The document must be presented in APA format 6th edition format. This includes an abstract, heading, citations, reference, tables, and illustrations and appendices.

Revised 7/15; 7/16 sdb