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**NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

Factors that Make Outstanding Professors Successful

**A Capstone Submitted to the**

**University Honors Program**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the**

**Requirements of the Baccalaureate Degree**

**With Honors**

**Department Of**

Nursing

**By**

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**DeKalb, Illinois**

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020

University Honors Program  
Capstone Faculty Approval Page

Capstone Title (print or type)

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**Factors That Make Outstanding Professors Successful**

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Date of Approval (print or type) \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Venue of Presentation April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 SoN Honors Poster Day

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# HONORS CAPSTONE ABSTRACT

## Guidelines

Your abstract should begin with a definitive statement of the problem of project. Its purpose, scope and limit should be clearly delineated. Then, as concisely as possible, describe research methods and design, major findings, including the significance of the work, if appropriate, and conclusions.

Students whose thesis involves “creative” work (original, fine art, music, writing, theatre or film production, dance, etc.) should describe process and production. Indicating the forms of documentation on file as “thesis” materials.

Please have your advisor review your abstract for organization, content, grammar and spelling before submission.

## Abstract

### **Purpose**

There is a need to find excellence in education, particularly in the demanding specialty of nursing education. The purpose of this study was to revisit and expand upon Rossetti's previous work of *Factors That Make Outstanding Professors Successful: A Connection to Inspiration* (2002). In the previous and current work, a qualitative study of Northern Illinois University's (NIU) recipients of the Presidential Teaching Professorship award essays were used as a data source on what makes them outstanding professors. This was following a literature review on excellence in education and specifically excellence in education in nursing.

### **Limits**

The beginning of the research was met with promise. After submitting and getting approved by the IRB, consents were sent out to the 36 professors at NIU for permission to use their essay in the study. 13 Professorship essays were collected before spring break. However, a pandemic started to take hold due to COVID-19, and no-one was allowed to return to campus, including those working in the Provost office that held the essays. As of May 2020, only 13 essays have been analyzed for data collection. The rest of the essays will need to be analyzed once they are obtained.

### **Methods**

Two literature reviews were conducted. One literature review focused on excellence in higher education and was conducted by Hostetler, A., (NIU Research Rookie), using ERIC and ProQuest databases. A second review of nursing education excellence was conducted using CINAHL database by Yarger, M. Students also were given a presentation by their professor and advisor Dr. Rossetti on the type of qualitative analysis that would be utilized in this study called Framework Analysis (Ward, et. al 2013). They were educated on the process of theme development and charting their findings to support the themes and sub-themes developed. The collected essays were stored in a secure Dropbox only available to the researchers. All identifiers were removed for the anonymity of the professors. Data collection using a framework analysis was started with the available 13 essays. This was conducted in the safety of home, and researchers met online through Blackboard Ultra Collaborate as well as over the phone to discuss the analysis and resulting theme and sub-theme

development. The three researchers came to consensus on the themes and sub-themes developed and charted their findings following the framework analysis utilized.

## Findings

The review of literature can be found in Table 1. In the analysis of date, several themes and subthemes were identified by the researchers and supported with quotes from the essays. The researchers offer nursing educators the opportunity to increase their confidence and effectiveness by 'learning' from faculty members who have been recognized as exceptionally successful in teaching. Four main themes were identified: Creating the Teaching Milieu, Passion and Enthusiasm for Teaching, and Providing Learning Experiences (Table 2).

Conclusive results await the collection of the remaining essays.

Table 1: Characteristics of included studies

#	Author	Year	Country	Design/Method	Sample	Analysis	Study Focus
1	Kenkre, J., Wallace, C., Davies, R., Bale, S., & Thomas, S.	2013	U.K.	Qualitative	Wales community nurses	Consensus Methodology	How to implement evidence-based research in community nurses
2	Irby, D., & O'Sullivan, P.	2018	U.S. A.	Literature Review Qualitative	Medical journals	Literary analysis	How to develop & reward educators
3	Hahn, J.	2010	U.S. A.	Review of Practicums Qualitative	Washington, DC. Practicum Projects of Value	Literary analysis	The mutual benefits between practicum students and nurses executives
4	Higginson, R., & Williams, M.	2018	U.K.	Literature Review	Studies of scaffolding clinical simulation (SCS)	Literary analysis	Scaffolding Clinical Simulation (SCS) in nursing
5	Rosser, E.	2016	U.K.	Literature Review	Reviews of schools using Magnet Award principles	Literary analysis	What are the benefits of the Magnet Award being applied to nursing instruction
6	Curtis, E., Sheerin, F., & Vries, J.	2011	U.K.	Literature Review	Studies on the development of leadership curriculum in nursing schools	Literary analysis	Developing leadership in nursing
7	Ironside, M.	2008	U.S. A.	Qualitative	Six teachers, five students, and four clinicians	Hermeneutical analysis	Common experiences and shared meanings of excellence of nursing students, teachers, clinicians
8	Girija, K.M.	2012	Sultanate of Oman	Literature Review	International studies on student surveys of clinical instructors	Literary analysis	Effective Clinical Teaching in nursing

Table 2

Creating the Teaching Milieu

- Learning Together with Students
- Creating the Best Learning Environment
- Mentoring Students
- Fostering a Reciprocal Relationship

Passion and Enthusiasm for Teaching

- Creating a Passion for Learning
- Creating a Love for the Subject Matter
- Having High Expectations
- Informing Teaching with Outside Experiences

Providing Learning Experiences

- Active Learning/Hands on Learning
- Critical Thinking
- Connecting Teaching and Research
- Student Feedback/Discussion
- Applying Learning/Job Preparedness

Table 3

Providing Learning Experiences					
Subtheme	Active Learning/Hands on Learning	Critical Thinking	Connecting Teaching and Research	Student Feedback/Discussion	Applying Learning/Job Preparedness
	I require participation in class P1 Line 16	I like to engage the class in critical thinking... P1 L22-23	I put together a department wide undergraduate research day for all students P1 Line 40/41		
			My teaching also benefits from my research more directly P1 Line 57		

**Significance**

The narratives of the professors’ help define the meaning of successful teaching across disciplines and offer nursing faculty additional perspectives on what leads to outstanding teaching. From a student’s perspective, this study offered insight into what professional research requires such as the IRB approval process and more. It was also a learning opportunity to see what sources professors pull from to develop their teaching strategies as connections to the literature and to not only the professors’ essays, but other professors as well came quickly apparent.

## Reference

- Rossetti, J. (2002). *Factors That Make Outstanding Professors Successful: A Connection to Inspiration* (Doctoral dissertation). Northern Illinois University, Dekalb.
- Ward, D. J., Furber, C., Tierney, S. & Swallow, V. (2013). Using framework analysis in nursing research: A worked example. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 69 (11),2423-2431.