

# Lessons From the Establishment of a Blended Model Dedicated Education Unit in a Pre-licensure Baccalaureate Nursing Program

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Neither the planner nor presenter indicated that they have any real or perceived vested interest that relate to this presentation.

# Background

- Tensions between academia and practice
- Students & faculty are outsiders
- Varying attitudes among staff nurses
- Need greater collaboration



(Steven, Magnusson, Smith, & Pearson, 2014;  
Emerson, Shabo, & Jones, 2019;  
Lin, Wu, Lin, & Lee, 2014;  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2016)

# Dedicated Education Unit (DEU)



- Academic practice partnership
- Nursing unit set aside for a program or SON
- Staff nurses play greater role in teaching

# Purpose of the Project

Establish a dedicated education unit (DEU)

- partnership between SON and clinical partner
- increase collaboration between academia and practice



# Aims



- Encourage & empower nurses to engage in student learning
- Improve clinical education Build strong relationship between SON and clinical partner

# Benefits of a DEU

Benefits for the hospital:

- Improved Professional Practice
- Recruitment of new graduates
- New graduate hires more prepared



# Benefits of a DEU



Benefits for students:

- improved clinical education
- greater improvement in self-efficacy



# Benefits of a DEU

## Benefits for staff nurses:

- Clear expectations regarding interactions with nursing students
- Continuing education provided by SON
- Autonomy in choosing to be a nurse mentor
- Improved professional practice



# The School of Nursing

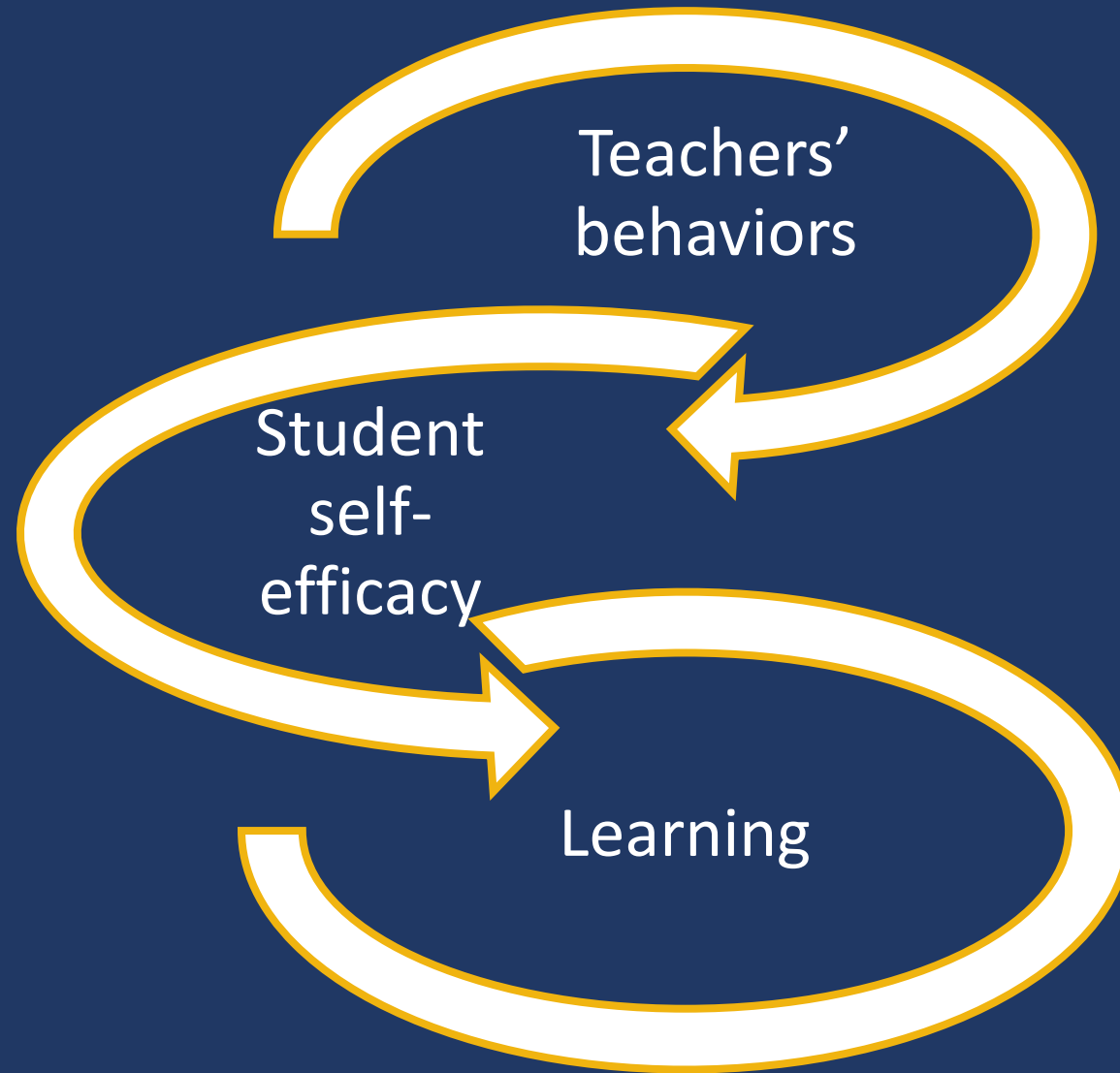
- first students entered in January 2018
- Private, not for profit, faith-based university in rural, southeast US
- 4 semester baccalaureate program
- 11-24 students admitted each semester



# Lewin's Theory of Planned Change



# Bandura's Social Learning Theory



# Dedicated Education Unit: Blended Model



## SON Objectives:

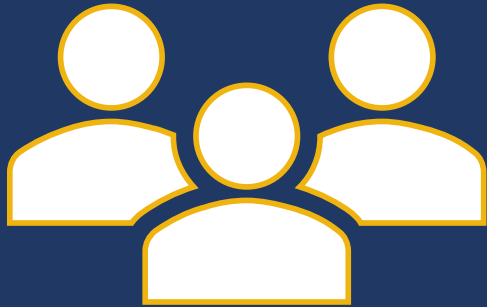
- Students spend one term in the DEU
- Faculty present
- Nurses work with students from one level within one program
- Staff nurses clearly understand role with students

# Initial Proposal

- Together with Dean of SON
- Chief Nursing Officer (CNO)
- Identified DEU Leadership Team



# DEU Leadership Team



- Project Manager
- Dean of SON (Practice Mentor)
- Unit Directors
- Unit Clinical Manager
- Unit-Based Educator
- Clinical Education Coordinator

# Defining Roles and Expectations

## Nurse *Mentors*

- Self-identify
- Supervise tasks
- Provide feedback
- Help identify learning experiences
- No IV push medications, no IV potassium with students



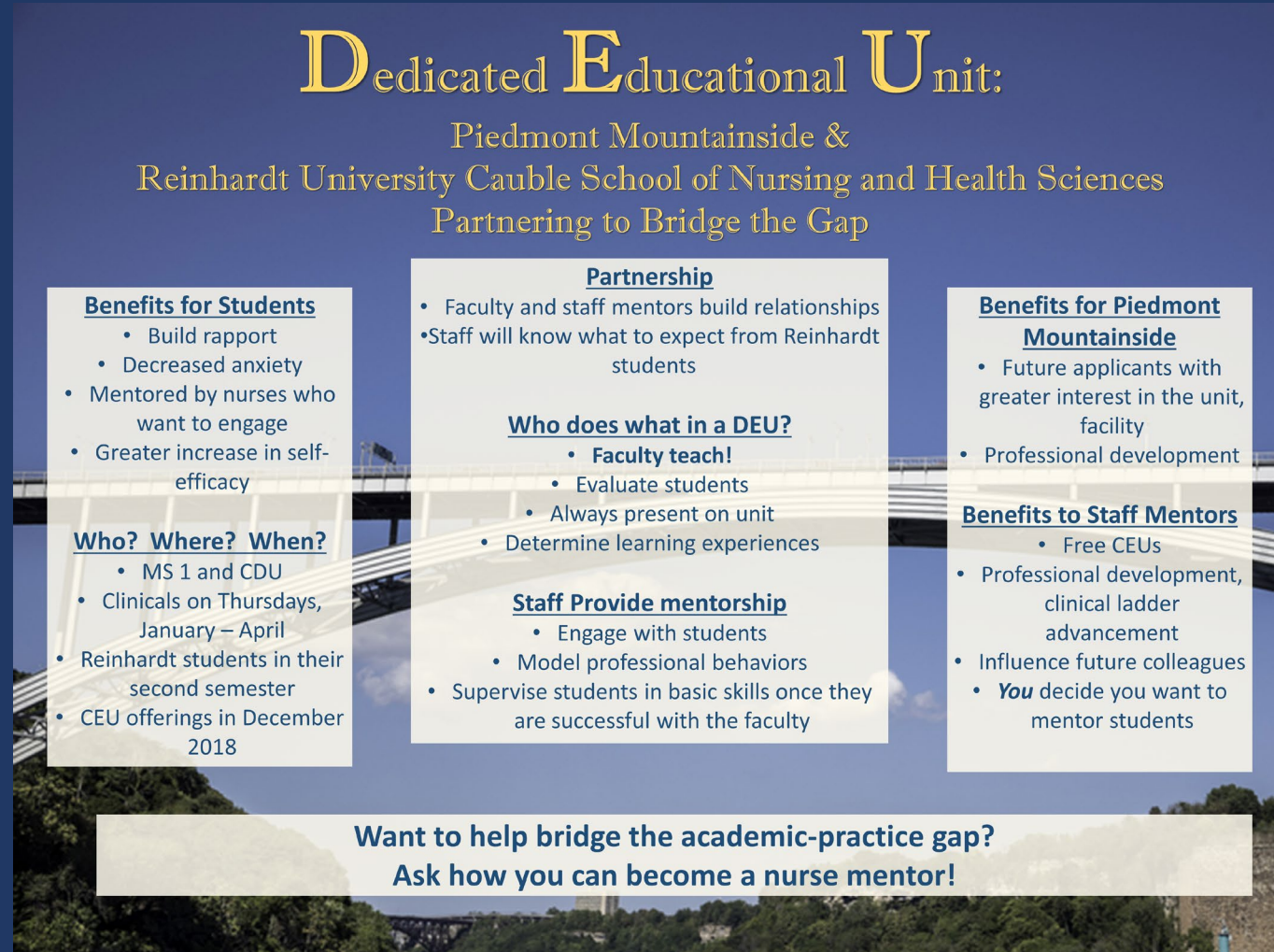
## SON

- Clinical faculty present, responsible for evaluations/grading
- Prepare Nurse Mentors



# Nurse Mentor Recruitment

- Lunch 'n' Learn
- Poster
- Informal Conversations
- Nurses shared their experiences



## Dedicated Educational Unit:

Piedmont Mountainside &  
Reinhardt University Cauble School of Nursing and Health Sciences  
Partnering to Bridge the Gap

### Benefits for Students

- Build rapport
- Decreased anxiety
- Mentored by nurses who want to engage
- Greater increase in self-efficacy

### Who? Where? When?

- MS 1 and CDU
- Clinicals on Thursdays, January – April
- Reinhardt students in their second semester
- CEU offerings in December 2018

### Partnership

- Faculty and staff mentors build relationships
- Staff will know what to expect from Reinhardt students

### Who does what in a DEU?

- **Faculty teach!**
  - Evaluate students
  - Always present on unit
- Determine learning experiences

### Staff Provide mentorship

- Engage with students
- Model professional behaviors
- Supervise students in basic skills once they are successful with the faculty

### Benefits for Piedmont Mountainside

- Future applicants with greater interest in the unit, facility
- Professional development

### Benefits to Staff Mentors

- Free CEUs
- Professional development, clinical ladder advancement
- Influence future colleagues
- **You** decide you want to mentor students

**Want to help bridge the academic-practice gap?**  
**Ask how you can become a nurse mentor!**

# Nurse Mentor Preparation

- Continuing Education Credit: 3 Contact Hours
- Hosted by SON, no cost to Nurse Mentors
- Topics:
  - Purpose and Benefits of a DEU
  - Meaningful Mentorship
  - Effective Supervision
  - Overview of SON curriculum & expectations



# Nurse Mentor Preparation

## Medication Administration

### Supervising the Nursing Student

#### The Staff Mentor should...

- ✓ Hold students **ACCOUNTABLE** for
  - Knowledge of the drugs
  - Patient teaching
- ✓ **SUPERVISE.**
  - Avoid multi-tasking while your student is giving meds.
- ✓ **DOCUMENT.**
  - Licensed RN MUST be logged in
- ✓ **COMMUNICATE** with the clinical instructor
  - Ask for help when needed.
  - Share honest feedback.
- ✓ **GIVE FEEDBACK.** Students can benefit from constructive feedback.



*Meds that must be given  
with the instructor:*

- All IV Push meds
- IV Potassium

#### The Nursing Student must...

- ✓ **ASK** questions.
- ✓ Adhere to **6 Rights** of Medication Administration
  1. Patient
  2. Drug
  3. Dose
  4. Time
  5. Route
  6. Documentation
- ✓ **BE PREPARED.**
  - KNOW the most commonly used drugs on the unit, LOOK UP the rest
  - Know pertinent labs
  - Complete necessary assessments.
  - Know safe dose range.
- ✓ **BE PROFESSIONAL.**
  - Accept constructive feedback.

**We can work TOGETHER to provide excellent care and prepare strong nurses.**

# Planned Evaluation

- Over the coming 3 semesters
- Course and program outcomes
- Student evaluations of clinical site
- Nurse evaluations of mentor preparation course
- Disrupted by pandemic



# Lesson #1

Time spent in staff nurse preparation is time well spent!

- Connection with faculty
- Reported sense of clear expectations



## Lesson #2

Developing our partnership made our students feel welcome.



## Lesson #3

Nurse mentor continuity remains a challenge.



## Lesson #3

Exclusive access was not realistic.





# Future Partnerships

- SON: 5 clinical partners in 5 rural counties
- AACN calls for stronger relationships between academia and practice
- Repeat the process
  - Other units
  - Different courses
  - More facilities



# References

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