

Towards the maintenance of excellence in the Graduate Nursing in Brazil

Graduate nursing education in Brazil is gradually being consolidated, both in the formation of qualified human resources, and in research and intellectually relevant production. As a result, graduate nursing education achieved its first program note of “6” in 2007, and three more in 2010. In addition, we saw an increase in edited international journals from Brazil gaining acceptance into the indexes in Web of Science in Nursing, beginning in 2007 and increasing to four by 2010. We finished 2010 with 48 Graduate Programs in Nursing, and 72 courses, distributed as follows: 42 Academic Masters, 23 PhD and 7 Professional Masters. Of the 48 programs, 21 are classified with a program grade of “3”, 14 with a grade of “4”, nine with a grade of “5”, and four with a grade of “6”. This picture reflects the social and scientific expression of Brazilian nursing, within both national and international contexts, ensuring the visibility and quality assurance of postgraduate education in nursing within Brazil.

The consolidation of excellence in Brazilian graduate nursing education has been transitioning toward maturity and performance stability equivalent to programs of international centers of excellence and reference in this area. This high quality of performance and differentiation between programs that meet the requirements for grade “5” highlights the visibility and integration achieved internationally.

This consolidation is confirmed by qualitative assessment of the scope of the position of “prominence” in a significant part of the standards and performance indicators for grades “6” and “7”, in these categories: solidarity, nucleation, and international leadership programs in the area (see the document on the 2010 triennial assessment: www.capes.gov.br/).

Within nursing, having an excellent program for developing individuals with doctorates in the nursing domain provides the potential to develop international leaders in research and science, who are committed to sustaining and advancing the science of the nursing discipline, in an intra- and inter-disciplinary manner. These doctorally prepared nurses have mastered the process of construction, transference and solidification of knowledgeable practice, or knowledge in nursing and health, in creative and constructive environments, including new epistemological/methodological foundations, and ethical research. These domain experts produce the knowledge, expand the theoretical foundations and philosophies of nursing, and serve as models of political and management practice in nursing and health care. They promote public policies and health education related to nursing, interact with political leaders in various fields and across scenarios and segments that represent all of society.

The consolidation of the excellence of our Graduate Programs in Nursing is based on the maintenance of policies and strategies of action to advance their qualification towards achieving the maximum grade (“7”). This requires increasing the quantity and quality of cooperative and multicenter research projects, funded internationally, while maintaining the performance of students with permanent faculty. Additionally, it is important to provide the opportunity for highly qualified publications with faculty and their respective advisees. Moreover, it is also important to attract students for doctoral “sandwich” degrees and doctorally prepared individuals at the post-doctoral stage.

Advances in methods and alternative strategies to pursue teaching and learning and knowledge building are needed to strengthen, in an innovative way, the links between education, research and extension, and the promotion of social development. Policies to enable networking, formation of innovative research and graduate regional, national and international networks, stimulate cooperation between researchers seeking to reduce regional imbalances in supply and performance of graduate studies (DINTER, PROAP, PROCAD or associations with institutions of higher

education). Measures to encourage solidarity and support for increased research, through the creation and strengthening of groups and lines of research and postgraduate courses, provide society with opportunities to obtain much better health care provided by professional nurses with higher qualifications. The seeking of innovative technologies and the appropriation of scientific and technological knowledge, helps to strengthen the disciplinary knowledge that is held, and encourage innovative knowledge, while adhering to public policy and consolidation of the Unified Health System, with sustainability and entrepreneurship, resulting in a significant impact on the excellence of nursing care in society.

This current moment represents historic growth, strengthening and consolidation of science, technology and innovation in nursing. Additionally, the revitalization and advancement of the potential of faculty researchers occurs with the training of masters and doctoral students in nursing with strong qualifications and who can contribute to the health of the population.

A commitment to strive to elevate graduate nursing students to the maximum of their potential, aggregating and integrating them, is surely the greatest collective achievement of those involved in nursing to achieve real progress that is significant for strengthening, making visible, recognizing and appreciating the nurses of Brazil.

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