

# CACN

California Association of Colleges of Nursing



**POSITION STATEMENT**  
IN SUPPORT OF SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR ACADEMIC  
LEADERS  
**Revised 10/13/15 (M. Wickman)**

**Position:**

The California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) is committed to advancing academic leadership through the design and implementation of mechanisms that will develop aspiring academic leaders by identifying candidates with leadership potential and instituting programs to assist them in obtaining the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes. CACN commits support for program development or expansion, a collaborative approach to identifying curriculum content and methods of teaching, and a long-term priority to prepare the future leadership for nursing education.

**Rationale:**

The Institute of Medicine, *Future of Nursing* (Institute of Medicine [IOM], 2010) has two recommendations specifically related to nursing leadership --- Recommendation #2: Expand opportunities for nurses to lead and diffuse collaborative improvement efforts and Recommendation #7: Prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health. In addition, data clearly indicate that the supply of faculty and academic leadership is aging (AACN, 2015).

Few, if any, faculty receive preparation for academic leadership in their graduate degree programs. In some institutions, there are positions in which aspiring leaders can be mentored in the role (e.g. assistant dean, assistant directors, faculty team leader, level coordinators). In other programs, the structure does not support these positions or they exist without sufficient release time or financial enhancements. Although national programs to develop nurse leaders exist (such as the National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations Scholars program and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellows Program), there are limited spaces and funds for faculty to participate. Failure to implement succession planning could put nursing programs at risk through noncompliance with Board of Registered Nursing and Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education standards related to the provision of effective leadership to the nursing unit.

By sharing best practices and exploring mechanisms to share expertise in leadership development (e.g. joint appointments, visiting professorships), CACN schools can maximize the development of future leaders.

The content for new nursing academic leaders includes, but is not limited to:

- leadership behaviors: collaboration, cooperation, coordination, motivation;
- competencies such as systems thinking, negotiation, strategy, analysis, change, emotional intelligence, and the development of learning communities;
- recognition of situations which require the leader to mediate, collaborate, delegate, or follow;
- leader as educator and scholar;
- legal issues in higher education;
- human resource concepts and issues relevant to faculty and staff;
- budgeting an academic program and developing an inclusive business plan;
- negotiating a leadership position;
- meshing educational and corporate cultures;
- creating a persuasive position/argument;
- developing a long-term perspective that maintains the organizational “good”; and
- recognizing and managing organizational risk.
- knowledge and understanding of accreditation expectations both at the program and university level.

#### **References:**

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2015). *Nursing faculty shortage*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Retrieved from: <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Media/FactSheets/FacultyShortage.htm>

California Institute of Nursing & Health Care. (2013). *Nurse role exploration project: The affordable care act and new nursing roles*. Retrieved from: <http://healthimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/CINHC-WhitePaperNurseRoles-100420131.pdf>

Institute of Medicine. (2010). *The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health*. Retrieved from [http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=12956&page=R1](http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12956&page=R1)