FAST FACTS FOR DEVELOPING A NURSING ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

What You Really Need to Know in a Nutshell
PART

Using SBAR to Create Academic Portfolios for Nurse Educators

Recommendations for Achieving Effective Academic Advancement
Introduction

Nurse educators are entering academia at unprecedented numbers due to the call for a BSN-prepared workforce. Nurse educators, like you, are unique academics because most come to academia from the practice setting. The transition from practice to academia presents challenges, and nurse educators need the right tools to ensure success. One of the most important tools is a well-put-together academic portfolio to showcase your accomplishments. Academic portfolios are important not only during periods of career mobility; they also serve as a reflective mechanism that can assist you to gain insight into your career goals. Furthermore, academic portfolios can help other academics who may be unfamiliar with the profession of nursing to learn the scholarship that is unique to your practiced discipline. Although a resume or curriculum vitae (CV) may suffice in the practice realm as a representation of your...
At the end of this chapter, the nurse educator will be able to:

1. Identify reasons for developing your academic portfolio.
2. Discuss the areas of scholarship on which an academic portfolio will focus.
3. Understand the role of the nurse educator compared to other academics and your colleagues in practice settings.

Nurse educators must showcase their accomplishments or scholarship in the academic environment, yet most are not educated or mentored on the best method to do so. The development of an academic portfolio is a tool that you, the nurse educator, needs to assist you to succeed in academe. Academic portfolios serve three distinct but related purposes:

- Academic portfolios showcase your accomplishments and excellence in scholarship when you are:
  1. Interviewing for a job in academia
  2. Pursuing a promotion in academia
  3. Applying for tenure in academia

- When used as an ongoing developmental process tool, academic portfolios serve as an instrument to promote individual professional growth through the process of reflection.
• Academic portfolios teach other academics about the scholarship of nursing by developing a clear, concise, yet detailed professional presentation that adequately explains discipline-specific information.

**FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL**

All three purposes are equally important to ensure a successful academic career and the nurse educator can incorporate all three into the single process of academic portfolio development.

To begin to understand the process of academic portfolio development, you should ask yourself three questions:

1. Have I recently taken a good, thoughtful look at where I was when I started my career, where I am now, and where I want to be?
2. What are my best academic accomplishments?
3. Do academic educators from other departments, who contribute to the search or interview, promotion, or tenure committees, understand the complex discipline of nursing?

**DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF ACADEMIC PORTFOLIOS**

An academic portfolio has been clearly defined as “...a visual representation of the individual, their experience, strengths, abilities, and skills” (McCready, 2007, p. 144), or “an autobiography of personal growth” (Javinen & Kohenen, 1995, p. 29). Oermann (2002) describes two types of portfolios: best work and growth and development.
PART I SBAR TO CREATE ACADEMIC PORTFOLIOS

(p. 73). In actuality, academic portfolio development is an ongoing process. It should be started as soon as possible, reflectively evaluated often and revised, and the final product used for submission to show your best work for career change or advancement. Academic portfolios are a well-selected collection of reflections and evidence that show how you are developing personally and professionally (Casey & Egan, 2010). Academic portfolios serve as a logical solution to the multifaceted evaluative process needed for educators. They can be crafted to adequately represent you, your accomplishments, discipline, and scholarship.

SCHOLARSHIP

Academic portfolios showcase accomplishments in the form of scholarship. Scholarship is defined as “learning; knowledge acquired by study” (Dictionary.com, 2011). It is the knowledge that a nurse educator gains and applies to outcomes within the role (Billings & Kowalski, 2008). It can take multiple forms such as finding a new innovative teaching technique, doing a pilot study to determine if students who are peer-tutored will increase test scores, presenting, or writing an article for a journal. Remember, “Scholarship demands rigor” (Martsolf, Dieckman, Cartechine, et al., 1999, p. 326). Good scholarship takes work, benefits our students, and promotes nursing knowledge.

Nurse educators are indeed scholars and this is best defined by Billings & Kowalski (2008) as “A scholar is a person who has particular knowledge in an area of specialization. A scholar has a spirit of inquiry and is able to think logically and communicate effectively” (p. 204). Therefore scholarship is something in which you are involved in on a day-to-day basis in academe. Many academic institutions will recognize and
organize scholarship as three distinct performance areas: research, teaching, and service. In traditional academic environments, an educator’s performance will be evaluated in each area. Figure 1.1 gives a graphic depiction of model of scholarship.

BOYER’S VIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP

There are other models of scholarship besides the traditional model of teaching, research, and service. One of the more popular alternative models is that of Boyer. In 1990, Ernest Boyer wrote a book entitled Scholarship Reconsidered that was well received by nurse educators. Boyer expanded on the three traditional categories of scholarship and added a fourth category. The categories that Boyer defined are discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Teaching is a key component in Boyer’s model and is described as a transmitter of knowledge that links the other forms of scholarship (Boyer, 1990, p. 24).
Boyer demonstrated how his model could be adequately used in today’s changing educational environment. The model emphasizes teaching as the integrating thread. Table 1.1 provides definitions and examples of the four domains of Boyer’s model of scholarship.

Although many nurse academics agree with Boyer’s model of scholarship, and some schools use it as the evaluation tool, it has not been embraced by all institutions. Many institutions still evaluate educators with the traditional models of scholarship that include only teaching, research, and service and, therefore, it is imperative you know how you will be evaluated and by what model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1.1 Examples of Boyer’s Model of Scholarship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discovery</strong> (Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Comparing technology usage of 2nd degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and pre-licensure students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration</strong> (Interdisciplinary collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or unique ways of knowledge development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Using music therapy to decrease student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>test anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong> (Taking learned knowledge and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>putting it into practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Taking students abroad to better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand cultural concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong> (Facilitating learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: Using an active teaching strategy such</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as gaming to increase knowledge acquisition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL

Find out how you will be evaluated by carefully reading your faculty handbook.

ACADEMIA TODAY

Academic portfolios are important because successful academic careers are currently being redefined within educational institutions and there is an increasing call for faculty accountability. That accountability is being emphasized more and more due to many socioeconomic factors that include:

- The high cost of education
- Institutional demands for excellence to stay competitive
- The need to find better methods to evaluate faculty (Martsolf et al., 1999).

Faculty are meeting and often exceeding this increased call for accountability by providing evidence of their excellence in scholarship. Academic portfolios are the mechanism to best showcase the skills and abilities of educators, as well as provide a description of an educator’s philosophy and attitude.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON NURSE EDUCATORS

This section will discuss some of the reasons that academic preparation for nurse educators is more important now than ever.
The Institute of Medicine

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has recommended that 80% of nurses be educated at the baccalaureate level by 2020 (IOM, 2010). This recommendation is supported by well-grounded evidence that nurses educated at the baccalaureate level decrease morbidity and mortality statistics for patients (Aiken, Clarke, Cheung, Sloane, & Silber, 2003). The IOM recommendation will increase the need for nurse educators to assume roles in collegiate settings. Although many nurse educators are already functioning in academic settings, others are bound to move into academia in response to the call to increase baccalaureate-prepared nurses and the movement entitled “BSN in 10 years” that has been initiated by the American Nurses Association (American Nurses Association [ANA], 2008).

**FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL**

RN to BSN programs are predicted to grow and will need an increasing number of nurse educators at the collegiate level.

The IOM is also calling for seamless educational transitions between levels of nursing education. When these recommendations are actualized, there will be an increased need for nurse educators in academic settings. Nurse educators can show their accountability through their academic portfolio.

Magnet®

Another social force that is affecting the profession of nursing is the American Nurses Credentialing Center
(ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program® (ANCC, 2011) for health care practice centers. The certification is currently held by only 5% of U.S. hospitals (CHOP, 2011) and is based on criteria of nursing excellence. New criteria that hospitals and health care centers must follow when submitting an application read as follows: “Organizations submitting application anytime after January 1, 2011 and before 2013... 100% of nurse managers must have at least a baccalaureate degree in nursing at time of application” (ANCC, 2011, p. 1).

**FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL**

Hospitals and outpatient centers anticipating application for Magnet® certification will be encouraging nurses to return to school, which will also increase the need for nurse educators to enter academia.

At this point in history, with all these social forces pushing nursing education toward the collegiate setting, it is difficult to imagine that effective presentation of nurse educators’ scholarship will not be needed.

**Faculty Shortage**

Currently nurse educators are in a choice position due to the lack of nursing faculty. The shortage of nurse educators is described by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2010):

...a total of 880 faculty vacancies were identified in a survey of 556 nursing schools with baccalaureate and/or graduate programs across the country (70.3% response rate). Besides the vacancies, schools cited the need to create an additional 257 faculty positions to accommodate student demand. The data show a national nurse faculty vacancy rate of 6.9%. (p. 1)
This employment advantage is unlike most other academics at this point in time. Therefore, nurse educators have options and can truly reflect upon and choose a position in academia that best suits their scholarship and skills. Developing an academic portfolio can assist with this self-evaluation and reflection.

THE IMPORTANCE FOR NURSE EDUCATORS TO DEVELOP AN ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

Nursing is a relatively new discipline to academia and it is unique in a number of ways when compared to traditional disciplines. It is of paramount importance for nurses and evaluators to recognize, understand, and incorporate these differences into nurse educators’ academic portfolios to best represent both themselves and the discipline. The obvious difference between nursing and other disciplines is that it is a practice profession, and thus much of the teaching occurs in the clinical setting as opposed to the classroom. The teaching that occurs in the clinical setting is so different than what is normally evaluated in the academic settings that it is usually NOT an aspect that is evaluated in real time. Unfortunately, rarely do members of the academic community who serve on interview, promotion, or tenure committees come to a clinical setting to see a nurse educator “in action.”

FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL

The real-time evaluation of the scholarship of teaching for nurse educators is more often done in the academically familiar classroom setting versus the practice-familiar clinical setting.
A second difference between nursing and many other academic disciplines is its educational history. Nursing was originally taught in diploma schools that did not mimic the academic setting. Even today nursing is still taught in over 100 diploma schools as well as in technical and community colleges. These programs, in effect, may have historically “branded” nursing in the view of some academics as a technical skill rather than an academic discipline. This may produce subliminal fallout in the evaluation process of nurse educators. Evaluators on promotion and tenure committees may not hold the nursing educator’s scholarship at the same level as other educators if they are not knowledgeable about it and view it as a lesser academic discipline.

Another consideration why nurse educators may be evaluated differently is the lack of the nursing profession’s consensus on entry into practice. Fuzzy lines of delineation exist due to diploma, technical, and academic education units. Other problems in the academic evaluation of nurse educators may arise due to the newness of the discipline in some institutions and evaluators’ lack of knowledge about the discipline, especially if nursing is not represented on the evaluative or other institutional committees.

Third, nursing, like education, has been a female-dominated profession. Other disciplines in academia have been male dominated for years. When applying the theoretical concepts of critical social theory and feminist theory, it is easy to imagine how the evaluation process in academia may not favor female-dominated professions. This is another good reason to have nursing represented on university committees.

Additionally, nurse educators often come to academic positions later in their careers than other traditional academics. Therefore, they have not “grown up” in the system like other academics and are many times less savvy about
The average age of the nurse educator holding a PhD is 54.

The average age of doctorally prepared nursing faculty in baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs holding the rank of professor is 57.3. Among associate professors, the average age is 55; among assistant professors, it is 51.

The average age at which nursing faculty members retire is 62.5.

Less than 7% of nursing doctoral students are younger than 35; the median age for all research doctorate awardees is 33.

The average time from enrollment to degree completion for nursing PhDs is 8.3 years; for all research doctorate awardees, it is 6.8 years.

Many nurse educators start in their academic careers later in life because they are in practice first. This may work as a double-edged sword: The nurse educator comes to the academic position with more personal maturity, but many times knows only the culture of the practice environment, which is far different than that of academia. Some of the environmental or cultural differences that have been noted are:

- Academia is less reactive to situations
- Academia is more stable due to tenure so people have been in positions and power longer
• Nurse educators must change focus from patient-centered to student-centered even in the clinical teaching area
• Being assertive is not always valued

**FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL**

Nurse educators many times start in academia at a disadvantage, but with the proper mentoring and professional development can use their experience to promote their own success.

A final reason why nursing education evaluation may differ from other disciplines (with the exception of education) is that there is an outcome examination. Programs of nursing, unlike traditional disciplines in academia, have a direct outcome measure: NCLEX-RN® success. This single entity can create a silo of focus for evaluative committee members. When examination pass-rate percentages are low, fingers immediately start pointing to teaching deficits, but when passing percentages are high those concerns disappear. All nurse educators know that NCLEX-RN® success is a multifaceted process that encompasses a multitude of variables, including but not limited to those listed in Exhibit 1.1. Therefore, the tone of an academic portfolio may differ when nurse educators are being evaluated in years of NCLEX-RN® success as opposed to years when NCLEX-RN® success is not up to expectations.

In lieu of all the various reasons that can indirectly affect a faculty evaluation, a well-put-together academic portfolio is a must for you and every nurse educator. There are increasing social reasons for nurse educators to become more adept at presenting themselves in the best light, and therefore positioning themselves in leadership positions throughout the governing organization. Other
Exhibit 1.1  A List of Factors That May Affect NCLEX-RN® Success for Educational Units

- Leadership effectiveness
- Newness of faculty
- Cohesiveness of faculty group
- Sequencing of courses
- Concepts of the curricula
- Learner group dynamics and characteristics
- Learner group qualifications
- Local competition
- Financial restraints of the academic unit
- Mission or philosophy of the educational unit or governing institution
- Administrative support from the governing institution
- Lack of practice partners
- Lack of staff development resources
- Lack of faculty education in graduate work specific to nursing education
- Lack of support staff
- Unrealistic prerequisites required by the governing institution

academics will not understand the scholarship of nursing unless we, the nurse educators, teach them.

PREPARING NURSE EDUCATORS FOR ACADEMIA

Although graduate education in nursing has been at the collegiate level for many years, the education is many
times concentrated knowledge in a specialty area, such as pediatrics, and scant discussion is devoted to the subject of academic success in which many graduates may eventually teach. Being a “good nurse” or even a “good teacher” may not be enough. Nurse educators need to understand the expectations of academia and that nursing is just as accountable as all other disciplines to those standards and criteria of evaluation. Developing an academic portfolio is often a part of new faculty development, yet its significance to the nurse educators’ future needs to be underscored (Supplee & Gardner, 2002).

**FAST FACTS in a NUTSHELL**

Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees are currently the fastest growing degrees in the field of nursing.

Although the DNP degree was originally a terminal degree intended for practice, many DNP graduates (30%) are entering into academic positions. Although teaching was not the intent of the DNP degree, these graduates are sorely needed in collegiate settings. The best scenario would be to increase DNP graduates’ knowledge of the academic environment and of scholarship presentation to ensure their success in the environment (Wittmann-Price, Waite, & Woda, 2011). In addition, the IOM (2010) is also calling for nursing to double their PhD graduates by 2020, but not all PhD programs in nursing have content specific to nursing education. Therefore, being a PhD-prepared nurse does not automatically provide you with the needed skills of scholarship presentation.

Graduate nurse educator tracks are more apt to focus on the academic environment but many times only touch the surface of what will be expected of nurse educators from
the larger educational organization. The National League for Nursing’s Core Competencies for Nurse Educators (NLN, 2005) dedicates Competency 8—Function within the Educational Environment—to skills specific to nurse educators’ roles in educational organization. This emphasizes the importance of the nurse educators’ ability to be scholarly, contributing members of the larger educational organization.

SUMMARY

A well-thought-out academic portfolio is needed when you, the nurse educator, present yourself for an academic position, promotion, or tenure because you are being critiqued by academic standards as opposed to familiar health care standards. There are also personal and professional reasons that academic portfolios are becoming increasingly important:

- The clear articulation of your philosophy of education
- Educating academics from other disciplines about the scholarship of nursing

Nurses will be moving increasingly into collegiate positions due to a combination of social forces that include:

- The current IOM report to increase the BSN workforce
- ANCC’s Magnet Recognition Program®
- BSN in 10 Movement
- Research discussion educational preparation related to patient mortality and morbidity (Aiken et al., 2003)
Once in collegiate settings, nurse educators should be aware of the differences inherent in their profession when considering the presentation of their academic portfolio. Some of those differences include nursing’s:

- Relatively short academic history
- Diverse teaching environments including classroom, clinical, and laboratory
- Lack of consistency about entry into practice
- History of being a female-dominated profession
- Trend of educators entering academia later than educators from other disciplines
- Program outcome evaluation process, which uses the success percentages of NCLEX-RN®

The combination of all of these factors makes an effective academic portfolio a must in order for you to secure an academic position or apply for promotion or tenure.
Ruth A. Wittmann-Price, PhD, RN, CNS, CNE, is the department chair and professor of nursing at Francis Marion University in Florence, SC. Ruth has been a perinatal nurse for 33 years. She received her AAS and BSN degrees from Felician College in Lodi, NJ (1978, 1981) and her MS as a Perinatal CNS from Columbia University, NY (1983). Ruth completed her PhD at Widener University, Chester, PA (2006), and was awarded the Dean’s Award for Excellence. She developed a mid-range nursing theory “Emancipated Decision Making in Women’s Health Care” and has tested her theory in three research studies. Other nurse researchers are now using her theory to test other decision-making situations in women’s health care. Besides continuing her research about decisional science, she studies developmental outcomes of preterm infants.

FAST FACTS FOR DEVELOPING A NURSING ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

What You Really Need to Know in a Nutshell

Ruth A. Wittmann-Price, PhD, RN, CNS, CNE
Contents

Exemplar Contributors vii
Foreword ix
Preface xi
Acknowledgments xv

Part I: Using SBAR to Create Academic Portfolios for Nurse Educators: Recommendations for Achieving Effective Academic Advancement

1. Situation: Why You Need to Develop Your Academic Portfolio! 3
3. Assessment: Assessing the Academic Environment and Your Career Goals 29
4. Recommendations: Laying the Foundation to Begin the Process 41

Part II: The How of Developing Your Academic Portfolio

5. How to Write a Five-Part Personal Statement 47
6. How to Showcase Your Teaching 57
CONTENTS

7. How to Showcase Your Research and/or Scholarship 77
8. How to Showcase Your Service 89
9. How to Write an Integrative Summary 105
10. Arrangement and Presentation of Your Portfolio 113
11. How to Develop an e-Portfolio
   Dr. Frances H. Cornelius 119

Part III: Examples

12. Personal Statement for Promotion From Instructor to Assistant Professor
   Dr. Karen K. Gittings 135
13. Personal Statement for Continuous Tenure
   Dr. Roberta Waite 143

References 175
Appendix: Contributors’ Biographies 179
Index 185
Exemplar Contributors

Rhonda Brogdon, MSN, MBA, DNP, RN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
Francis Marion University
Florence, South Carolina

Frances H. Cornelius, MSN, PhD, RN-BC, CNE
Associate Clinical Professor
Chair of the MSN Advanced Practice Role Department
Coordinator of Informatics Projects
Drexel University, College of Nursing and Health Professions Nursing Faculty
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Jeana N. Dunn, BSN, RN
Graduate of Francis Marion University (2010)
Staff RN, Maternal Child Health Services/
Labor and Delivery
Florence, South Carolina

Rosemary Fliszar, PhD, RN, CNE
Certified Nurse Educator, Assistant Professor
Kutztown University
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Karen K. Gittings, DNP, RN, CCRN
Assistant Professor of Nursing
Francis Marion University
Florence, South Carolina

Roberta Waite, EdD, APRN, CNS-BC
Associate Professor of Nursing
and
Assistant Dean of Academic Integration and
Evaluation of Community Programs
Drexel University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Portfolios are collections of products and evidence that demonstrate your achievements. Nurses can develop a portfolio to document their clinical expertise, experiences in clinical practice, and professional goals. Similarly with academic portfolios, nursing faculty members can provide evidence of their research and scholarship, teaching performance, and contributions to the nursing program and profession. With a well-developed academic portfolio, nurse educators can document their accomplishments in relation to criteria for appointment and reappointment, promotion, tenure, merit review, and other purposes. Academic portfolios also are a strategy for educators to reflect on their development as a nursing faculty member, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and plan future activities to meet their career goals.

Few nurse educators are prepared to develop an academic portfolio: This book fills that gap. Beginning chapters explain the purposes of a portfolio and its value in assessing one’s own professional growth, documenting achievements, and setting career goals. Later chapters explain how to develop a personal statement, describe teaching successes with evidence to support those achievements, document research and scholarship, and explain one’s contributions to service and the nursing
profession. Details on formatting and presenting an academic portfolio including how to develop an e-portfolio also are included in the book. Many times portfolios are developed to document performance, recognition, and impact as part of the educator’s application for promotion and tenure; two chapters in the book explain how to gear a portfolio to those purposes.

Academic portfolios are important not only because they provide a means of documenting accomplishments in the faculty role but also because they enable an educator to reflect on his or her own progress in meeting career goals. With an academic portfolio, nursing faculty members can monitor their career development and present their work for others to review and critique. This is an easy-to-read book that will serve as a valuable resource for nursing faculty members in developing their academic portfolios.

Marilyn H. Oermann, PhD, RN, FAAN, ANEF
Professor and Chair of Adult and Geriatric Health
School of Nursing
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Editor, Journal of Nursing Care Quality
All nurse educators know that moving from clinical practice to academia includes culture shock! This book is designed for nurse educators who are considering entering academia or contemplating career advancement within academia. It is designed to discuss the importance of and specifics about developing an effective academic portfolio. How you, the novice or expert nurse educator, present yourself and your accomplishments through the presentation of an academic portfolio, is imperative to a successful career. Let’s face it, academia differs greatly from our familiar practice settings. In order to accomplish your goal you must communicate clearly and effectively to the rest of the academic community about your scholarship. This book is designed to help you negotiate academia safely and effectively.

Formatting this book using the SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, and Recommendation) method of communication demonstrates the importance of telling your scholarly journey in a concise, explanatory manner with recommendations or reflections for further development in your role. In a clinical setting, SBAR is the communication tool that nurses use to provide other health care professionals the vital information needed about a patient. In this book it is used to communicate to nurses
the vital information they need to know in order to present their accomplishments is a scholarly format. Scholarly presentation of nurse educators’ work not only assists the individual but also assists the profession of nursing, which is a relatively young discipline, to be recognized for its excellent knowledge development.

I had been in several academic positions before I was exposed to a course designed to teach educators how to put together an academic portfolio. The course provided me with an experienced mentor, to whom I am grateful. The product that I developed after those learning sessions was more than I expected and considerably different from other evaluative material I had previously used. The product was reflective, thoughtful, and, most importantly, something that I could be proud of because it represented my best work and demonstrated to academic colleagues the nature of nursing scholarship!

I want to pass along that “something to be proud of feeling” to my colleagues by sharing with you in this book the information that was afforded to me and assisted me in my career. My portfolio not only assists me to gain professional advancement but it also influences my growth. There is something very therapeutic about putting together your professional achievements and goals in one place. It allows you to see “face-to-face” what you have done, where you need to go, and what directions need to be tweaked. It is a method to reflect on the strengths and limitations of your career in order to help you formulate new goals and ideals.

This book is arranged to walk you through the process of academic portfolio development step by step. But before that happens, the first section provides you with the background you need in order to understand the climate in which your professional evaluation will take place. Chapter 1 or “the situation” describes why an academic portfolio is so important for career advancement. The background in Chapter 2 provides a brief historical view
of academic portfolio development. The third chapter is the assessment and may be the most important chapter. It explains variables in the academic environment that may affect the development of your academic portfolio. And the final chapter of the first part makes recommendations for the development of your portfolio.

Part II of this book provides the reader with the step by-step process in Chapters 5 through 9 that is needed to develop an academic portfolio. It provides explanations, Fast Facts in a Nutshell, and examples! Chapter 10 discusses the actual physical presentation of your material and provides great anecdotal gems in order to enhance your academic portfolio presentation. Chapter 11, by Dr. Frances H. Cornelius, describes the process for e-portfolio development, which is being used at some institutions.

The last two chapters of this book are actual academic portfolio personal statements in their entirety from two successful nursing academics. One nurse educator is from a smaller school; the other is from a larger university. This provides the readers with a comparison perspective. Each personal statement presented in Chapters 12 and 13 includes a critique to assist in explaining what the content in that specific section brings to the finished product. Finally, you will want to read about the contributors and their careers in order to better understand the context under which they offered their personal statements to benefit other nurse educators.

Nurse educators will enjoy this book and use it as a guide to develop their own amazing academic portfolios. Every academic portfolio will be different and every nurse educator will reflect upon it differently, but there are critical elements that all should contain. Developing these elements in such a way that they showcase you and nursing is very gratifying and will assist you to put your best foot forward in the academic setting!

_Ruth A. Wittmann-Price_
I am thankful for my mentor of my first academic portfolio, Dr. Pamela A. Geller, Drexel University. Her patience, wisdom, and empathy guided me through the process and taught me a tremendous amount about presenting myself. I am deeply grateful.

I am also grateful to my Deans at Drexel University, Dr. Donnelley and Dr. Glasgow, for their continuing support in my career and for promoting academic excellence.

Thank you to the contributors of this book who gave so freely of themselves to help me complete the project and shared a piece of themselves with other nurse educators.

To my husband, David, and my children, Rachel, Samuel, and Rosemary, who are always supportive of my career—thank you. Finally, I would like to thank my two big sisters, Judy McDowell and Eileen Wittmann, who are my living guardian angels.
FAST FACTS FOR DEVELOPING A NURSING ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

What You Really Need to Know in a Nutshell