

Preparing the Next Generation of National Leaders in Academic Nursing

The Dean's Role in the NFS Application Process: Seven Best Practices

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Nurse Faculty Scholars



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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Who We Are – RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars

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- Amy Rial, M.P.H., R.N., Deputy Director
- Mirla Martin, Sr. Administrative Coordinator

RWJF

- Maryjoan Ladden, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., Senior Program Officer, Human Capital Team
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Today's Participants

We are joined by approximately 35 Deans from Schools of Nursing across the country, including those from:

- Minority Serving Institutions (HBCU, HACU-affiliated universities, and schools likely to have Native American students and faculty)
- Non-research intensive universities
- Institutions who have applied but whose candidates were not successful
- We are working hard to have more successful applications from all of you and have some ideas we hope will be helpful to you

—and will welcome ideas from you



Today's Objectives

- Overview of the NFS Program
- The Difference Deans Make in the Application Process – Seven Best Practices
- Summary of Critical Dates
- NFS Resources for Deans and Candidates
- Q&A

RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars – Purpose

- Develop the next generation of national leaders in academic nursing through career development awards for outstanding junior nursing faculty.
 - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the NAC as well as NFS program staff recognize how crucial it is that nursing increase the diversity of its workforce for the 21st century and are therefore committed to increasing diversity of faculty leaders in order for this to be accomplished
- Strengthen the academic productivity & overall excellence of nursing schools by providing mentorship, leadership training, salary & research support to young faculty
 - NFS as a “leg up” experience

NFS Award - Overview

- Up to 12 scholars are selected each year
- \$350,000 grant over 3 years
 - Scholars supported for 60% time for all 3 years of the program
 - Funding for an original research project (Approximately \$30,000 annually)
 - Training and travel expenses, support of mentor

NFS National Program Office provides:

- Assessment of leadership skills
 - Some leadership & skills training (media training and other skills) and facilitates acquisition of other skills
 - Appoints a National Mentor
- A nursing school can nominate one candidate annually
 - * Therefore will need an internal mechanism to select
 - * May have no more than two active scholars at any one time

NFS Program - Eligibility Criteria

- Registered nurse with a research doctorate in nursing or a related discipline.
- Junior faculty member in an accredited school of nursing in an academic position that could lead to tenure.
- Junior faculty are defined as those who have been in a faculty position after completing their doctorate for at least two and no more than five years at the start of the program, and usually are at the instructor or assistant professor level
- Identify at least one senior leader in the school of nursing as an primary nursing mentor for academic career planning & access to organizations, programs & colleagues helpful to the candidate's work as a Nurse Faculty Scholar.
- Identify at least one senior researcher in the university with similar or complementary research interests (*discipline outside of nursing*) to serve as a research mentor.

NFS Program - Eligibility Criteria, continued

- Candidates must be citizens or permanent residents of the US or territories at the time of application.
- Candidates must not receive support from other research fellowships/ traineeships at time they begin the program.

We embrace racial, ethnic and gender diversity and encourage applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds.

Note – candidates can apply more than once if still eligible and several of our current scholars were successful second time around

Nurse Faculty Scholars - Diversity

42 scholars from 37 different schools

- 55% are from non-research intensive schools*

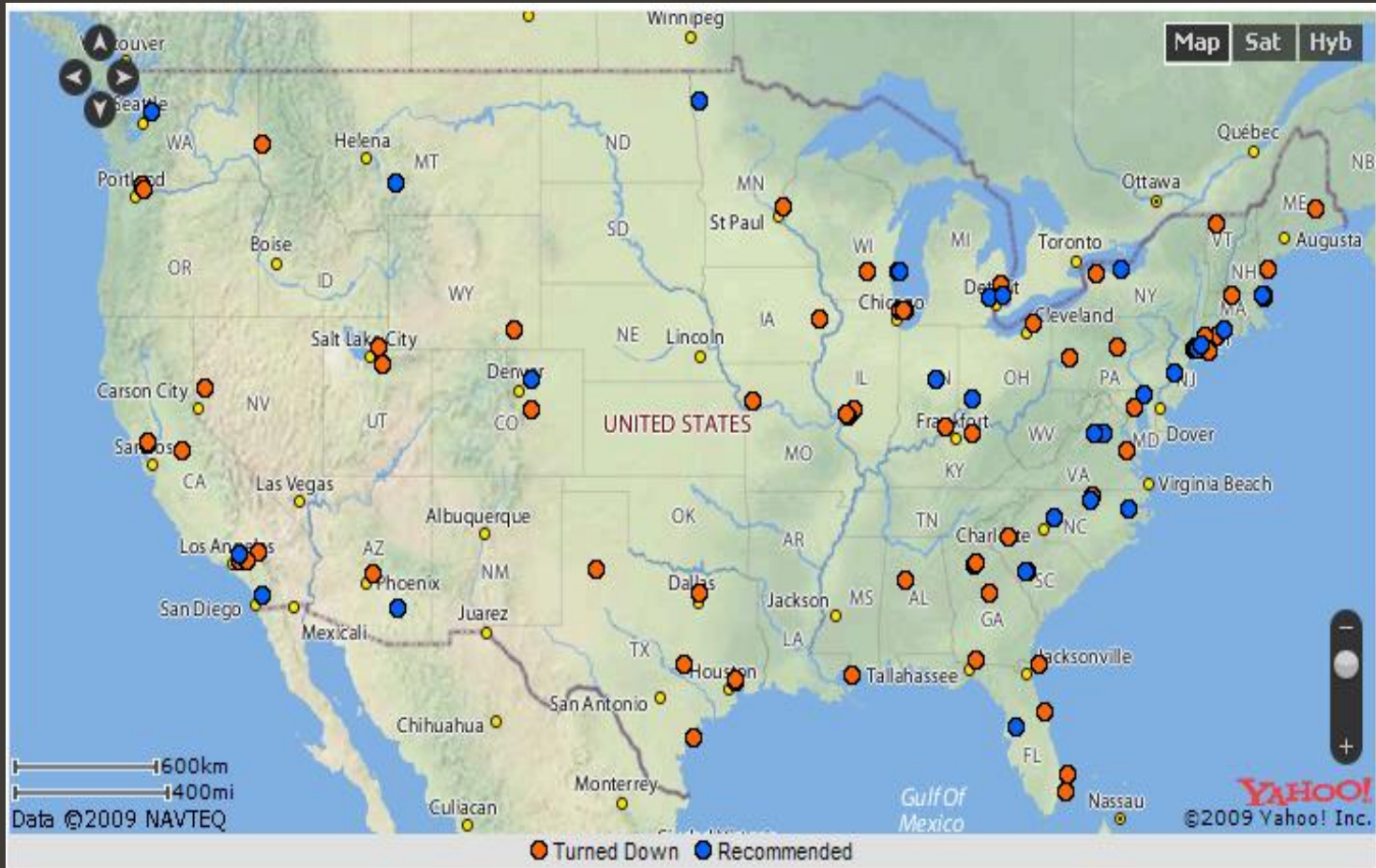
Demographics – first three cohorts

- 7 (16 %) African American Scholars
- 1 Native American Scholar
- 1 Hispanic Scholar
- 8 (19%) Male Scholars



*Research intensive is being within top 25 schools of nursing receiving NINR funding – non research intensive is all others outside that top 25

Nurse Faculty Scholars - Geographic Diversity of Scholars



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Nurse Faculty Scholars

Deans Make a Difference

DEANS ORCHESTRATE THE APPLICATION PROCESS!

THEY ARE CRITICAL TO THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING,
RECRUITING AND MENTORING QUALIFIED CANDIDATES
FOR THE NFS PROGRAM



Deans Make a Difference – Seven Best Practices

- I. Identifies and nominates qualified candidates early in the application process
- II. Ensures that the program's selection criteria is met
- III. Makes certain that candidates have primary and secondary mentors
- IV. Writes *Letter of Support* for candidates; showcases how candidate has met selection criteria
- V. Provides technical and other support for proposal development and submission
- VI. Establishes an effective review process to revise candidate's proposal in a timely manner; obtains outside reviewers for candidates, if needed
- VII. Keeps abreast of application deadlines; moves the application forward

Best Practice #1

Deans Identify and Nominate Candidates Early

Early Nomination Benefits

- Candidates identified early have ample time to work with mentors for developing , revising and polishing their applications
- Candidates often require technical assistance during preparation of the proposal
- Obtaining all required letters can be time-consuming and is a common delay for submission of applications
- Nominating candidates early makes gives them time to participate in and benefit from NFS web conference for applicants in December

I. Lessons Learned – Delayed Nomination

- Candidates have limited time to carefully check to make sure application meets technical requirements and all elements are included
- There is a minimal time for proposed mentors and others writing *Letters of Support*
- Candidates have a limited opportunity to obtain knowledgeable review and revise proposal following review process
- There is minimal window to navigate and manage possible delays with the online application process, especially in regard to uploading documents
 - always harder and more chance for glitch if last minute and under stress!

I. Tips and Insights for Deans

- Make sure that Faculty at your school are aware of this opportunity and other RWJF opportunities by having them register at <http://www.rwjf.org/services/>
- Selecting a candidate that is ready



Best Practice #2

Deans Ensure Selection Criteria is Met

A proposal must provide evidence of the following (in Dean's letter &/or other letters as well as in what Candidate writes):

- Candidate has a potential for & strong (**long-term**) commitment to a full career as an academic nurse leader, with the capacity to achieve rank of full professor
- Nominating institution & its senior leadership are committed to supporting the candidate's academic career and activities during the program
- Availability & commitment of qualified mentors & academic resources, including space as appropriate, at the candidate's institution
- Candidate has a potential to become a national leader in scholarly focus area

Best Practice #2

Deans Insure Selection Criteria is Met

- Candidate has a commitment to teaching excellence
- Candidate has a commitment to racial, ethnic, gender and cultural diversity in nursing
 - can be demonstrated through committee work, through the candidate having recruited or mentored nursing students or pre-nursing students of color, through their research etc - but it is extremely helpful for dean to speak to this in their letter
- Candidate's proposed research/scholarly plan demonstrates merit
- Proposed research and scholarship area has potential to serve as a foundation for the candidate's academic career and contribution to: nursing science, interdisciplinary knowledge in a focus area; and improvement of health and health care in the United States

II. Lessons Learned – When Candidates Didn't Meet Selection Criteria

- Unilateral focus on research to the exclusion of teaching or other aspects of academic leadership
 - e.g. talks about “buying out of” teaching as a goal - we need our faculty leaders to actively teach and we stress this in the program and how to manage to “do it all”
 - Scholars are expected to teach during the three years of NFS – that’s why 60%, not more
- Unclear institutional commitment
- Lack of academic leadership potential demonstrated in bio-sketch of applicant
 - Lack of publications (e.g. dissertation not published)
 - Lack of prior small research funding and completion to a publication
- Commitment to racial, ethnic, gender and cultural diversity in nursing is not sufficiently addressed in the application

II. Tips and Insights for Deans

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

- Review eligibility and selection criteria closely. Make sure that the candidate is knowledgeable about the criteria. Please contact the RWJF National Program Office with any questions.
- Letters of Support, written on behalf of candidates, must address specific selection criteria, i.e. institutional commitment, commitment to a full career in academic nursing, etc.



Best Practice #3

Deans Make Certain Candidate Has Appropriate Institutional Mentors

Primary mentor – senior nursing leader within candidate's school of nursing

- Will attend an orientation meeting at the beginning of the program
- Will attend annual national meeting with scholar each of the 3 years
- Provides academic nursing career mentorship
- Assist the scholar in navigating a career trajectory to become a leader in academic nursing
 - Does NOT have to be an expert in candidate's field of research – in fact may know nothing about it! Best person in SON to help the candidate gain tenure – who “knows the ropes”

Best Practice #3

Deans Make Certain Candidate Has Appropriate Institutional Mentors, continued

Research Mentor – within the candidate's institution – on their campus – so they can meet with them frequently and easily

- From a discipline outside of nursing
- Similar or complementary research interests
 - Ideally in topic area but could also be a methods match –
 - Does not have to be exact topic match – e.g. a candidate doing research on incarcerated women could be paired with a research mentor in women's health more broadly
- Guide the scholar in developing research projects and obtaining appropriate research skills – including publications
- Facilitate the scholar's membership on high-level academic committees and research collaboration

III. Lessons Learned – Mentorship

- Letters did not elaborate a clear commitment and/or detailed plan for mentorship
- Poor match of research mentor to scholar –
 - lack of obvious match not referred to in research mentor’s letter so that nature of match becomes clear to reviewers
- Lack of academic leadership demonstrated on biosketch of primary mentor
- Lack of research leadership demonstrated by publications, grantsmanship, and other benchmarks on the part of the research mentor
- Candidates not well prepared for the interview process



III. Tips and Insights for Deans

Mentorship

- Encourage the candidate to draw on mentoring relationships early while developing proposals
- Recommend a mentor who will “stretch the candidate”, someone beyond his/her dissertation chair or committee member
- Direct the candidate toward an appropriate research mentor at your university
- Letter of reference speaks to the candidate’s progression; contains evidence that the candidate uses mentoring relationships well
- Help define the role and specifics of how candidate will be mentored (e.g. frequency of meetings, proposed outcomes)
- Gather an interdisciplinary team to conduct a mock interview with the candidate

Best Practice #4

Deans Write Effective Letters of Support

- Dean's letter speaks to each of selection criteria as much as possible – with specific examples, evidence
 - Dean's letter often best place to find evidence of commitment to teaching excellence (e.g. brief summary of outstanding teaching evaluations or a student comment about)
 - and commitment to academic nursing career – potential to achieve full professor - therefore good start in all areas where will be evaluated for promotion
- Dean's letter contains evidence that the candidate uses mentoring relationships well
- Dean's letter speaks to what each of mentors will do for candidate – for instance:
 - Research and/or primary mentor's reputation for mentoring in SON and across the university
 - Match with research mentor if not obvious in research mentor's letter or biosketch
 - If research mentor is Director of a Center or head of a research team that candidate will be able to join

IV. Tips and Insights for Deans

- Go over goal statement with Candidate to be sure that meets goals of Nurse Faculty Scholars program –
 - Be sure goal statement resonates with selection criteria – especially commitment to full career in Academic Nursing
 - remind Candidate to look at RWJF website to make sure application is in synch with Foundation goals and purposes
- Have candidate ask for research and primary mentor letters early and go over letters with candidate before write own letter
 - To make sure the three main support letters in a package speak to all the selection criteria
 - To add other points to your Dean's letter not covered in other two or emphasize points not strong in others



Best Practice #5

Deans Provide Support in Proposal Development

Career Goal Statement

Proposal Abstract

Proposal Narrative

- a. Current Educational
- b. Research Goals
- c. Proposed Research
 - i. Statement of the research problem and specific aims of the project
 - ii. Background
 - iii. Previous Studies and Preparation for Conducting Research
 - iv. Methods
 - v. Summary

References

APPLICATION
COMPONENTS (as soon
as candidate registers has
access to templates)

Best Practice #5

Deans Provide Support in Proposal Development

Letters of Support

- Dean's Nomination Letter Template
- Provost's Institutional Support Letter Template
- Primary (Nursing) Mentor's Recommendation/Commitment Letter and Biographical Sketch
- Research Mentor's Recommendation/Commitment Letter and Biographical Sketch
- Letter of Recommendation Template

Biographical Sketches (use NIH format):

- Applicant
- Primary Nursing Mentor
- Research Mentor

APPLICATION
COMPONENTS

V. Lessons Learned – Proposals with Problems

- Problems in Research Methods
 - Challenges and barriers to conducting research not fully articulated
 - Poor articulation of methodology– insufficient detail in methods – background sometimes too long to leave sufficient room for methods
- Insufficient case as to the potential of program of research to improve health and health care in the United States (e.g. clinical relevance of lab research)
- Insufficient specificity in research questions, methods, and data analysis
- Institutional commitment is lacking especially in terms of resources available to help conduct the research
- Guidelines of NIH bio-sketch not followed
- Proposal had missing documents (*letter from a mentor or mentor CV*)
- Academic leadership potential was not highlighted

V. Lessons Learned – Proposals with Problems

- Poor articulation of commitment and sensitivity to diversity issues that will shape the academic nursing role in the 21st century - in service to school of nursing, university and/or in research
 - For instance, how the research will help close health disparities/inequities is an important value to RWJF and to NFS – not necessary to speak to but helps make the case
- Poor articulation of plans for use of RWJF NFS resources for leadership development across domains in academic nursing
- Lack of vision about career trajectory and goals

V. Tips and Insights for Deans on Proposal Development

- Encourage candidate to write and re-write proposal
 - seek input of both mentors on proposal in plenty of time to rewrite and then polish
- Best proposals address the “So what?” question about the value of the research –
 - the proposed study does not have to be immediately transferable to health policy (!) but application can show how the study lays the foundation to do so (“this study is the appropriate next step in my program of research or research career that will eventually.....”)
- Total application – proposals, biosketch and letters of support - demonstrate candidate is laying foundation for leadership in scholarship, teaching, practice and service – as will need to for promotion
 - Direct practice if relevant (several NFS are NP’s) but at least contributes to practice

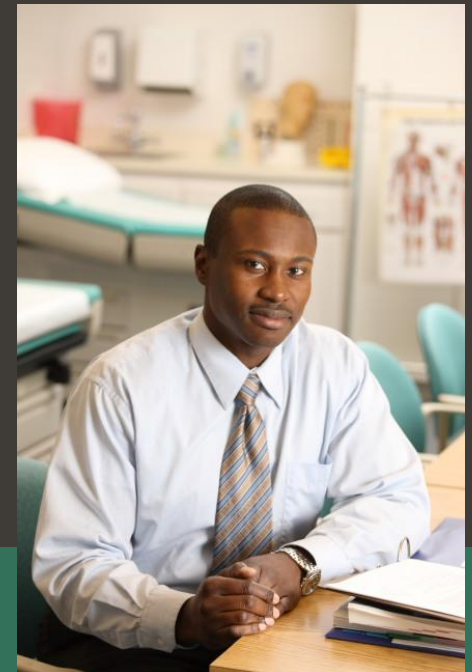
V. Tips and Insights for Deans on Proposal Development, continued

- Showcase how the proposed research will impact (or lay the foundation for a program of research that will do so) the health of Americans, nursing science, interdisciplinary research,
 - and/or translate nursing knowledge “from bench to bedside” with ability to show improved health outcomes
 - Be sure the proposed research is substantive – not described as a “pilot” – should need three full years of funding – be the scope of an R03 or R21 or K award type research
- Solid research plan with societal value; well-articulated and has relevance for health care and policy

Best Practice #6

Deans Establish An Effective Review Process

- Assist in the assembly of the candidate's review team
- Use internal research proposal review process if available
- Find and contact outside reviewers if needed - provide resources for outside review if necessary
- Establish an effective and timely review process
- Maintain communications with candidates and mentors



Best Practice #7

Deans Keep Abreast of Deadlines

Critical Dates for 2011

October 29, 2010	2011 Call for Proposals Released
October 30, 2010:	RWJF NFS presentation at the AACN Fall Dean's Meeting
February 8, 2010:	Anticipated due date for applications
May 17-19, 2011:	Semi-finalist interviews in Chicago
September 1, 2011:	2010 Grants begin
Sign up for RWJF alerts:	http://www.rwjf.org/services/

Online NFS Resources for Deans and Candidates

- Dean's Nomination Letter Template
- Provost's Institutional Support Letter Template
- Primary (Nursing) Mentor's Recommendation/Commitment Letter and Biographical Sketch
- Research Mentor's Recommendation/Commitment Letter and Biographical Sketch
- Letter of Recommendation Template
- FAQ's, individual email and telephone support from DD and Program Director

www.rwjfnursefaculty.com

Contact the NFS National Program Office via the helpdesk for additional information

NFS Contact Information for Deans and Candidates

Nurse Faculty Scholars Program National Program Office
Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

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Applicant Webinars

December 9, 2010 at 3 pm ET

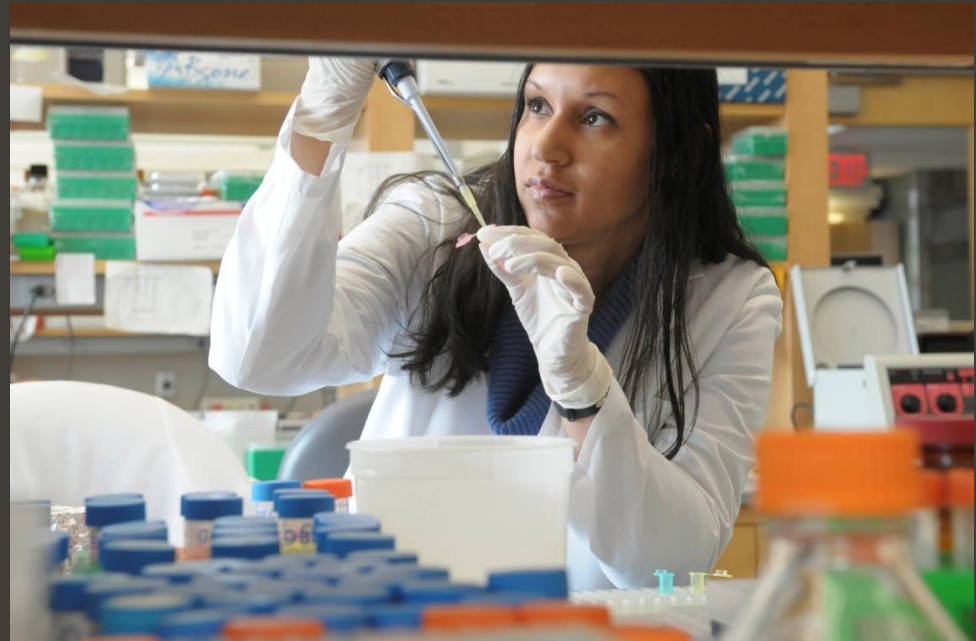
December 14, 2010 at 11:30 am ET

Please visit our website at www.rwjfnursfacultyscholars.org/events
to register

NFS Think Ahead Webinar

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank You!



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