

# 26<sup>th</sup> WORLD NURSING EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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## Concurrent enrollment: a new pathway to the baccalaureate degree in Nursing (BSN)

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**Statement of the Problem:** The number of Bachelor of Science (BSN) prepared Nurses in the United States has traditionally been low. Many Associate Degree Nurses (ADN) do not complete the BSN post ADN. Most of nursing programs in the U.S. are community college based ADN programs. The number of BSN prepared Nurses providing patient care is positively correlated to improved patient outcomes. It is from this need of low BSN completion rates and a need for more BSN Nurses that a new academic pathway was created in 2011. In this new program the ADN student is concurrently enrolled in a partner university BSN program resulting in graduating with both an ADN and BSN at the same time.

**Findings:** Initial barriers included a sense of competition between the community colleges and university, a concern that the program would be too rigorous and intense causing high attrition for the concurrently enrolled student, and funding concerns. These perceived barriers were overcome. Partnerships between several community colleges and the university have resulted in a highly successful program that enjoys an ever-increasing high enrollment rate and low attrition. Faculty at all institutions work collaboratively together in the admission, financial aid and instructional process resulting in an increased number of BSN prepared Nurses and serving as a model curriculum pathway for other community colleges and universities. The concurrent enrollment program has been a major success in the State of Arizona. Since inception of the program in 2011 more than 750 students have completed both the ADN and BSN through this creative and innovative curriculum. There are currently 800 students enrolled in the program at 12 rural and urban partner community colleges.

### Biography

Doshier is an Associate Professor, the former Associate Dean of the School of Nursing at Northern Arizona University and co-founder of Arizona's CEP. Wederski is an Associate Clinical Professor and the current program coordinator for RN/BSN education in the School of Nursing at Northern Arizona University.

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