

# The Work Learning Program (WLP): Supporting career development in psychiatric-mental health nursing

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# Disclosures

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The speakers have no conflicts of interest to disclose

# Learning Outcomes

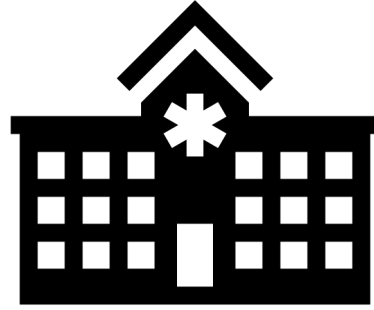
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Upon completion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the components of a Work Learning Program
2. Discuss the challenges and opportunities in implementing such a program

*“Transforming health care is a formidable challenge that can only be met through a coordinated response from academic and practice leaders from across the health professions.”*

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
Manatt Health Project Team Report (2016)



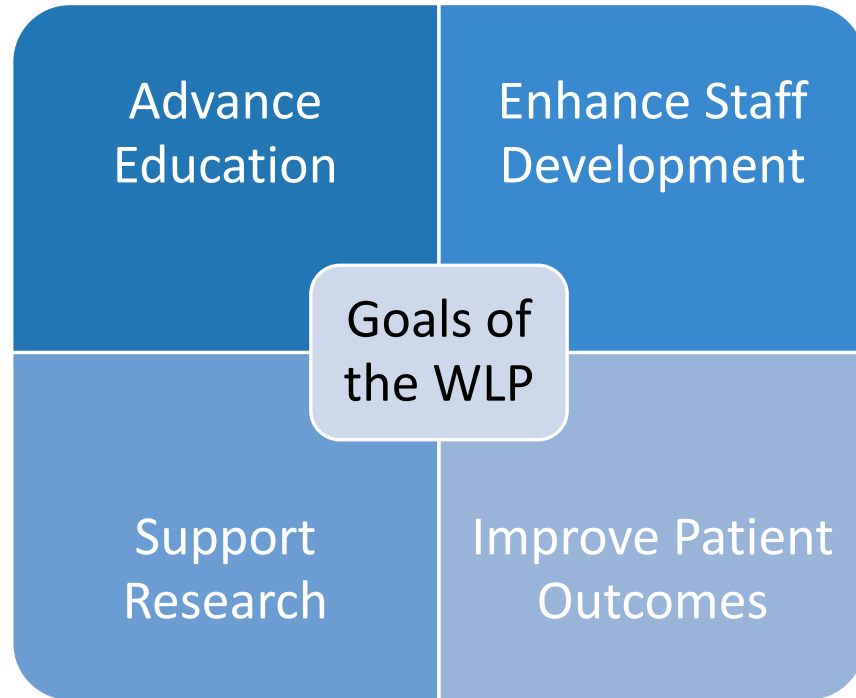
**41.1%** of healthcare settings require new hires to have a bachelor’s degree in nursing (BSN)



**82.4%** of employers express a strong preference for BSN program graduates

**Academic-practice partnerships** are an opportunity to support nursing professional development and career advancement

# The Work Learning Program (WLP)



## Components:

- 1) Space for learning
- 2) Smooth transition from work to work/school
- 3) Creating a sense of belonging
- 4) Program coordination
- 5) Program commitment



# Components & Resources

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**1) Space for learning:** a dedicated room with furnishings and a computer for online class lectures and assignment completion



**2) Smooth transition from work to school:**

- Orientation, study support information and links
- Dedicated faculty mentorship
- Workshops on professional and educational topics
- Set of on-site course textbooks in dedicated WLP learning space

# Components & Resources

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## **3) Creating a sense of belonging:**

- Students complete their courses as a team
- Collaboration during weekly study times
- Workshops to showcase student projects
- WLP student scrubs
- “Check-in” meetings

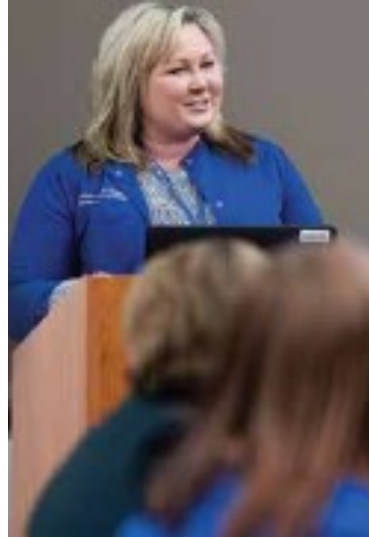


## **4) Provide program coordination:**

- Program coordinator assistance throughout program
- Faculty mentors
- Peer mentors/tutors

## **5) Offer program commitment:**

- Credit hours are covered as employee benefit
- Up to 2 hours/week as paid coursework time
- Job commensurate with academic achievement upon program completion



# 1st Cohort: RN to BSN (2017-2019)

## Overview

11 applicants, 4 accepted for pilot cohort

3 nurses successfully completed BSN coursework within 1.5 years





# A Student Success Story..

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*"I felt like getting through the BSN program would be pretty stressful while working full time, but when I heard about the Work Learning Program I thought it would be a great opportunity. Studying with my peers and discussing the class work with people that were going through the same course load was extremely helpful." – Johna, BSN, RN*

Promoted to Patient Care Manager during WLP  
Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honors Society, 2019  
Current WLP DNP Student

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Cohort: WLP Doctoral Program

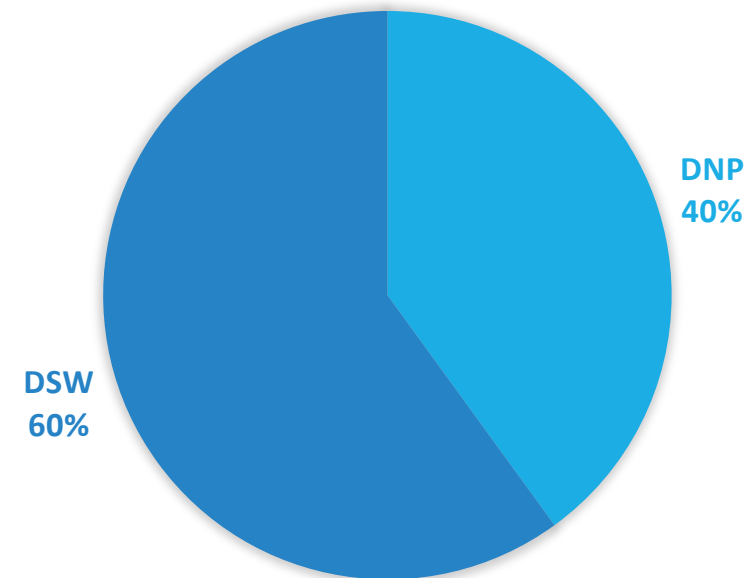
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ESH WLP Doctoral Program commenced Summer 2020 with a total of 10 doctoral students

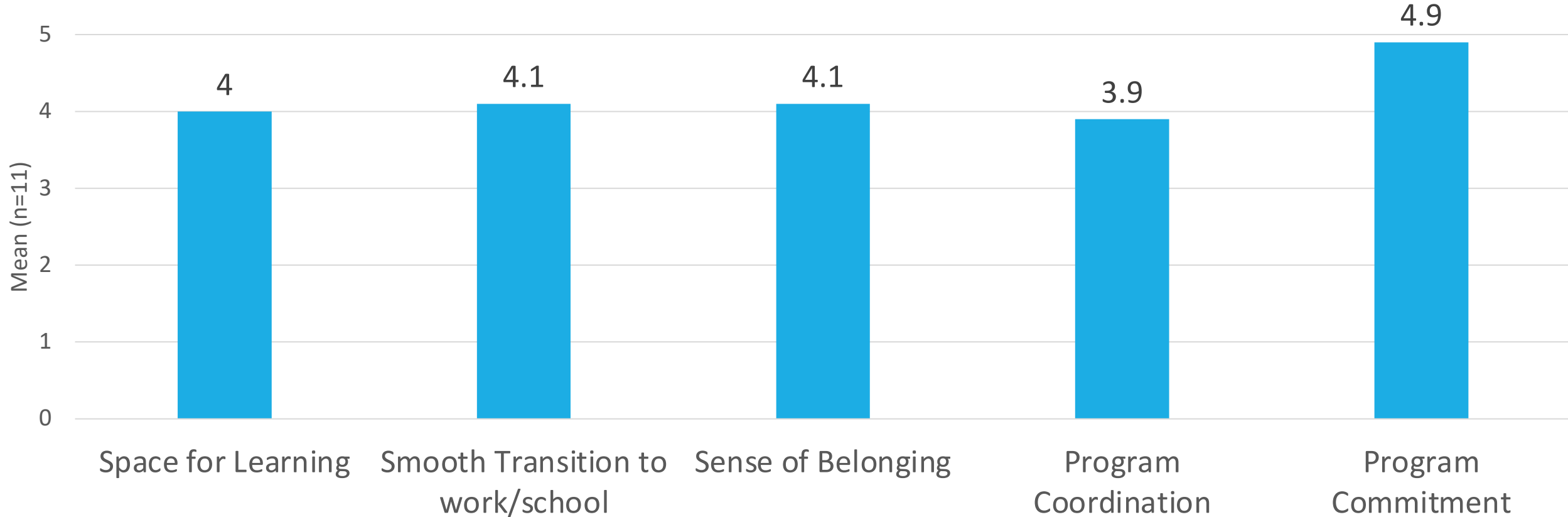
4 Nursing Students: BSN/RN to DNP

6 Social Work Students: MSW to DSW

**STUDENT DISTRIBUTION**

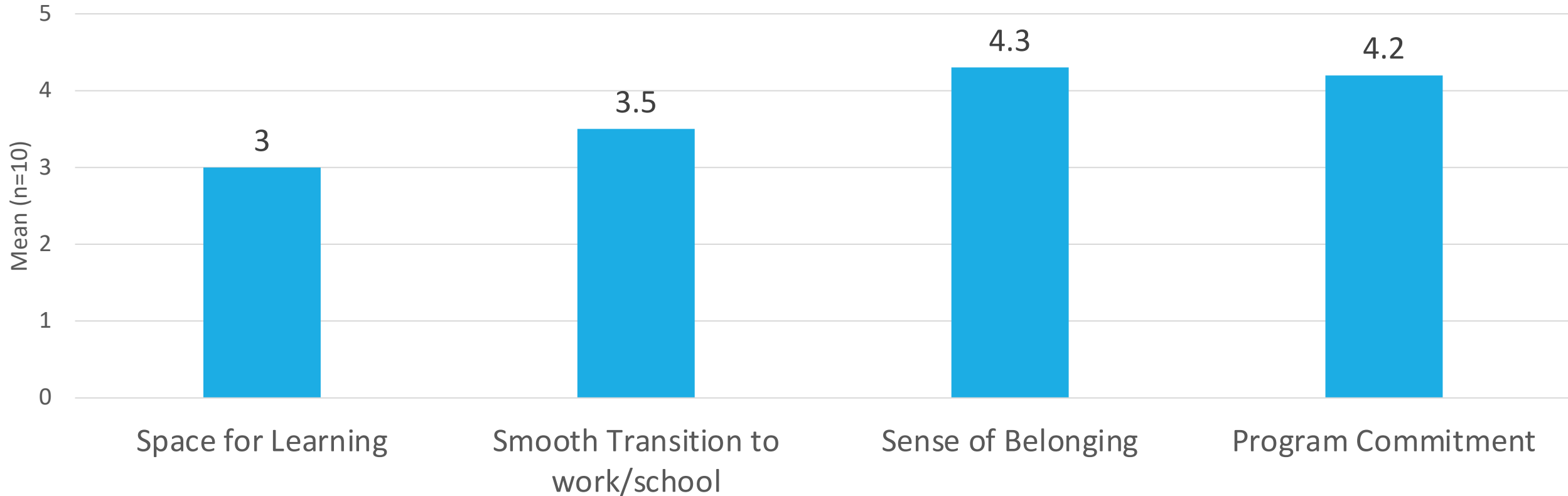


# Pre-Semester Survey: Rating of Usefulness of WLP Program Elements



“On a scale of 0 being ‘not at all beneficial’ to 5 being ‘extremely beneficial’, to what extent do you anticipate that the following components may enhance your experience in your DSW or DNP program through the WLP opportunity..”

# Post-Semester Survey: Rating of Usefulness of WLP Program Elements



“Please rate on a scale of 0 being ‘not helpful at all’ to 5 being ‘extremely helpful’, to what extent the following WLP components, whether provided in person or remotely, enhanced your experience in your DSW or DNP program last semester..”

# Summary & Future Implications

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## **Relevance to Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing:**

- 3 ADN-prepared psychiatric nurses completed the WLP and obtained their BSN
- Supportive components of WLP program included the study room and peer mentor/tutor
- Current WLP Doctoral program includes nurses and social workers caring for psychiatric patients

## **Future Implications:**

- Evaluation of student needs and suggestions to improve WLP program in future semesters
- Application of this model to different nursing professional levels (e.g. pre- and post-licensure)

# References

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