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Leading with courage and wisdom

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Rapid changes have taken place in American higher education. The public expects higher education to be academically and socially responsible and accountable. Funding for higher education, especially in public universities is limited. Changed student populations require newer ways of higher education by taking into account the rapidly developing technology. Students expect accessible, affordable, flexible, and high quality education so that their investment in higher education would have a good return such as a career, and/ or the ability to advance in their field of studies. Higher education market is becoming highly competitive as potential students desire to select universities that add values to their investment. These contexts/factors influence academic nursing. Academic nursing encompasses the integration of practice, education, and research within baccalaureate and graduate schools/colleges of nursing. Faculty engaged in academic nursing demonstrate a commitment to inquiry, generate new knowledge for the discipline, connect practice with education, and lead scholarly pursuit that improve health and healthcare (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2016). In healthcare, a time of uncertainty, an increase of healthcare complexity, a shortage of nurses and primary care physicians, and challenges of healthcare finances, while aging of populations coupled with chronic illnesses need coordinated, comprehensive, and affordable care. Academic nursing leaders have to be nimble to prepare a caring, compassion, and competent nursing workforce that meet needs of an ever-changing healthcare environment. This paper will focus on how to lead with courage and wisdom as thought leaders to inspire a shared vision, execute workable strategies, seek opportunities, build academic practice partnerships, negotiate needed resources, manage uncertainties, and sustain and advance mission and goals of academic nursing.