

Editorial

The *stricto sensu* graduate programs are recognized by society and public bodies as excellence in university teaching. It is considered by the scientific community to be the most successful higher education level in the country.

For approximately 40 years, the system of higher education in Brazil relied exclusively on the modality of the Academic Master's. The first Professional Master's courses only began to be offered in the final years of the 1990s. The implementation of this new modality had as one of its principle objectives the demands of qualification of the professionals working in the areas linked to the world of work.

Its *raison d'être* is to respond to a need for different training, and it does not constitute, in any way, a more or less rigorous alternative to the exacting standards adopted by the Academic modality.

Beginning in 2009, with the relevant legislation, the Professional Master's gained momentum in several practice areas, including in nursing. Despite this considerable increase, the number is still small compared to the Academic Master's: in 2012, it represented 6% of the *stricto sensu* post-graduate programs in the area of nursing.

For educational institutions that offer an academic master's, the decision to initiate the professional master's is still controversial. They weigh in the decision the vocation of the institution and the composition of the permanent body of faculty, which is composed primarily of academics or professionals working in the world of work.

In educational institutions that will initiate the activities of the master's, many discussions should be conducted to analyze which modality would take advantage of the characteristics of the institution, especially its innovative character in the area of health and in technological development.

At my institution, we chose the professional master's, believing that our role was to transmit knowledge and to share research results and products of the students with other health services. This exchange permits the advancement and dissemination of nursing practice, as well as producing new ways of caring and managing in health.

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