

## SoTL Grant Application Form

**(2015-2016)**

**To be considered for funding, your research proposal must align with the following definition of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, SoTL, endorsed by the University Faculty Council in January of 2014:**

*"The rigorous investigation of student learning, with the purpose of developing novel teaching methodologies and practices that can lead to the measurable enhancement of student learning. The results of the investigation are made public through quality scholarly outlets and widely-accepted conferences and general or discipline-specific journals."*

Proposals are due to the Office for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by **Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015** and should be [submitted online](#). Award recipients will be notified by Tuesday October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Funded recipients will need to submit a final report for the grant project to TLA by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

### I. Basic Information

Title of Project: Experiences of Masters Entry to Nursing Practice Program Students in a Curriculum using a Community-based Service Learning Pedagogy

#### Investigator(s) Information

##### **Principal Investigator:**

Name: Karen Larimer PhD, ACNP-BC, FAHA  
 College: College of Science and Health  
 Department: School of Nursing  
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##### **Other Investigators (Co-Pi):**

Name	College	Department
Jonathan Handrup, MS		Steans Center
Kathleen Rylance DNP, APN, CNP	CSH	SON
Jaclyn Houston, MA		Steans Center
Alita Yoder, BA	CSH	SON

For each investigator, please include an abbreviated CV using the SoTL grant CV template.

Will your project involve human subjects?  Yes  No

If Yes, you must include evidence of IRB approval or exemption, or of having applied for IRB approval or exemption. Please note that before any granted funding can be made available, you will be required to provide evidence of IRB approval or exemption.

## **Requested Funds**

Amount Requested (up to \$2,500): \$2,500

## **II. Project Abstract**

Community-based Service Learning (CbSL) is a pedagogical model that is used in many academic settings. In 2012, The School of Nursing adopted this model and implemented CbSL through the entire curriculum spanning 7 quarters and 112 hours of service. However, there remains uncertainty about the value to the nursing student. Therefore, the purpose of this proposed project is to determine what is the experience of the MENP student in a nursing program where CbSL is embedded throughout the curriculum? In this project we propose to survey 3 cohorts of students in the Masters Entry to Nursing Practice Program to better understand their experiences in courses with CbSL. Using a phenomenologic approach, we believe we open the window to all possibilities of answers. Participant responses will allow the researchers and educators to make recommendations concerning the program that may improve or add to the value of CbSL as a pedagogical tool. It is important that we understand the student experience so that we can deliver the best program possible.

## **III. Project Description:**

### **Purpose**

In Fall 2012 DePaul University's School of Nursing faculty adopted Community-based Service Learning (CbSL) as a curricular innovation in its Masters Entry to Nursing Practice (MENP) Program. CbSL is a dynamic, collaborative process whereby faculty, students and community-based organizations partner to link student learning with service to the community. Students are involved in meeting community needs while applying the experiences to their personal and academic development as well as applying their academic learning to their community experience. The CbSL student experience features intentional learning objectives and structured reflection assignments that align with these objectives. In this model for graduate education, the desired outcome of such service is the enhancement of student learning (Narsavage, Lindell, Chen, Savrin, & Duffy, 2002).

This level of community engagement is deeply resonant with the Vincentian mission of DePaul University as well as being supported by the Pew Health Professions Commission's recommendation that nursing programs include CbSL (Callister & Hobbins-Garbett, 2000). This pedagogical innovation, which is clearly distinct from the student's nursing clinical practica experience, not only gives students an improved awareness of an individuals' lived environment but also a comprehensive and first-hand exposure to the social and physical determinants of health in a community as emphasized in Healthy People 2020 (Healthy People 2020, 2014).

With these motivators in play, faculty believe that becoming a professional nurse should entail more than technical proficiency working at the bedside. Emphasis on nursing of the whole person and her/his community is supported by the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2010). It acknowledges that nursing students must learn beyond the classroom and simulation lab in diverse communities wherein much indigenous knowledge can complement the student's education. Our goal is to produce nurses who are prepared to lead innovations to deliver quality care in diverse communities by knowledge of and sensitivity to socioeconomic and cultural dimensions as well as physical determinants of health.

This curricular innovation involved the School of Nursing's partnership with DePaul University's Steans Center for Community-based Service Learning, whose staff identify appropriate community partners to host the nursing students. Community partners include non-profit entities that provide services and/or undertake advocacy efforts related to health and wellness in underserved Chicagoland communities. The Steans Center also provides consultation on faculty development including, but not limited to, course-based curricular development.

Each student in the initial cohort (2012) completed 80 hours of CbSL with the same community partner. This occurred over the course six of their seven MENP program quarters. In Fall 2015 in addition to a course program shift, the school saw fit to increase this curricular commitment to 112 CbSLs over 7 quarters of an 8 quarter curriculum. Partnered with the same community organization for all 7 quarters, allows a deepening of the relationship and experience that can only occur over time. This is a sizable initiative which continually engages over 300 over two campuses (LPC and RFU) each in 112 hours of CbSL, totaling over 15,000 hours of knowledge-based, graduate level community engaged service learning per year. Course objectives for these identified courses are tied to assignments that, when successfully completed, demonstrate achievement of those objectives. As the program progresses the depth and breadth of the experience, and learning of the student, is expected to increase which is consistent with the Community Engagement at the School of Nursing Model.

While this pedagogical model has been used in many academic settings, there remains uncertainty about the value to the nursing student. Therefore, the purpose of this proposed project is to determine what is the experience of the MENP student in a nursing program where CbSL is embedded throughout the curriculum? Using this phenomenologic approach, we believe we open the window to all possibilities of answers. Participant responses will allow the researchers and educators to make recommendations concerning the program that may improve or add to the value of CbSL as a pedagogical tool. It is important that we understand the student experience so that we can deliver the best program possible.

Answers to this question will also give information on whether the program is meeting or not meeting one of the four desired outcomes of CbSL: enhance the understanding and appreciation of health as having a community focus, influenced by social and physical determinants as described in Healthy People 2020.

### Theoretical Framework

There is increasing evidence that CbSL enhances students' classroom experience. According to Jones, Ivanov, Wallace, and VonCannon, (2010), CbSL differs from community service and internships in that community service focuses on the entities served and internships focus on the student's needs. As a pedagogical approach, CbSL combines service in a real-world setting with learning objectives, preparation and evaluation, and processing during reflection (Riner & Becklenberg, 2001).

What distinguishes CbSL from traditional classroom based learning or experiential learning is the connection to civic outcomes. According to Motley and Sturgill (2014) students become more aware of their beliefs and practices and those of others and how they can contribute to a more socially just society. It is also widely documented that CbSL makes substantial progress in career development, self-efficacy, interpersonal and leadership skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills and develop a stronger sense of self (Peterson, Wardwell, Will, Campana, 2014). The CbSL focus embeds teaching and learning in a social context bigger than a classroom and involves an organized service activity with structured reflection to guide students' learning (Sheafer, 2014). However, most of this has been explored in a non-nursing curriculum.

The benefits that prospective nurses receive from involvement in CbSL courses are multi-faceted. Sheifer and Vaughn (2002) conclude that CbSL enhances students' visions of what it means to be a nurse, citizen, and a community member. When compared to non-CbSL courses that focus only on the clinical aspects of nursing, students exposed to CbSL become well-rounded people. Thus, they are more effective nurses. The model of CbSL employed health-care related courses involving students with community groups, as volunteer, where they were 'giving' service to their community and gaining learning about people comprising that community in return (Roskill, White, Bonner, and Fairchild, 2012, p.449).

Some of the potential benefits of CbSL to nursing students include: fostering respect for others (Blackwell, 2008), promoting professional communication (Reams, 2003), exposure to diverse populations (Blackwell, 2008), experience with complex challenges that require prioritization skills (Jackson, Leadbetter, Manley, Martin, and Wright, 2015), opportunity to practice leadership skills (Foli, Braswell, Kilpatrick and Lim, 2014), and modeling of professional conduct (Foli et al., 2014).

Health care is moving to the community level and away from a hospital setting, CbSL in a nursing program seeks to prepare prospective nurses for this shift. Greater exposure on the community level is paramount. Without the presence of a greater community requirement in nursing curriculum, nursing will struggle going from a clinical setting to a community setting (Ezeonwu, 2013).

## References

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Blackwell, C. (2008). Meeting the Objectives of Community-based Nursing Education. *Service-eLearning: Educating for Citizenship*.

Callister L.C. and Hobbins-Garbett D.J. (2000). "Enter to learn, go forth to serve": service learning in nursing education. *J of Prof Nurs*,16(3), 177-83.

Ezeonwu, M., Berkowitz, B., & Vlasses, F. R. (2014). Using an Academic-Community Partnership Model and Blended Learning to Advance Community Health Nursing Pedagogy. *Public Health Nursing*, 31(3), 272-280.

Foli, K. J., Braswell, M., Kirkpatrick, J., & Lim, E. (2014). Development of leadership behaviors in undergraduate nursing students: A service-learning approach. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 35(2), 76-82.

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Reams, P. (2003). Service Learning in Health Care Higher Education: Risk or Not to Risk. *Education For Health: Change In Learning & Practice (Taylor & Francis Ltd)*, 16(2), 145.

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### Research Methodology

*Design.* A descriptive qualitative approach will be used with multiple points of data collection. This approach is appropriate as we seek to understand the meaning of student responses in the context of their experience from quarter to quarter throughout the academic year. This methodology includes data collection, coding and data analysis. The sample will consist of students in the MENP Program (as described earlier) at both the Lincoln Park Campus as well as the Rosalind Franklin Campus. Specifically, all students participating in the MENP Program at DePaul University, that enter Fall 2015, Winter 2016 and Spring 2016. This will include approximately 200 students (dependent on attrition).

*Data Collection.* Students will complete paper surveys on the last day of class for each quarter in courses where CbSL is incorporated (see figure 1). The survey will ask two questions which require a written narrative response: 1) "What aspects of the service learning experience did you benefit or learn from the most? Explain." 2) "What, if anything, do you recommend to improve the service learning experience? Explain." The survey is anonymous and will only be identified by the course and section that it was administered. Investigators, with support of courses instructors, will administer and retrieve the survey during allotted class time.

*Data Analysis.* A data-driven approach using content analysis will be utilized to describe the common experiences of participants. This approach allows researchers to create a category system that links interviews and themes together in a systematic way (Burnard, 1991). The responses will be examined line by line to identify themes and create an initial heading structure within the codebook. The codebook will keep a list of codes and their definitions and will be used to code each transcript. The primary investigator and a qualitative researcher will code the transcripts separately. The coded transcripts will then be compared and any

discrepancies in coding discussed until the coders agree and their decisions will be documented in the codebook. Next, the coded transcripts will be compared for similarities and differences to provide thematic study results. Dedoose, a qualitative research software platform, we will work efficiently and securely with large amounts of qualitative data. It also allows us to collaborate seamlessly with the research team. In addition we can explore and analyze data intuitively and thoroughly. While not a primary objective of the study, a secondary objective will be to separately analyze the LPC cohort and the RFU cohort to explore if the themes from the combined data set accurately represent the two campuses.

*Trustworthiness.* The PI will use several strategies to ensure trustworthiness of the data that follow recommendations by Morrow (2005) to reduce subjectivity and increase authenticity. First, by having a second coder and reaching consensus among the two coders, the quality and trustworthiness of the process will be improved and the subjective bias decreased. We will also implement strategies to increase authenticity, which is demonstrated through being open to different perspectives (i.e., fairness; Morrow, 2005) and refining themes based on participants' experiences based on the analytic process (Morrow, 2005). In the present study, coders will stay close to the data (i.e., following the system of analysis; authenticity) and being open to different views and experiences to capture multiple perspectives, allowing the process to be improved and recreated as more data are collected and incorporated (Morrow, 2005; Morrow, 2007). In addition, direct quotations from the participants' responses will be used to support the generated themes.

### References

- Burnard, P. (1991). A method of analyzing interview transcripts in qualitative research. *Nurse Education Today*, 11, 461-466.
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 250-260.
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### Impact of Project

The impact of this project will be to generate recommendations to improve CbSL in the MENP Program. It will also serve to begin a process of evaluation for additional scholarship and service of the applicants by allowing resources to advance CbSL in the MENP Program. Preparing nursing students for the future of healthcare requires an educational model that goes beyond lectures, textbooks, practica, and labs. It requires that students have a more holistic view of health and in particular the social determinants of health. The University's Vincentian Mission and the future of healthcare education are consistent in the emphasis of service and learning. The best way to enable this learning is through CbSL. Just as more and more universities are requiring their students to take a service-learning course, in the not too distant future we anticipate that a majority of nursing schools will involve students in community engagement through CbSL and DePaul will be a leader in this work.

### Dissemination of Results

*Possible options for dissemination of results:*

- DePaul University Annual Teaching and Learning Conference, Spring 2016
- Community Campus Partnerships in Health Conference, Spring 2016
- Journal of Nursing Education

#### IV. Project Plan and Timeline

Describe the proposed project plan and timeline. \*Please note all 2015-2016 grant funds need to be used by the end of the fiscal year.

Figure 1

Quarter	Course	Survey Administration	Data Analysis	Abstract/Paper
Fall 2015	N431	Week of 11/15/15	Dec. 2015	
Winter 2016	N431 N400	Week of 3/15/16	April 2015	Jan. 2016 submit poster CCPH  Winter 2016 submit proposal to DPU T and L Conference
Spring 2016	N431 N400 N302	Week of 5/30/16	June 2016	June 2016 submit paper Journal Nursing Education  Fall 2016 present data to SON faculty

#### V. Budget

Provide a detailed, itemized budget of how proposed funds will be used. If applicable, provide information about any external funds you have secured for this project and/or matching funds from DePaul University (including in-kind contributions).

**Dedoose Software**, \$10.95/month per user. Two users for 7 months: \$153.30

Software platform for data entry and analysis

**Research Assistant**, wages and benefits: \$1,720

Survey distribution and collection

**Campus Community Partners in Health conference**, May 2016: \$626.70

Partial reimbursement for registration, flight, accommodations

**TOTAL requested amount:** \$2,500