September 16, 2013

Robert McKinney, Director
Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development

Dear Mr. McKinney,

Please consider the attached Faculty Development Grant proposal to fund the “Critical Thinking and Test Item Writing” workshop for new and continuing faculty. Since I am submitting the proposal, I have included a letter of support from Dean Poirrier. Please feel free to contact me if any additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Lisa Broussard, RN, DNS, CNE
Acadian Ambulance Endowed Professor in Nursing
Dr. Donald B. Williams/BORSF Professorship in Nursing
Department Head and Associate to the Dean
University of Louisiana at Lafayette College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions

Broussard
Faculty Development Grant

“Critical Thinking and Test Item Writing Workshop for Nurse Educators”

Submitted by:
Dr. Lisa Broussard, Department Head for Nursing
College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions

Fall 2013
Abstract

The Department of Nursing consistently ranks among the top nursing programs in the U.S. in pass rates on the NCLEX-RN© licensure exam. Graduate students enrolled in the family nurse practitioner program also consistently demonstrate pass rates above the departmental benchmarks and national averages on their certification exam. Preparation of students is linked to both classroom and clinical experiences, with a major emphasis on performance on both instructor-made and national standardized exams. In order to continue this pattern of success, it is vital that faculty receive initial and continuing education on item writing and test construction. Over the past ten years, the majority of new faculty who have joined the department have been prepared at the master’s level as nurse practitioners, with no formal background in nursing education. In order to ensure that undergraduate and graduate nursing faculty have the knowledge, skills, and ability to develop rigorous exams and to be able to evaluate student performance on these exams, a nationally recognized speaker will present a one-day workshop on item writing and test construction. This will provide new and continuing faculty with the most up-to-date information on testing of students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.
Project Description

The purpose of the project is to provide nursing faculty with knowledge, skills and ability to develop rigorous exams based on sound testing and measurement principles. At the end of this one-day workshop, faculty will have an understanding of techniques for writing test questions which stimulate critical thinking, as well as evaluation methods related to exam reliability and validity.

Statement of Need

The Department of Nursing has a long history of exceptional performance on licensure exams for undergraduate students and certification exams for those completing the nurse practitioner program. Students at both levels engage in a wide array of clinical experiences and receive didactic content in a face-to-face environment at the undergraduate level and online for graduate students. Evaluation of student performance in the didactic portion of nursing courses is achieved primarily by instructor-constructed exams. End-of-course and end-of-program national standardized exams are administered to students, but successful completion of the program must be demonstrated by a passing course grade on instructor-constructed exams. Therefore, it is vital that all nursing faculty are proficient in developing high quality test questions, and have the ability to analyze student performance on individual test questions as well as the exam as a whole.

Over the past 10 years, the Department of Nursing has experienced tremendous growth. While enrollment in the traditional BSN program remains high, the launch of the accelerated, online RN to BSN program in 2012 has resulted in an exponential increase in undergraduate student numbers. Enrollment in the nurse practitioner program is increasing each semester as the demand for advanced practice nurses continues to grow. Additionally, the first cohort of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program began in Fall 2012, with the Department now offering degrees at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels. This rapid growth has resulted in an increase in the number of faculty needed to meet the needs of so many students. Recruiting efforts for new faculty have resulted in hiring practices which mirror those of new Broussard
faculty across the U.S.; those entering into higher education who are prepared at either the master’s or doctoral level have received their post-baccalaureate education as advanced practice nurses rather than nurse educators. Consequently, they have little or no background in evaluation of student learning, including principles of testing and measurement.

In the past, university funds were available to send new faculty to national conferences related to test construction. With budget cuts that have been imposed on all departments, there are no longer resources available to send new faculty to costly conferences. In order to continue to achieve the exceptional outcomes that have come to be expected of graduates of the nursing program, it is imperative that faculty receive professional development related to testing theories and principles. Rather than incur heavy costs that are no longer sustainable to send faculty to national workshops, funds are being requested to have a nationally known speaker come to campus to provide an interactive, one-day workshop with nursing faculty.

Academic Consulting Group® is a service of Elsevier, Inc. that provides workshops to nursing programs on a wide range of relevant topics. At the beginning of the Spring 2014 semester, Dr. Susan Sportsman, Director of this consulting group, will provide a one-day workshop for all nursing faculty titled “Critical Thinking and Test Item Writing”. Dr. Sportsman has a long history of excellence in nursing education, and was recently selected as a Fellow in the National League for Nursing Academy of Nurse Educators. The workshop will enable nursing faculty to improve their test item writing skills, considering five guidelines for developing critical thinking test items and using a scientific method for evaluating the effectiveness of test items. Faculty will practice revising test questions with the goal of increasing students’ critical thinking.

**Plan and Timetable**

On February 6, 2014, Dr. Susan Sportsman will present a workshop titled “Item Writing and Test Construction for Nurse Educators”. The Louisiana State Board of Nursing requires that all registered
nurses receive continuing education credits each year for renewal. At the end of this workshop, faculty will receive 4.3 continuing education credits.

**Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Departmental Contribution</th>
<th>Grant Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Consulting Group Fees</td>
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<td>• Speaker Honorarium (includes cost of continuing education credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Travel Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop Costs</td>
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<td>• Printing and Duplication</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Lisa Broussard

Education

- 2000–2006 LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA
  Doctorate of Nursing Science
- 1989–1991 LSU Medical Center, New Orleans, LA
  MN, Master’s in Nursing
- 1981–1985 University of Southwestern LA, Lafayette, LA
  BSN, Bachelor of Science in Nursing

July, 2011- Current University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Laf, LA
Department Head and Associate to the Dean, Department of Nursing

- Responsible for overseeing all activities related to Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Programs

2007-present University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA
Assistant Professor

- Semester Coordinator, Community and Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing
- Master Teacher, Pediatric Nursing
- Chair, Program Evaluation Committee
- School Health Consultant, Picard Center for Child Development and Lifelong Learning

Professional Affiliations

- Louisiana Statewide Simulation Faculty Development Program, 2013- Workshop Facilitator
- Louisiana State Nurses Association, District IV, member
- American Nurses Association, member

- Sigma Theta Tau, Delta Eta Chapter, President, 2012-2014
- Sigma Theta Tau, Delta Eta Chapter, Vice President, 2007-2011
- Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Member
- National Association of School Nurses, member
- Louisiana School Nurse Organization, member
- Southern Nursing Research Society, member
- Southern Obesity Summit Planning Committee Member, 2011
- Louisiana Council of Administrators of Nursing Education, Member, 2011-present

**Awards/Certifications**
- ULearn Certified Online Teacher, University of Louisiana at Lafayette Office of Distance Learning, August 2012
- Poster Presentation, First Place Award for “Clinical Practice”, “Conducting Root Cause Analysis with Nursing Students During Simulation”, June 21, 2012, 11th Annual Nursing Simulation Conference, San Antonio, TX
- Grants Reviewer, “Improving Patient Safety Through Simulation Research (R18)- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Fall 2010

**Grants**
Publications


Presentations

- Poster Presentation: “Conducting Root Cause Analysis with Nursing Students During Simulation”, April 26, 2013. Louisiana State Nurses Association Link to the Legislature, Baton Rouge, LA

- Podium Presentation: “Scaling and Sustaining an Online, Accelerated RN to BSN Program: Perils, Pitfalls, and Promises”, April 12, 2013. American Association of Colleges of Nursing Hot Issues Conference, St. Louis, MO


- Poster Presentation: “Conducting Root Cause Analysis with Nursing Students During Simulation”, June 21, 2012, 11th Annual Nursing Simulation Conference, San Antonio, TX,


- Podium Presentation: “The Use of University Partnerships to Improve Student Health” October 3, 2011, Southern Obesity Summit, New Orleans, LA