



Division of Nursing

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Dear Dr. Cary and the AACN Membership Committee:

I respectfully submit a nomination on behalf of Siena Heights University for an Innovation in Professional Nursing Education Award. A small school by AACN definition, Siena Heights Nursing Program graduates 14-22 pre-licensure students and 25-35 RNs each academic year. Founded by the Adrian Dominican Sisters in 1919, Siena Heights added the nursing major in 2008. Across the past seven years, energetic MSN faculty have created and implemented a curriculum that meets the needs of the university and health care community. One of the most creative courses in the Siena Heights pre-licensure program is entitled *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning*. This course stimulates great student and faculty learning, and created positive learning outcomes among three unique disciplines – theatre, social work, and nursing. The *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning* course is the reason I nominate Siena Heights University for the **Innovations in Professional Nursing Education Small School Award**.

Project Summary:

Siena Heights University has offered a traditional pre-licensure program since 2008. After two years, the curriculum was evaluated and redesigned. Decisions were based upon faculty analysis of student learning. Students were struggling to incorporate critical thinking into clinical reasoning, identified through analysis of clinical paperwork and through analysis of formative and summative program exam scores. The curricular analysis and redesign became a catalyst for change. The curricular redesign included a new course with multiple simulations. The course is entitled *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning*. Course assessment includes analysis of evidence based articles in patient care; reflective journals; several small scale simulations; and a final large scale simulation in week 14 of the semester. The final simulation is an interprofessional collaboration among three unique disciplines: theatre, social work, and nursing. The financial resources were minimal for this course. People fulfilled the major resource as interdisciplinary faculty designed the learning, and students performed as the caregivers, patients, and family members. This course stimulated great student and faculty learning; created positive learning outcomes among the three disciplines; and could easily be replicated. The *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning* course is worthy of the Small School Innovations Award.

Award Criteria:

Catalyst for change: The *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning* course did serve as a catalyst for change in two ways: 1. Within the nursing curriculum, because other faculty became energized to develop and implement simulation in other nursing courses; and 2. Through meeting the educational mission of Siena Heights "...a teaching and learning environment that respects the dignity of all" (SHU mission, 2012).

Potential for replication and dissemination: With minimal fiscal needs, the simulation can be implemented and replicated by other nursing faculty and staff.

Involved teams of faculty: A nursing faculty member led the creation of a three hour simulation course with two interdisciplinary faculty – a theatre faculty member and a social work faculty member. All three faculty were focused upon creativity, communication, and student success.

AACN Mission and Vision: This simulation innovation developed learning outcomes among nursing, theatre, and social work students – which fits the AACN mission through providing resources and the vision by leading innovation as students learn from one another about delivery of quality health care in a simulated setting.

Demonstrates advancement of professional nursing education: A simulation course with three different student disciplines advances professional nursing education in a very creative and cost effective manner.

Description of the project design:

Across the first two years of the Siena Heights pre-licensure program, the curriculum was implemented as designed. After year two, the faculty and I evaluated and redesigned the curriculum. We based our decisions upon faculty analysis of student learning. Students were struggling to incorporate critical thinking into clinical reasoning, identified through analysis of clinical paperwork and through analysis of formative and summative program exam scores. The curricular analysis and redesign became a catalyst for change. The change was to incorporate simulation into the pre-licensure curriculum.

The curricular redesign included a new course with multiple simulations. The course is entitled *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning*. Course assessment includes analysis of evidence based articles in patient care; reflective journals; several small scale simulations; and a final large scale simulation in week 14 of the semester. The final simulation is an interprofessional collaboration among three unique disciplines: theatre, social work, and nursing.

Kelli Kusisto was the faculty member who designed *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning*. In 2012, Kelli was chosen as one of 40 participants in a year-long Faculty Learning About Geriatrics (FLAG) program. This outstanding program was offered through the University of Minnesota's Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence. Kelli's project was the creation of the simulation course for Siena Heights. Kelli's immersion as a fellow in FLAG allowed her to create and implement simulation into a course. Her enthusiasm and examples became a catalyst for change, leading other faculty to embrace and include simulation into multiple courses. In creating the final simulation in the course, Kelli worked across eight months with two non-nursing professors: Mark DiPetro, a theatre professor, and Lynn Townsend, a social work professor. Two skills lab BSN prepared nurses, Cathy Emery and Jodi Hess were part of the entire course creation, lending skills lab expertise in simulation design. With Kelli as the group leader, the interprofessional simulation became reality. Taught successfully in fall, 2013 and fall, 2014, the *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning* Course is worthy of a Small School award from AACN.

Outcomes achieved:

The *Simulations in Clinical Reasoning* course occurs in the second of five semesters in the nursing major (fall semester, junior year. Three simulations are conducted across the entire semester of the course. The first two simulations were small scale, with lab personnel fulfilling

roles of the patient and other health care personnel. These simulations required active participation in small groups, including video debriefing and guided reflection post simulation.

Objectives of the live simulations included:

1. Provide a risk-free environment for student learners that reinforce critical thinking, reasoning and decision making
2. Enhance student's ability to promote patient safety and quality health care
3. Increase clinical competence through selected critical thinking scenarios
4. Improve performance, communication, and efficiency in clinical setting.
5. Encourage evidence based practice leading to improvement in clinical education
6. Promote evidence-based competent decision making for professional practice
7. Promote empowerment of the student in preparation for the clinical setting
8. Facilitate debriefing and positive feedback to enhance student learning
9. Encourage students to self-analyze their performance and use critical thinking during the reflection process
10. Provide opportunities to enhance caring behaviors towards peers and patients

The live interprofessional simulation in week 14 of the semester is the culmination of the course. A two hour long unfolding case study requires nursing students and social work students to interact in caring for an elderly patient and various family members (theatre students). Aspects of the case study and Student Self Evaluation were adapted with permission from the National League for Nursing Simulation resources (<http://sirc.nln.org/2005>). Other resources utilized in the simulation were the nursing skills laboratory; the faculty and staff; a video camera; and the students in various roles (nurses, social workers, patients, and family members). Each live simulation was video recorded and shared with the students for debriefing. Guided reflective journals were required after each debriefing. Liberal arts learning outcomes included *creativity*, *aesthetic learning*, and *critical thinking* for the theatre, social work, and nursing students.

The interdisciplinary simulation was unique to Siena Heights University. The project created excitement across campus as faculty from other disciplines inquired about the use of simulation to collectively enhance learning in a cost efficient and cost effective way. Theatre students, social work and nursing students engaged in peer-to-peer communication and collaboration to advance their individual outcomes and education. Specifically, all three disciplines, theatre, social work and nursing walked away with an appreciation for improving care for the vulnerable elder population. The entire experience provided an opportunity to address challenges and best practices in gerontology.

Sincerely,
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