

**U of S SoTL Cluster Charter
Regina Campus Nursing Faculty Cluster
March 14, 2017**

Description/Background:

The proposed research project will explore the perceptions of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) nursing students in Years 2-4 about the benefits and challenges of distributed synchronous learning at the Yorkton and Regina, SK campuses. The research findings will provide an enhanced understanding of the student experience in a unique simultaneous in-person and 'Learn Where You Live' distributive teaching mode as articulated by the nursing student participants. These findings will provide guidance in the revisions of the curriculum and development of teaching strategies to support the existing benefits and to address the challenges identified by participants. The ultimate goal is to create an effective and rewarding learning experience for both in-person and distributed site students based on the student insights offered in this project.

This proposal will also inform further 'distributive' study (namely Prince Albert and the northern campuses of Ile-a-la Crosse and LaRonge) and ultimately enhance understanding about how to promote a high quality University education in rural and remote contexts. For the purposes of this research, **distributive learning** is defined as the delivery of nursing theory courses that simultaneously include both students who are physically present (i.e., face to face) and students who participate synchronously via videoconference.

Cluster Lead (Academic Unit leader): Dr. Lynn Jansen

Members of the Cluster:

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Goals and projected timeline (specific Deliverables/Milestones) *bullet point please:*

Major Goal: To explore the perceptions of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) nursing students in Years 2-4 about the benefits and challenges of distributed synchronous learning at the Yorkton and Regina, SK campuses. This proposal will also inform further 'distributive' study in the College of Nursing (namely PA and the north)

Proposed Timeline:

- **May-July 2017** the research team will submit applications for ethics and operational approvals to the College of Nursing and University Research Ethics Board. Once these approvals are received, the research team will:
 - Hire a graduate student as a research assistant (RA) to conduct a literature review (with the assistance of a university librarian), focus groups, and key informant interviews. Faculty will provide the RA with key words and phrases to initially begin the literature search and will maintain ongoing support to the RA.
 - Purposively sample two (2) BSN nursing students from each year of the three-year program at both the Regina and Yorkton campuses for the focus groups to elicit information about their perceptions of and experience with challenges and opportunities of distributive learning. Students will be recruited on the basis of their willingness to participate as key informants to the research. Information from focus groups will be audiotaped and transcribed for analysis.
 - The focus groups will be co-led by a faculty member and the RA, neither of whom will have had prior involvement with the students in order to maintain an unbiased position.

- **September-December, 2017:**
 - The literature review will be completed and data from the focus groups will be analyzed by the Regina faculty. The findings of the literature review and the focus groups will provide the foundation for the development of a cross-sectional survey questionnaire focusing on simultaneous distributive learning evaluation from the perspective of undergraduate nursing students. Decisions will be made by Regina faculty prior to distribution of survey about steps for analysis, synthesis, and dissemination of results.

- **January 2018:**
 - The survey will be electronically distributed to all BSN nursing students at the Regina and Yorkton and analyzed according to previous decisions. The results will be distributed according to prior decisions but will include informing the Dean of Nursing and leadership team, developing publications and presentations for relevant journals and conferences.

Envisioned process (specify how the group will function; e.g., frequency and types of meetings, how you will monitor milestones,):

1. All faculty listed in this document will be involved as a member of the research team and participate in the design and process of the research;
2. The research team (faculty at Regina Campus, Yorkton, and the RA) will meet once every 4-6 weeks during 2017-2018 to update project progress;
3. The research team will review the key outcomes at each meeting; and
4. Determine next steps and outputs for the project.

Financial (specify how funding will be spent, can be high level criteria and processes for allocating funds rather than a specific budget; note any additional or matching funds):

Funds will be spent on:

- Hiring a graduate student RA and providing an honorarium to the librarian who assists with a literature review (\$4500);
- Travel to Yorkton to conduct focus groups and interviews (\$400); and providing lunch for students who participate in the focus groups (\$100)

NOTE: The team will discuss the options of hiring a transcriptionist and factor in the cost per hour of recorded time or using Dragon Naturally Speaking software (voice to text) for \$129.99 for student/teacher edition. The team will also make a decision about funds needed for survey imputation, data management, recruitment, data analysis if using SSRL, or hiring grad student to perform these tasks. The team would ask for a quote from SSRL before making a final decision.

Scope (Focus):

In Scope: (what is the intended focus of the Cluster)

To research and analyze the perceptions of both on-site and distributive recipient nursing students at Regina and Yorkton Campuses regarding their participation, experiences, and evaluation of simultaneous distributed learning.

Not In Scope: (what will NOT be included in the focus of the Cluster; limits on expenditures may be included here or in the Finances section.):

The faculty will not be examining the perceptions of faculty at Regina and Yorkton as there is/may be a conflict of interest if faculty are involved in the study.

Constraints, Assumptions, Risks and Dependencies of Note

Constraints	The Regina and Yorkton campuses are small. It will be important to have faculty and an RA who have not taught the nursing students facilitate the focus group. It will be important to have faculty who have not taught the nursing students to interview the nursing students to maintain a degree of distance and reduce the perception of researcher bias from the perspective of nursing students.
Assumptions	Based on informal feedback, most faculty believe that there are challenges and opportunities with distributive learning that affect nursing students' learning outcomes. The results of this study have an implication for teaching in the College of Nursing, as it employs distributive learning is used throughout the province. The Dean of Nursing will be kept informed about the research and its findings. The Regina Faculty assume that ethics approval will be received and that students from both sites (Regina and Yorkton) will agree to participate in the research project.
Risks and Dependencies	Generally a low risk project. Data would be anonymized to protect the identity of participants. However, due to the fact that participants will be located at a small campus in Yorkton, only limited confidentiality can be offered during focus group interviews. This risk would be explained during the informed consent process, with participants encouraged to refrain from disclosing any details of the information shared with individual outside of the study sample.