

## **SAMPLE Statement of Need**

The present nursing shortage has been labeled as the worst shortage since the 1980's, and it is predicted to continue and worsen. The nursing shortage in New York is reflective of that in the United States as a whole. A report from the American Hospital Association in April 2006 indicated that U.S. hospitals need approximately 118,000 Registered Nurses (RNs) to fill vacant positions nationwide. This would translate to a national RN vacancy rate of 8.5% (<http://aacn.nche> 2006). Furthermore, 49% of hospital CEOs reported that they had more difficulty recruiting RNs in 2005 than in 2004, and 85% of the CEOs reported that this shortage is one of the top issues faced by hospitals today (<http://aacn.nche>, 2006).

As the population ages, there is a need to prepare professional nurses with increased education and skills to work within complex systems of care and with patients who require greater nursing skills. In addition, because of the advancement in healthcare technology, and the explosion of knowledge about disease states, clinical interventions and especially psychopharmaco-therapeutics, nursing care of all clients has become more complex and requires greater skills and critical thinking capabilities. Aikens (2006) highlighted this in her ground breaking research which demonstrated better selected outcomes for a group of patients when care was provided by registered professional nurses with a baccalaureate degree compared to care provided by RNs without a baccalaureate degree.

The diversity of the population for whom nurses care is constantly changing. Nurses need to understand the ethnic, cultural and racial diversity of their clients. More importantly members of the profession of nursing need to better reflect the diversity of the population for which they care. Therefore, the need to recruit students into nursing with diverse backgrounds, as well as those for whom English is a second language is of great importance.

## **Project Design**

The project design is a comprehensive discussion of how you will address the problem. It is the heart of your proposal, and is sometimes referred to as the research plan, the project description, the approach, or the proposal narrative, depending on the funding agency. The design section contains subsections for objectives, work-plan, timeline, activities, and methods. All funders are especially interested in how well you have defined measurable objectives and their expected outcomes. Reviewers usually report that proposers confuse goals and objectives. Objectives should be specific and usually seek to increase or decrease some phenomenon, such as "Increase the number of certified special education teachers in District 1 by 25%," "Increase the number of female undergraduates majoring in computer science;" "Increase the rate of mammography screenings for women of color." If possible and applicable to your proposal, your objectives should indicate the timeframe and the amount of increase/decrease involved. Some guiding questions for writing objectives are:

- Do your objectives indicate precisely what will change because of your project?
- Do they indicate the time frame involved?
- Do they logically follow one another?
- Do they indicate what you would accept as proof of project success?
- Are they measurable?

The project design or description also contains the workplan—the methods and activities—you will use to achieve your objectives. Many federal agencies ask for a person-loading chart or timeline and responsibilities in this section or in the management plan. You should describe your activities in narrative form, and then in an abbreviated chart or table that lists the responsible project staff and dates for implementation/completion of the activities. Writing in this chart/table form will help you to think through what you need to do to get your project started and keep it running smoothly.

## **SAMPLE Project Design**

### **Hypotheses/Questions**

Because the scope of the proposed research focuses on validation of previous studies on professional

development and teacher effectiveness with ELLs as well as exploration of factors impacting on teacher effectiveness and ELL achievement, both hypotheses and research questions are included.

- 1) During each year of the project, the gains in ELLs' achievement (grades 3-5) on State assessments in reading and mathematics will be significantly greater in those schools that are part of the treatment group than those that are in the control group.
- 2) During each year of the project, the gains in teachers' expressed attitudes towards teaching ELLs in content literacy (grades 3-5), beliefs about their abilities in working with families and cultural competence will be significantly more positive in those schools that are part of the treatment group than those that are in the control group.
- 3) During each year of the project, the gains in observed teacher effectiveness in content literacy (grades 3-5) will be significantly more positive in those schools that are part of the treatment group than those that are in the control group.

Schools will serve as the unit of analysis and comparisons will be made both within and across the two districts each year of the project.

- 4) The gains in ELLs' achievement (grades 3-8) on State assessments in reading and mathematics will be significantly related to the number of years their school (and teachers) had been part of the project (0-4 years).
- 5) The gains in teachers' expressed attitudes towards teaching ELLs in content literacy (grades 3-5), beliefs about their abilities in working with families and cultural competence will be significantly related to the number of years their school had been part of the project (0-4 years).
- 6) The gains in observed teacher effectiveness in content literacy (grades 3-5) will be significantly related to the number of years their school had been part of the project (0-4 years).

These three hypotheses will address the cumulative impact of the project on teacher effectiveness in teaching literacy in the content areas to ELLs and will be conducted in two ways: 1) by collecting the achievement data of all students in the treatment and control schools each year and 2) by tracking the achievement data of individual students from the time that their school and teachers were selected for the project (through 8th grade). The second dimension is discussed in greater detail below.

- 7) What is the relative impact of the identified factors (listed below) on gains in teacher effectiveness in content-based literacy?
- 8) What is the relative impact of the identified factors (listed below) on gains in ELL achievement in content-based literacy?

Using some of the same data collected to address the hypotheses, these two research questions attempt to situate the exploratory aspects of the proposed research of effective instruction within the social and institutional contexts in which it develops. A series of related questions then emerge which could be asked in this research, including what social and academic practices are required for successful participation, what forms of language, practice, and interactions do ELLs have access and what supports this access, and what strategies do ELLs use to facilitate access and how are they responded to by teachers (Hawkins, 2004)?

### **Sampling Procedures**

Two public school districts on Long Island were selected based on their student demographics and identified need with regard to ELLs in regular classrooms in both the elementary and middle schools. Their identification was based on a survey of the proposed team members' work with school districts through the New York metropolitan area (with at least 30 public school districts on Long Island), using the following criteria: 1) the percentage and growth of ELL population in the communities served; 2) the degree of administrative support from district administrators responsible for literacy, ESL/Bilingual, special education,

curriculum and instruction, and professional development to the buildings; 3) an evaluated “readiness” for collaboration with the University personnel that serve as part of the team; and 4) an expressed willingness to follow the sampling procedure established for the project.

The proposed sampling involves two dimensions for each of the participating districts: 1) a randomized selection of elementary schools within each district each year of the project and 2) participation of a previously-selected group of middle school teachers (grades 6-8) who have been identified by the district administrators as having strong content knowledge and pedagogical skills. With regard to the first dimension, the research team and district administrators (described in the above paragraph) from both districts will meet during the summer of each project year (beginning in 2007) to randomly select one of four elementary schools within the district to be participating in the project for that year, designated as the “treatment” group. Those that were not selected are treated as part of the control group. The schools, again, are considered the unit of analysis with data collected on teachers, students, and families by building. Once a school has been selected for participation, it remains in the project for the remainder of the funding. In this way, all of the elementary schools in the district are part of the “treatment” group by the end of the four years.

All grades 3-5 teachers in the selected buildings are part of the project and data is collected on them and their students. The rationale for the randomization by school and inclusion of all teachers is approximately the same: that attempts to control confounding variables (or to match schools or teachers for comparison purposes) assumes that such variables should be controlled for rather than studied explicitly as part of the research design. As can be seen by the research questions, in particular, the attempt will be to address a wide range of potential variables that are linked to possible gains in teacher effectiveness and ELL achievement in content-based literacy. As has been discussed in the extant literature on scientifically-based research, the efforts to use the “gold standard” in education can fly in the face of what makes sense educationally. In this proposed project, there is an effort to maintain the importance of random selection in research while involving all stakeholders in the development of a model of effective teaching.

Content-based teachers, grades 6-8, will be selected from the “feeder” middle schools in the two districts based on their depth of knowledge and skills to be regular participants throughout the project. While they are not the focus of the proposed research, they provide an important curriculum and pedagogical “context” for ELLs after the students leave the elementary school buildings and will be a part of the intervention and subsequent data collection.

## DATA COLLECTION

The following table provides an overview of the proposed data collection for the project.

**DATA COLLECTION TABLE (abbreviated)**  
**Adelphi University DELC Research Project**

Hypothesis/ Research Question	Data types	Collection dates	Methods	Development of instruments
(Baseline/ # 7 and 8)	Demographics	Summer 2007-2010	Collection from district reports	N/A
#1, 4, 8	State tests, grades 3-8	2008-2010 (varied months)	Collected from state/BOCES	N/A
#1, 4, 8	NYSESLAT scores	Spring 2008-2010	Collected from district records	N/A
#8	Developmental assets checklist	Fall/Spring 2007-2010	Administered and collected checklist	N/A
#8	Student attendance	Fall/Spring 2007-2010	Collected from school records	N/A

#8	Incidence of discipline	Fall/Spring 2007-2010	Collected from school records	N/A
#7, 8	Student on-task/engagement behavior	Fall/Spring 2007-2010	Classroom observations of targeted behaviors by evaluator	Instrument developed in summer 2007
#7, 8	Motivation/personal development of students	Fall/Spring 2007-2010	Focus group interviews by research team	Instrument developed in summer 2007
#7, 8	Parent satisfaction	2007-2010	Survey administered to academy/HS parents	Instrument designed in summer 2007
	Teacher/Administrator surveys of knowledge/skill	Varies by event 2007-2010	Survey administered to staff in treatment/control schools	Instrument designed in summer 2007

## Project Personnel

In this section, you are expected to describe the qualifications, training, and experience of the key personnel involved in the project. You should highlight the educational qualifications, specialized training/knowledge, and participation on similar grant-funded projects of the proposed project staff. You can also discuss the University's capabilities, resources, and reputation in the given area of study.

### SAMPLE Project Personnel

**Leadership Team:** The Principal Investigator of the project is **Dr. X**, who leads the School's efforts in the area of University-Community Partnerships and oversees the design, evaluation, and implementation of numerous projects both within the school and the community. He has an extensive background in the formation and implementation of lasting partnerships with Long Island's human service community and presently serves as the Principal Investigator of a funded project to promote community partnerships for service and leadership in gerontology, as well as a funded project that is investigating the geriatric mental health needs of senior citizens in Suffolk County (both projects are granted by national foundations).

**Dr. Y** is the Co-Principal Investigator on the project and will coordinate and oversee evaluation activities.

**Dr. Y** is an expert in adolescent development and has served as the Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator on federal and foundation grants in the area of economically disadvantaged and high-risk youth.

**Dr. Z** who will conduct the evaluation is an expert in adolescent and young adult risk behavior and has engaged in grant funded research on such topics as adolescent substance abuse, intimate partner violence, and HIV sexual risk behavior in young men.

**Ms. A** will serve as the **Project Coordinator**, supervising the **Program Director (TBA)** and reporting to the Principal Investigator. **Ms. A** is the former director of a technical assistance service that provided resources to strengthen and support the management of nonprofit organizations. Previously, she served as director of the Nonprofit Resource Center of the Community Foundation of Broward County. For over twenty years, **Ms. A** has served as an adviser and consultant to over 500 organizations and nonprofit boards (primarily with FCBOs) on issues as varied as leadership transition, board training and development, marketing, fundraising, and strategic planning. Her experience with both grantor and grantee organizations, allows the LI Center to deliver services attuned to both sides of Long Island's nonprofit sector.