

Narrative for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

This narrative documents my academic activities and accomplishments as a research tenure track Assistant Professor at Kennesaw State University (KSU) during the last five years. Since joining the faculty of the WellStar School of Nursing (WSON) in 2009, I have actively contributed my expertise in the areas of research and creative activity (RCA); teaching, supervising, and mentoring (TSM); and professional service (PS). As I will illustrate in this narrative, I have a strong, consistent record of scholarly productivity. The primary goal of this narrative is to provide evidence that I am currently exceeding the expectations required for tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. Research and creative activity are my primary foci, and I will be emphasizing this in the narrative. The period under review is fall 2009 to fall 2014.

Philosophy of Teaching

As a registered nurse with more than 10 years of clinical experience, I believe that I have a responsibility to prepare future and current nurses for the complex roles they will fulfill as clinicians, leaders, and scholars within the dynamic environment of professional nursing practice. The following beliefs are central to my teaching practice:

- Students and faculty are part of a dynamic and collaborative exchange within the learning environment. As a lifelong learner, I enjoy the challenge of teaching across undergraduate and graduate programs, and I delight in learning from my colleagues and students.
- Learning occurs when I challenge my students to become reflective practitioners and scholars. First and foremost, I am a facilitator. I provide expertise, guidance, and substantive resources. I believe students are responsible to use these resources to enhance their own learning.
- Learning is facilitated by creating an environment of acceptance for personal differences and mutual respect. In the environment I create, students are encouraged to embrace their strengths

and be who are they are. In my classroom, students and faculty have the freedom to exchange ideas, reflect, and grow as learners.

- I am a role model to my students. Students observe my actions and professional conduct. I strive to model professional behavior in all settings, competence in my nursing practice, decorum in the classroom, and respect for others.

Teaching, Supervising, and Mentoring

Since beginning at KSU, I have taught three courses in the undergraduate program (Holistic Health Nursing-NUR 3209; Professionalism and Ethics in Nursing- NUR 3302; Nursing Research for Evidence-Based Practice- NUR 4402). I have obtained full graduate faculty status (**TSM 1**) and have regularly taught Health Care Theory (NUR 7725) in the WellStar Primary Care Family Nurse Practitioner program.

Commensurate with the rank of Associate Professor, I have mentored and served as a thesis chair and second reader for students in the Master of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Science programs (**TSM 2-8**), and I have been asked to share my expertise as a guest lecturer in nursing theory (NUR 7725, Spring 2010) methodological issues in research (NUR 9930, Fall 2010), and health promotion (NUR 3209, Summer 2011) (**TSM 9-44**). Finally, I mentored a faculty member from Egypt for two weeks (**TSM 45**).

In approaching my courses, I employ “thoughtful construction” or the architecture of course materials and assignments with primary goal of enhancing student success. Each semester I spend time re-designing my courses using new strategies for student engagement and success. For example, in NUR 7725, I redesigned the course assignments to enhance application of middle-range theories to family nurse practitioner practice. In order enable student success, the scholarly paper in NUR 7725 is completed by the students in the two sections: the first section is a detailed outline of the paper, and the second section is the final paper (**TSM 46-47**). By creating a detailed outline, each student receives individualized feedback on the content, organizational flow of the final paper, and their writing skills.

The courses that I teach are writing-intensive; I have high standards for student performance and set clear expectations at the start of the semester. An example of this is a course policy I implemented in NUR 3302 which states that any student who receives less than a passing grade on their course paper will be required to re-write the paper until it meets a minimum passing grade of 75 (or a C) (**TSM 48-49**). The intent of the policy is to communicate the value of writing, expectations for quality writing, and receptiveness to feedback in order to improve writing. I believe it is critical that every nursing school graduate be able to communicate effectively in writing, as this enhances communication skills overall.

In order to create a dynamic and collaborative exchange, I construct an interactive learning environment in my classroom. In my view, the best learning occurs through lively discussion and personal reflection. During the past two years I have challenged myself to replace nearly all of my Powerpoint lectures with active, guided classroom discussion and activities. Since implementing more active classroom discussion and activities, I have experienced dynamic classroom discussions and observed student growth through participation in meaningful classroom activities (e.g., **TSM 50-52**). In addition to guided discussion, I employ other strategies including interactive activities (**TSM 53-63**), iClicker questions, television clips, motion picture clips, and You Tube videos to highlight key points, add interest, stimulate discussion, and help the students to relate the course materials broadly. I am mindful of the importance of relating course materials to the realities of professional nursing practice. I also believe there is value in using myself and my personal experiences as teaching tools; I accomplish this through storytelling.

I have applied my principles of “thoughtful construction” to student evaluation in my courses. My course exams engage students in thinking about the course materials rather than memorizing and re-stating information. I have found that students are better able to apply course materials to nursing practice when taking written exams. I have used extemporaneous written exam questions in NUR 3302 (**TSM 64-66**) and collaborative group testing in NUR 4402 to critique a research article (**TSM 67-69**). Collaborative testing involves the use of a group testing format. Collaborative testing allows students to discuss the

research article, while simultaneously teaching group process and conflict negotiation. In my graduate course, I formally assess student learning through the use of rubrics I create for the course assignments (e.g., NUR 7725, **TSM 70**) which are based on expectations for graduate-level work.

One criterion for the rank of Associate Professor is leadership in initiating new and meaningful clinical experiences that prepare students for the reality of the nursing practice. I accomplished this by creating a learning opportunity for students in NUR 3209 at the (former, now closed) KSU Community Clinic. At the request of the Director of the WSON, and with the assistance of the NUR 3209 course coordinator, I designed a rotational schedule for 90-100 students (**TSM 71-76**). Each student rotated to the clinic for a two hour learning experience. At the KSU Community Clinic students were able to practice basic skills (e.g., blood pressure), conduct health screenings, and interact with patients in a community setting. I was responsible for teaching, supervising, and mentoring the students at the clinic. In addition to this, I contributed to the redesign of course policies related to professionalism (**TSM 77-79**).

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching I have employed several methods:

- Personal reflection and course re-design: After each class I make notes about effective techniques and activities, immediately changing materials for subsequent semesters.
- Student evaluations: I have received positive student evaluations of my teaching every semester (**TSM 80-146**). The students note that my strengths are enthusiasm and passion for nursing and the course materials, effective delivery, and organization. I have received letters from KSU Career Services noting that recent graduates mentioned me specifically by name in their graduation surveys as a faculty mentor during their education at KSU (**TSM 147-148**). In the fall of 2011 I was named by a student as an honored faculty member at the graduate degree ceremony (**TSM 149-152**).

- Peer evaluation of my teaching: Dr. Marie Bremner conducted a peer evaluation of my teaching (**TSM 153-154**), noting creativity, innovative teaching strategies, genuine warmth toward students, and high standards as my major strengths.
- Demonstrated growth in student writing: In NUR 7725, I evaluated the effectiveness of my teaching and feedback by assessing for student growth in scholarly writing (**TSM 155-168**). I mentored students in their theory course paper by giving substantive feedback on their paper outlines. I assessed their progress by comparing their final course paper to their paper outline.

Research and Creative Activity

Over the past five years I have devoted my time to developing my program of research in the area of childhood obesity prevention/treatment and family weight management. Childhood obesity affects diverse and low income populations disproportionately. To this end, a secondary focus within my program of research is exploring sociocultural factors that impact the provision of culturally competent care and treatments. In addition to my program of research, I have conducted a study of cultural competency within the nursing profession and disseminated articles pertaining to innovative teaching strategies.

For a research tenure track faculty member in the WSON, three units of scholarship are required per year, for a minimum requirement of 15 units over five years. Since 2009 I have produced 30 units of scholarship, twice the minimum expectation. I have published 16 articles in peer-reviewed journals, published two peer-reviewed book chapters, given six podium presentations at regional and national conferences, and I have submitted six research grant applications (with three funded). In addition to the 30 units of scholarship that meet the WSON guidelines, I have two manuscripts under review, presented five posters at national/international conferences, and I have been invited to give four non-refereed presentations in the community and at the WSON. In this section I will provide evidence of how I am meeting the expectations of the rank of Associate Professor in the areas of research and creative activity.

Scholarly Productivity within my Program of Research

The central concept of my dissertation was wellness; my first goal after graduating from my doctoral program in 2009 was to disseminate my dissertation findings. I successfully published one article on the psychometric properties of the wellness instrument I used for my dissertation in the *Southern Online Journal of Nursing Research* (**RCA 1-12**) and presented the psychometric data at the Society for Public Health Education meeting in April of 2010 (**RCA 13-20**).

I began developing expertise in family weight management and childhood obesity prevention/treatment as a doctoral student. I was invited by my research mentor and dissertation chair to join her research team. Our research team conducted weight management programs for low income families in San Diego. The collaboration culminated in the publication of two manuscripts and one professional presentation (**RCA 21-43**). Both articles were published in the *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing* (*JSPN*). *JSPN* is an international pediatric journal; our first article (**RCA 21-34**) has been cited by four other researchers in nursing, dentistry, and family therapy. Our research team prepared a poster summarizing our findings which was presented at the 1st Annual Diabetes and Obesity Forum in Athens, Greece in October 2011.

Early in my career at KSU, I began to develop a track record of scholarly work in the areas of childhood obesity prevention/treatment and family weight management. First, I began by establishing myself as an expert in the area of nutrition across the lifespan. In the fall of 2009, I was asked to present a paper on optimal nutrition with a colleague at KSU's Arab American Dialogue (**RCA 44-77**). Next, I collaborated with three KSU faculty members, Dr. Janice Long, Dr. Becky Shabo, and Dr. Astrid Wilson, on a manuscript summarizing rates of overweight and obesity among White, Black, and Mexican-American children using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). The manuscript was published in *JSPN* (**RCA 78-87**). Our research team won *JSPN*'s 2012 Article Award for the publication (**RCA 88**). Subsequently, we submitted the article for consideration to KSU's Foundation Prize

for Publication in 2013, where we were named as finalists from the WellStar College of Health and Human Services (WCHHS) (**RCA 89-100**). On behalf of our research team, I presented the findings from our paper at the Southern Nursing Research Society Conference in Jacksonville, Florida in February 2011 (**RCA 101-107**). Finally, I was invited to author two book chapters; one was on topic of developing a qualitative research proposal exploring childhood obesity in Latino families (**RCA 108-123**), and one was on the topic of malnutrition (**RCA 124-131**) which won a book award (**RCA 132-134**). The article, presentations, and book chapters helped to establish my expertise on nutrition and childhood obesity prevention/treatment.

After establishing my foundational expertise in my area of focus, I sought funding to begin a pilot study of a family weight management intervention. My pilot study was supported by Dr. Richard Sowell from the WCHHS (**RCA 135-140**). The aim of the study was to assess the feasibility of a family weight management intervention for a small group of parents in a low income community. I disseminated the findings of my pilot work in the form of two publications (**RCA 141-151**) and one presentation (**RCA 152-158**). The first manuscript, which summarized my pilot study findings, was published in the *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, an international journal with a wide readership (**RCA 141-143**). The second manuscript discussed my experiences in providing culturally competent family weight management interventions and was published in the *Online Journal of Cultural Competence in Nursing and Healthcare* (**RCA 144-151**). Finally, I presented my pilot study findings at Sigma Theta Tau Mu Phi Chapter's 2011 Research Day (**RCA 152-158**).

As part of my pilot study, I discovered cultural differences in family dietary and physical activity patterns that were unique to the families, especially in regard to how a parent perceived his or her child's weight. As the next step in my program of research, I conducted a concept analysis of parental perception of child weight. My concept analysis was accepted and subsequently published in the *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (**RCA 159-170**), an international journal with a high impact factor. After completing the concept analysis, I designed a qualitative study to further understand parental perception of assets and barriers to

healthy eating and physical activity. In the spring of 2011, I submitted a grant proposal to the American Nurses Foundation (ANF) to fund the project (**RCA 171-201**). The grant was positively reviewed, but not funded. I revised the grant proposal based on the reviewers' recommendations and submitted the proposal for two small grants offered from the Association of Community Health Nursing Educators (ACHNE) (**RCA 202-220**) and Sigma Theta Tau Mu Phi Chapter (**RCA 221-231**). Both grants were awarded, and I completed the study in 2013. I presented the findings of the study in two venues; the first was an invited presentation to the WSON faculty (**RCA 232-238**), and the second was a podium presentation at the ACHNE Annual Institute in June 2014 (**RCA 239-242**). I submitted a manuscript summarizing the findings of my study to the *Journal of Clinical Nursing*; the manuscript is currently under review (**RCA 243-251**).

Continuing to build my program of research, in the summer of 2013 I began to actively collaborate with the YMCA of Metro Atlanta. The WCHHS, YMCA of Metro Atlanta, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) has created a professional working group to prevent and treat childhood obesity. I currently collaborate with the YMCA of Metro Atlanta and CHOA in developing their children's nutritional and physical activity programs, lending my expertise in the area of engaging parents in making family lifestyle changes. Two foci of our collaboration have been the preparation of grant applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and submission of manuscripts detailing our research findings. I submitted an R15 grant application to the NIH in order secure funding for building a tailored family weight management intervention at the YMCA (**RCA 252-268**). Dr. James Annesi, Director of Wellness Development at the YMCA of Metro Atlanta, and part-time faculty in KSU's Department of Health Promotion, was my co-investigator on the grant application (not funded). I was included as a consultant on an NIH R01 grant application (Dr. Annesi, principal investigator) that will examine the effect of exercise on eating and sustained weight loss among an adult population (**RCA 269-294**). Dr. Annesi and I have successfully published three manuscripts summarizing our findings on psychosocial predictors of health behavior change among adults with obesity (**RCA 295-316**) and adolescents (**RCA 317-346**). Our interdisciplinary

research time has just begun to collaborate, and we are anticipating a long-term relationship to help address issues of obesity.

Secondary Research Interests

A secondary research interest of mine is cultural competence; especially in regard to how culturally competent interventions increase success in childhood obesity prevention and treatment. Dr. Patricia Hart and I successfully wrote and received one of eight FY 2011-2012 research grants from KSU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) (**RCA 347-362**). We studied Georgia nurses' perceptions of cultural competence in caring for diverse populations. The collaboration culminated in four peer-reviewed publications (**RCA 363-424**) and three presentations (**RCA 425-430; See Binder #3 for remaining items**).

I have developed teaching scholarship by disseminating information about innovative teaching strategies. Dr. Marie Bremner, Ms. Christie Emerson, and I published an article on best practices using audience response systems in the *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship* (**RCA 431-447**). In addition, we presented this topic at the Georgia Association of Nursing Education (GANE) conference in February 2010 (**RCA 448-458**). Another way I have been active in demonstrating teaching scholarship is by mentoring a recent master's degree graduate in the preparation and submission of her thesis as a manuscript. The manuscript is currently under review in *Nurse Education in Practice*.

Finally, I have provided expertise in research methods and theory to my colleagues. I provided expertise on factor analysis in one manuscript accepted for publication in the *Journal of Nursing Measurement* (**RCA 459**). Second, I provided expertise in applying middle range theories to nursing practice by authoring a book chapter (**RCA 460-491**). Publication of the book chapter is forthcoming.

Summary

As I have built my program of research, I have been effective in creating a track record of scholarly productivity. I have been successful at securing small grant funding, completing the research, and disseminating the findings. I have applied for an NIH grant as a principal investigator and look forward to

pursuing additional grant opportunities to continue the cycle of productivity. The WSON tenure and promotion criteria state that an Associate Professor publishes refereed scholarly works, submits external funding proposals, and presents papers and posters beyond the local professional community. As I have demonstrated, I exceeded the expectations commensurate with the rank of Associate Professor.

Professional Service

In this section I will discuss my service to the WSON, the WCHHS, university, nursing profession, and community through committee work, consultation, and community volunteer activities.

Service to the WSON

I have provided service to the WSON by serving on, co-chairing, and chairing committees (**PS 1-18**). I served four years as a member on the WSON Survey committee, with one year of service as a co-chair. On the survey committee I was responsible for assisting with survey data collection, reviewing, and disseminating undergraduate and graduate survey results (**PS 19-35**). I served two years on the WSON Faculty Development committee, where I contributed to brainstorming and arranging faculty development sessions that met the most pressing needs of the faculty and school. I chaired the Faculty Development committee for one year, and was responsible for arranging a faculty development session featuring Tim Porter O'Grady as the speaker (**PS 36-41**). I have contributed as a member of the Graduate Program Evaluation committee (representing the Family Nurse Practitioner program) where I was active in helping to revise evaluations plans for the graduate programs (**PS 42-43**). Finally, I was a member and chair of the Department Faculty Council. In this role I was responsible for addressing faculty issues with administration.

I have provided service to the WSON by interviewing 74 potential candidates for the undergraduate nursing program and 16 candidates for the Foreign Physician program. Early in my career at KSU, I served one semester as the clinical coordinator in NUR 3209. As the clinical coordinator, I created the clinical schedule, oriented clinical faculty, and coordinated a student clinical rotation to the KSU Community Clinic

(PS 44-45). Finally, I was instrumental in authoring the original thesis guidelines for the graduate program **(see PS 46-65 for original guidelines from Fall 2011; guidelines have since been updated)**.

I have volunteered for three ad hoc WSON committees since 2009. The first (fall 2010) was the student awards committee, where I was responsible for reviewing student papers for the writing award. The second was the summer 2011 workload document committee **(PS 66-67)**. The third was the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) task force, where I was responsible for helping to explore the possibility of a DNP program for the WSON **(PS 68-73)**.

Service to the WCHHS

In 2011 and 2012 I served as the WSON Wellness Center Liaison **(PS 74-75)**. In this role, I was responsible for assisting the Wellness Center director with the recruitment of faculty and student volunteers for the annual KSU Student Health Fair. In the fall of 2012 I was appointed by the dean of the WCHHS to help recruit, identify, and interview potential candidates for the WSON's director position **(PS 76-77)**.

Service to the University

In the fall of 2009 I was invited to join the Faculty Furloughs Dialogue Team by Dr. Jorge Perez, former Faculty Executive Assistant to Dr. Papp **(PS 78-80)**. I represented the WCHHS and was responsible for compiling, summarizing, and reporting feedback from the WCHHS faculty. In August 2011, I was invited to serve as a panelist on the new faculty orientation panel by Dr. Meghan Burke from CETL **(PS 81-82)** to share my experiences about KSU with new faculty members. From 2012-2014, I served as the WCHHS elected member of the KSU Academic Standing Committee. In this role, I reviewed academic appeals.

Service to the Nursing Profession

To the profession of nursing, I served by practicing as a registered nurse at the KSU Community Clinic from 2010-2013 **(PS 83)**. I served on Sigma Theta Tau Mu Phi chapter's governance committee from 2010-2012 **(PS 84)** where I kept the bylaws up-to-date and participated in the annual induction ceremony. Finally, I serve as an invited peer reviewer for journals including: *JSPN*, *Health Education & Behavior*,

Journal of Advanced Nursing, Health Promotion Practice, and Nursing Education Perspectives. I offer expertise on obesity, cultural competence, concept analyses, and teaching strategies.

Service to the Community

I am vitally interested in health promotion and disease prevention. I have volunteered at numerous health screenings for children and adults through the KSU Community Clinic (**PS 87-92**) and the Kidney Foundation of Georgia, where I have provided nutritional education, conducted blood glucose and blood pressure screenings, and supervised student volunteers. In October 2010 I volunteered as a counselor for the First Aid Merit Badge at the Boy Scout Merit Badge University held on KSU's campus (**PS 93-94**). In this role I supervised KSU nursing student volunteers. Finally, I have been actively involved as a member of a working group of professionals from the YMCA of Metro Atlanta and CHOA in developing their children's nutritional and physical activity programs, providing consultation on the parent and child components of the programs (**PS 95-96**).

Continuing Education

In order to improve my skills as a researcher and educator, I have participated in a variety of continuing education activities over the past five years (**PS 97-120**).

Conclusion

This narrative provides evidence of my scholarly accomplishments in teaching, supervising, and mentoring; research and creative activity; and professional service. I believe that I am exceeding the expectations for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Over the past five years I have been working conscientiously to develop my program of research, teaching practice, and have provided professional service to the WSON, WCHHS, university, profession of nursing, and community. I will continue to build my program of research, maintain my record of excellence in teaching, and to contribute to the college, university, and profession of nursing through service.