

INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON

# NURSING RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE

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**Linda J Ulak**

Seton Hall University, USA

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## Changes that start small can have a ripple effect

**Background:** What makes a nursing curriculum unique? With accreditation standards, boards of nursing, hospital policies and the legal system, most nursing curriculums are very similar and are the graduates of one program any different from another?

**Purpose of Study:** This paper looks at changes that are ongoing at Seton Hall University, described as a small Catholic University, especially in the health care education area. What factors have facilitated this change? Incorporation of a philosophy of Bernard Lonergan S J into faculty development across the campus. Through a series of meetings, workshops, retreats and ATMs (application of the method), individuals, courses and programs have changed. Lonergan's philosophy, his establishment of the general empirical method as well as the outcomes from individual ATM's will be discussed.

**Findings:** Individual faculty have made changes to their courses to expose nursing students to more reflective learning and to include the mission of the university to both mission trips to underserved areas as well as changes in individual courses, such as our Lifespan Development, Maternal Family Nursing, Gerontological Nursing as well as our graduate courses. Students have embraced the concepts brought forth from our mission statement. They identify them as positive influences on themselves and their learning.

**Conclusions:** Using the mission statement as a live document and incorporating the GEM have led to increased students attainment of course and program outcomes. Quality of faculty teaching is essential to examine in academia. Role modeling expectations are more likely to result in the outcomes teachers are hoping students will achieve. Leadership skills are integral part of nursing curriculum and necessary in today's healthcare environment. Igniting passion in subject matter is one effective way teachers can facilitate learning outcomes among students. The concept of leadership through acts of service outside the traditional teaching classroom is a concept that is new and requires further study. Faculty effectiveness as perceived by students where the teacher is a leader and the learner is the follower has been explored in the literature and identified as a perceived need. Many universities include the development of leaders in a global society in their mission statement. Focusing on developing leaders utilizing an educational philosophy inclusive of acts of service can result in reflection, self-discovery, self-knowledge that benefits not only individuals but also society.

### Biography

Linda J Ulak has taught many nursing students at Seton Hall University over the years. She has started teaching at the College of Nursing in 1986. She was an Associate Dean at the College of Nursing from 2002 until 2014. She also has held positions as Academic Director for the Online RN/BSN program, Chair of undergraduate Nursing and Director of the Accelerated Nursing Program. She has also worked in the clinical environment at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Elizabeth, N.J. from 1975 through 2001 mostly in the ICU. She was graduated with her BSN in 1975 as well as received education in 1991, both from Seton Hall University. She has completed her Masters in Adult and her Doctorate of Nursing Education at Wagner College. Her teaching assignments have included pathophysiology and pharmacology as well as several clinical courses. She was an Instructor at Elizabeth General School of Nursing. During her tenure at Seton Hall, she has served on many university and college committees, including the University Academic Integrity Committee and the College Cultural Diversity Committee. She has received numerous awards for teaching from the college, university and professional organizations.

[ulaklind@shu.edu](mailto:ulaklind@shu.edu)