



2008-2009 Awards for Program Excellence

SUBMISSION FORM

Program Title Distance Learning Program for Nursing (Collaboration between The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, Ryerson University, and the University of the West Indies)			
Submitted by: Emily Jardeleza		Position Production Editor	
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Please consider my submission in the following category:

- Local/Regional**
 National
 International

SUBMISSION COMPONENTS

Please include the following in your submission:

1. This submission form
2. An abstract (not exceeding 200 words)
3. The program description, **not exceeding 6 pages** (Be selective; please do not include a detailed curriculum or all the course materials.)

METHODS OF SUBMISSION

Electronically – E-mail the submission form, abstract and program description (one document) to kradway@ryerson.ca Be sure to include one weblink in your submission if you would like us to consider a piece of promotional material.

Fax – Fax the submission form abstract and program description (one document) to Ken Radway 416-979-5277.

Mail – Send **six copies** of the submission form, abstract, program description and one brochure or flyer to:

Ken Radway, Program Director
 Ryerson University, The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education
 350 Victoria Street
 Toronto, ON, M5B 2K3

(check) I understand that if this submission wins an award, it will be posted on the CAUCE website

Deadline: Monday, March 3, 2009
Late Submissions will NOT be Accepted



THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE WEST INDIES



Distance Education: Our portal to lifelong learning

CAUCE Program Award Entry

Abstract

The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education and the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Ryerson University have collaborated with the School of Nursing at the University of the West Indies (UWI) to develop a model of distance delivery that allows nurses in the Caribbean to pursue a Post-RN Baccalaureate Nursing Degree.

This innovative distance delivery process was designed to build baccalaureate nursing capacity in the Caribbean and decrease the migration of nurses to other countries. The model contributes to producing nurses who can provide leadership and mentorship within nursing communities and also enhances the health care system in the Caribbean.

The flexible distance delivery model lowers the cost of learning, increases accessibility to quality education by allowing students to continue working full-time, and eliminates the need to travel or relocate in order to upgrade qualifications.

The educational experiences, alliances, and resources developed through this partnership will support future educational endeavors within the nursing field and may also benefit other disciplines/ programs in each organization.

Program Description

In recent years, the professional and educational scope of the nursing profession has changed, both in North America and abroad. Sensing that a unique and productive partnership could be formed to address the changes in the nursing field, G. Raymond Chang facilitated introductions between The G. Raymond

Chang School of Continuing Education and the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Ryerson University and the University of the West Indies in 2006. The collaborating institutions have been working together since then to adapt the existing Post-RN Baccalaureate Degree for both hybrid (i.e., a combination of classroom and online) and online course deliveries for nurses in the Caribbean region.

Value/ Service

The courses in the Distance Learning Program for Nursing are all delivered in hybrid or completely online format. The distance delivery model provides a working solution for a region that faces nursing shortages and scant local access to higher education. By allowing students to remain in their local areas and continue working while taking hybrid and online courses, the program ensures that nurses do not have to migrate to another country to upgrade their qualifications.

At the same time that the program provides a necessary service to nurses themselves, it is also helping to establish the reputation of the University of the West Indies (UWI) as a centre that provides higher education for Caribbean nurses. There is currently a shortage of qualified nursing instructors (i.e., those holding Master's degrees) in the Caribbean and one of the advantages of the program is that it allows a small number of instructors to reach a large number of students throughout the region via distance education.

This partnership has allowed The Chang School and the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Ryerson University to enhance their distance education delivery model and to help produce high quality course materials that can be adapted for use in other programs/ innovative projects. The high quality course outline, syllabus and course design templates that were developed by The Chang School's Distance Education Department were used in this project.

The collaboration of the faculty from the Schools of Nursing at both universities has ensured that the content of UWI's Post-RN Degree is high quality and regionally relevant.

Complexity

The Distance Learning Program for Nursing was created to fill a need for higher education for nurses in the Caribbean. The Caribbean Regional Government recently decreed that the minimum level of education for entry into practice for registered nurses is a Baccalaureate Degree. In order to encourage nurses and nursing students to attain this level of education, UWI has negotiated with hospitals to give current diploma-prepared nurses paid leave to pursue the baccalaureate degree. Financial incentives have been provided by employers

and professional nursing associations to promote the enrolment of nurses in this baccalaureate program.

Evidence of logistical complexity can be found in the organization of technical help facilities on all of the participating islands, as well as negotiations with publishers to ensure the distribution of the required course textbooks and online products to all campuses.

In order to adequately prepare instructors at UWI for the task of delivering online and hybrid courses, Ryerson created a professional development course specifically for these instructors. In addition to course work, there were weekly phone meetings between Ryerson and UWI instructors. This peer-to-peer knowledge transfer has resulted in the ability of UWI instructors to train their own new instructors without relying on Ryerson indefinitely. The professional development component for UWI faculty has been an important piece in promoting the sustainability of the Program.

The Ryerson practice of creating a list of electronic course readings to be placed on E-reserve through the university library was adopted by UWI instructors with great enthusiasm. The E-reserve provided an opportunity for local source readings specific to Caribbean issues to be included in the courses.

A public relations campaign was launched in early 2007 in Toronto and Jamaica to draw media attention to the Program via radio, newspapers, and the Internet. The resulting high enrolment numbers have indicated that this unique Program has helped to address an acute need in the nursing field.

Ingenuity and Innovation

The course materials developed for the program take into consideration the principles of adult learning. Since the students enrolled in the program are working professionals, it is important to meet their unique needs through interactive learning objects and exercises, simulations, online presentations, and self-assessments. Instructional designers at Ryerson University have been instrumental in creating reusable interactive learning objects that meet the curriculum needs of both Schools of Nursing. A showcase of these innovative learning objects can be viewed at <http://de.ryerson.ca/showcase/uwi>.

Recognizing the importance of addressing foundational theory as well as regional issues in the nursing courses, the faculty at Ryerson and UWI worked together to produce reusable yet regionally relevant course materials. For example, the Epidemiology course is divided into 12 modules: the first 7 modules contain foundational theory while the last 5 modules focus on specific regional health concerns such as HIV/AIDS and diabetes. The Health Assessment course contains standard health assessment information and theory, as well as case studies that address regional issues. The structure of these courses allows them

to be used anywhere in the world once the regional components have been tailored to a specific place.

Innovation in Delivery

The program's distributive model of delivery has enabled the courses to be offered to 280 students across 13 satellite locations throughout the Caribbean (Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Other Territories, St. Kitts/Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent). The distance delivery content model has combined the best of classroom teaching with the convenience of distance education, giving a greater number of students access to the program without having to travel.

The cost-effectiveness of this model is undeniable; it minimizes the use of institutional space and resources as well as the need for students to incur travel and lodging expenses and lost income.

Using the model championed by Ryerson, course content has been created in one master course shell and then delivered to all participating islands. This ensures consistency and allows one professor at one central location to oversee all satellite locations. Each satellite location also has teaching assistants and technical support available for students.

Profile of Continuing Education

The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education is one of Canada's leading providers of online credit courses and certificates. With a focus on collaboration, innovation and flexibility, it strives to further enhance its expertise and profile by partnering with such institutions as the University of the West Indies. This international partnership has responded to current issues in nursing education by building a flexible model and sustainable process for course development and delivery of university level distance education courses. It has been the intention of the project partners to develop course materials that can be used for nursing education in both rural Caribbean and rural Canadian communities.

By developing higher education resources for nurses that allow them to remain in their home region, this partnership may help to alleviate nursing shortages in rural Ontario and in countries of the Caribbean. In turn, nurses with higher education can help teach the next generation of nurses and improve the overall quality of regional health care.