Project Summary:
The aim of this project is to identify the factors that support/inhibit lifelong learning as the impetus for how students manifest leadership from within. The focus of this descriptive exploratory research study will be on the experiential learning and the meaning making of nursing students in the fourth year of their undergraduate program; students who are transitioning into a career path and who are expected (from professional and academic outcome standards) to sustain a practice of lifelong learning through health literacy. Understanding complexity, reflective practice and ethical engagement with clients on a global level are used to guide the students to engage “leadership from within” (or “being the best you can be under the circumstances”). What this study offers is a view into the factors that influence how students learn beyond “scope of practice” and competence assessment parameters/outcomes that are routinely assessed.

Revised Research Question:
What factors influence student nurses’ transition into their role as professionals? How do nursing students in the fourth year of their program describe their experience?

Data Required to Answer your Research Question:
Reflective narratives (RN) x3: RN#1) At the beginning of the course a written submission (describing their perceptions of professional identity and leadership based on what they have learned through the program, through popular culture and media, and examples via life experience; RN#2) Students will prepare an interview with a “leader in practice” of their choice and they will do a post-interview write up that describes how that individual’s practices, descriptions, experiences and values; RN#3) At the completion of the course, students will be asked to revisit their first RN and consider where they are now, having completed the assignments and the course, as they prepare to transition to practice as Registered Nurses.

The discussion board is designed for students to work in COP, but the initial contribution they make reflect their comprehension and interpretation of the modules in relation to their practice, group work and life experience. This data is rich with description from a “lived experience” perspective and will provide some insight into how students make meaning of that experience in relation to their contexts of practice and areas of interest. There will be four topical discussions that students will respond to with guidelines. Those who agree to participate will be asked to use their contributions.
Methods of Gathering Data:
Reflective narratives x3. Discussion board of the participants...their main generative threads in the required contributions (rather than responses to other students).

Anticipated Evidence:
Student nurses will describe their experience and share a self-awareness of their social situatedness in context of that complexity, which is what the course is designed to evoke. This is a qualitative analysis of their interpretations of the course and how it supports their transition into practice.

Project Timeline (2010 through 2011):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics proposal to MRU REB</td>
<td>Submit initial proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare questions for survey, interviews and focus groups</td>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present literature review/inquiry at UofA 1</td>
<td>Poster presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Reflective Narratives x3 Discussion Board collection of data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>One month (October 2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissemination of results to date</td>
<td>ISOTL Conference will be attended to discuss the data analysis to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of results and literature review</td>
<td>May 2011 (Nurse Education Today and International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literature Search Results:


1 2nd Annual Dr. Olive Yonge Teaching Learning Scholarship Day
Through the looking glass: Reflecting on the scholarship of teaching/learning March 25, 2010 (UofA)


Additional Information, Comments, Questions: I have two conferences that will support dissemination of results. The first is coming at the end of this month and it is expected to be a poster presentation...I’m struggling with how and what to select for this form of presentation of my question and literature review. Any suggestions would be useful.