

McLennan Community College Application for Sabbatical Leave

Please refer to Policies and Procedures: Sabbatical Leave; F-I-d, 1 posted on MCC's web site for a complete description of eligibility requirements and selection criteria for Sabbatical Leave candidates. Each applicant must have completed a minimum of three consecutive years of full-time employment as an instructor, administrator, or other member of the professional staff prior to the current academic year (2022-2023) to be eligible for Sabbatical Leave in 2023-2024. Persons wishing to apply must complete an application package including the following:

1. This completed form.
2. A project proposal including:
 - a. A statement of the applicant's educational objectives and description of how the proposal contributes to his/her professional development plan. Progress toward these objectives (i.e., coursework and/or research completed or in progress, etc.) should be discussed.
 - b. A detailed description of proposed Sabbatical Leave activities and projected product of their work.
 - c. A discussion of benefits expected for the applicant, the applicant's area or department, and the institution in general if this Sabbatical Leave were to be awarded.
 - d. A description on how the applicant will share their experience and new insights gained during the Sabbatical Leave with the college community after their return.
3. A letter of endorsement from the applicant's immediate supervisor.

The application package must be submitted electronically to bprice@mcclennan.edu by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, 2023.

NAME: Angela J. Mathis

DEPT. OR OFFICE: Associate Degree Nursing

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES: ADN Skills Lab Leader

List degrees earned and granting institutions:

Degree	Institution	Date Earned
Associate of Arts	McLennan Community College	2011
Associate of Applied Science in Nursing	McLennan Community College	2013
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	University of Texas at Arlington	2016
Master of Science in Nursing - Education	University of Texas at El Paso	2020

List occupational experience relevant to this application:

Position	Employer	Date Employed
Staff nurse	Ascension Providence	Dec 2013 - May 2015
Staff nurse	Fresenius Kidney Center	May 2015 - Aug 2016
Staff nurse	Baylor Scott & White- Congestive Heart Failure	Aug 2016 - Nov 2018
Adjunct Instructor	MCC Associate Degree Nursing	Aug 2016 - Aug 2017
Full-time temporary Instructor	MCC Associate Degree Nursing	Aug 2017 - Dec 2021
Full-time Assistant Professor	MCC Associate Degree Nursing	Jan 2022 - present

Sabbatical Leave Acceptance Agreement

I understand that a grant recipient must return to McLennan Community College for the contract year following the Sabbatical Leave or, upon completion of the leave, return the entire amount of the grant (including salary and fringe benefits) to MCC. I agree to share my experience and learning with the MCC community within the next long semester upon my return by one of the venues listed in Policies and Procedures: Sabbatical Leave; F-I-d, 1.

Check One:

I prefer to take the Sabbatical Leave during one long semester at full salary.

_____ Fall 2023 or _____ Spring 2024

I prefer to take the Sabbatical Leave over two long semesters at half salary (15 load hours split between two long semesters, as shown below):

_____ Hours for Fall 2023 and _____ Hours for Spring 2024

I prefer to take the Sabbatical Leave during the 2024 Summer (May – August) for 15 load hours based on the current 2022-2023 Salary Schedule: Part-Time, Overload, and Summer.

I have not decided on a leave period at this time.

Angela J. Mathis
Signature

1/29/23
Date

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Educational Objectives and Professional Development Plan

I am requesting Sabbatical Leave for the Spring semester of 2024 to complete my Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program for Educational Leadership at Post University. This is a 28-month program for which I have completed 11 months thus far. My scheduled completion of this program is June 2024. During the requested Sabbatical leave period, I would be enrolled in my final DNP courses, which include Perspectives on Nursing Informatics, Contemporary Use of Healthcare Tech, and Strategic Leadership and Planning. Each of these are eight-week courses and involve separate coursework from my DNP project. My professional development plan for the upcoming school year of 2023 to 2024 is to complete my DNP courses and DNP quality improvement project.

Proposed Sabbatical Leave Activities

During the Spring of 2024, several activities will need to be completed to accomplish my goal of finishing my doctoral studies. I will be enrolled in the courses mentioned above, and will also need to complete the final section of my DNP project paper, which is similar to a dissertation. My DNP project paper has three sections which include an introduction section, a methods section, and the final section covers results and a discussion of findings. I have completed the introduction section and I am currently working on the methods section. My DNP project involves a teaching intervention with students. The data collected from the project that will be implemented during the summer and fall will need to be analyzed and summarized into the final section of my DNP project paper. A clear interpretation of major findings will help show the overall purpose of the project and help demonstrate correlation between theory and the findings being presented. The sections of the dissertation that I would truly like to spend time

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writing are the portions entitled *Implications for Nursing Practice* and *Recommendations*. This is essentially where theory gets put into practice, where the research begins to influence not only the students in my classroom, but students in other nursing programs as well as potentially other health professions.

For a better understanding of what my project entails, let me share a little background information. During a fall or spring semester, nursing students are required to learn 20 or more psychomotor skills. Our associate degree nursing program front loads many of the critical skills, sometimes referred to as the “shotgun” approach which, in some nursing programs, can lead to skills being taught but quickly forgotten (Gonzalez & Kardong-Edgren, 2017, p. 11). The importance is placed on achieving minimal proficiency, rather than learning and retaining long-term knowledge and purpose of the skill (Gonzalez & Kardong-Edgren, 2017).

Deliberate Practice (DP) has been initially noted to improve teaching methods of medical students and has shown to be effective in nursing education as well (Oermann et al., 2015). Deliberate practice refers to performing skills repetitively while being observed in small groups or individually by a nurse with experience performing the skill, who provides specific assessment and immediate feedback on the student’s performance. After feedback is given, time is then allowed to repeat the skill with corrections made. Many nursing programs may not allow time to practice skills in an instructional setting beyond initial competency, but our nursing program is striving to provide staff and time available to allow for a greater level of skills competency. As Msosa et al. (2021) discussed, students can benefit from clinical demonstration followed by practice with supervision, assessment of the skills performance, DP, and immediate feedback. This process helps students develop clinical judgement by learning to recognize, interpret findings, and respond to the potential deterioration of a patient (Msosa, et al., 2021).

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Deliberate practice helps nursing students to work on fluidity of hand movements and improve the speed and accuracy of skills such as urinary catheter or initiating an intravenous infusion (Msosa et al., 2021). Using DP can help students to refine their skill and become more efficient with their hand movements. The feedback from instructors should continue to help students understand the clinical reasoning of the skill. These measures will help lead to safer patient care (Msosa et al., 2021).

The skills lab setting allows me the freedom to discuss things with students that would not necessarily be stated in front of a patient in the clinical setting. In the presence of a patient in the hospital setting, it would not be appropriate to explain why the student needs to adjust the angle of the needle or prepare supplies for a sterile procedure in a particular manner. But in the Skills Lab setting, explanations can be given for each action the student takes.

My project involves specific deliberate practice teaching strategies to help improve student's competency in the skill of urinary catheterization. I will implement this study once during the summer of 2023 with the licensed vocational nursing (LVN) to associate degree nursing (ADN) bridging students, and again in the fall for incoming ADN students. I will be using a data collection tool, the Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument (CCEI) which will be used as a pre-test and post test to evaluate competency in the skill (Manz et al., 2022). This is a 23-question data collection tool that covers assessment, communication, clinical judgement, and patient safety and is verified as a valid and reliable tool. My teaching intervention covers all but two of the questions in the CCEI. I will also use a demographics questionnaire to gather information about previous licensure and experience in the healthcare setting. The information gathered from this study will help nursing faculty see the impact of DP teaching methods and learn how to improve teaching strategies. In my teaching strategies, I have included the use of

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the cognitive load theory to help students move information from working memory to long-term memory (Gent & Kainth, 2022). The final product of my project will result in a dissertation style paper of approximately 80 - 100 pages and will be presented for final defense in June 2024 to Post University.

Benefits expected for the applicant's department

The requested sabbatical leave would give me time to thoroughly analyze all the findings from the data collected in the summer and fall cohorts. I will be looking at data from LVN students as well as the ADN students who have not yet earned a nursing license. Being able to spend adequate time to look at multiple factors that may cause students to learn more effectively and present accurate findings would be extremely useful.

During a 16 week fall or spring semester, I am usually on campus Monday through Thursday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm and work many Fridays each semester. I am either working directly with students or gathering and preparing skills supplies during this time. If I were allowed to spend this time to analyze, write, and properly present my findings, I feel the information collected has potential to help change the way we think about teaching psychomotor skills in health professions. When students understand why they are completing a task, or certain steps in a task, then allowed to repeatedly perform these skills with supervision, this can greatly increase critical thinking at the bedside. Deliberate Practice also helps students understand when they may need to change some steps in their process, such as when not to start an IV on a particular arm or vein, or when to consider an intermittent catheter as opposed to an indwelling catheter. We want students to not only learn how to perform a skill, but also be able to think on their feet and know when to adjust or make corrections in their processes. Examples include

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knowing how to handle when they have contaminated a sterile field and how to correct the situation to keep patients safe and handle the correction in a professional manner.

I have been working with nursing students for over six years and have worked diligently to apply DP teaching methods into each skill I teach in all four levels of students in the associate degree program. I have seen students improve their skill level, increase their confidence level, and most importantly have a better in-depth understanding of the skills they are performing, from vital signs and basic physical assessment to venipuncture, urinary catheter insertion, and many other skills that have potential to save lives, or if performed incorrectly could lead to patient harm. As discussed by Zulkosky et al. (2021), DP improves clinical skills competency and clinical knowledge. I hope to play a part in helping MCC nursing students perform their nursing skills with confidence and develop a greater depth of clinical judgement that will be noticed by the hospitals that hire them. This will speak volumes in helping each cohort of new graduate nurses secure jobs in the Waco area, and also have a positive impact on the community's perception of McLennan Community College.

How the applicant will share their experience with MCC after their return

These teaching strategies and DP concepts not only apply to nursing students, but could also apply to many other health professions such as respiratory therapists, physical therapy assistants, medical lab technicians, etc. All these students could benefit from immediate feedback from experienced instructors while in a simulated environment. This helps prepare them for a multitude of patient care situations. When my project is complete, I would appreciate the opportunity to share my findings with other health professions for the purpose of improving teaching strategies.

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I have been told that there have not been any research studies completed in our program is quite some time, so I am happy to have the opportunity to complete this DNP project and inspire other faculty in my department to complete similar studies. In the future, I would also like to explore factors that lead to skills retention, which is a very important topic in nursing, not only in school, but after our students graduate and are in the clinical setting. Gent and Kainth (2022) examine several factors that influence the retention and decay of nursing skills such as the distribution of teaching sessions over time as well as access to repeated scenarios for practice.

I appreciate the opportunity to share what I have learned so far in my educational journey. I look forward to working with nursing students and faculty to improve our teaching strategies to enhance student competency, student's self-confidence, and clinical judgement. The end goal is always to seek methods to improve patient safety and help our students become safe, competent nurses. My personal hope is that the students that finish our nursing program will feel confident enough in their skills and knowledge that they cannot help but teach and share their knowledge with fellow students and nurses.

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References

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- Manz, J. A., Iverson, L. M., Hawkins, K., Tracy, M. E., & Todd, M. (2022). Assessing student performance in a dedicated education unit: Validity of the creighton competency evaluation instrument. *Nursing Education Perspectives (Wolters Kluwer Health)*, 43(3), 184-186. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.americansentinel.idm.oclc.org/10.1097/01.NEP.0000000000000838>
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2 February 2023

Dear Dr. Hills and Members of the Sabbatical Leave Committee.

Please accept this letter as my endorsement of Angela Mathis' request for sabbatical leave during the spring of 2024. Angela is a gifted educator whose dedication to deliberate practice has noticeably elevated the psychomotor skill levels of our graduates in recent years. I fully support her request and look forward to the evidence her Doctor of Nursing Practice project will generate to support innovative skills teaching, learning, and practice for our students.

Since becoming Skills Team Leader in the fall of 2020, Angela Mathis has worked to build a high-functioning faculty team, including one additional full-time faculty member and four-to-five adjunct instructors. While her colleagues will miss her during this leave, I am confident that the team is prepared to meet the needs of our students. I will ensure that the Skills Team has the help needed to let Angela complete her sabbatical with peace of mind. The quality of educational experiences for our students will continue to be exceptional.

Please let me know if you need more information as you consider this request for Sabbatical Leave.

Chasing What Matters,

Shelley Blackwood

Shelley Blackwood, EdD, MSN, RN, CNE, CHSE
Program Director, Associate Degree Nursing