

Project Title: Enhancing the Care of Women throughout the Lifespan Using Virtual Technology in Interprofessional Education.

Applicant Organization: East Carolina University College of Nursing

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Building on the strengths of a nurse-midwifery program that has a 15 year history of educating nurse-midwifery students (NMs) through distance learning (DE) technology, the **purpose** of this application, consistent with the **statutory purpose**, is to advance interprofessional education opportunities for nurse-midwifery (NM), third year medical (M3), and students from other health-related disciplines through shared clinical technology learning experiences at East Carolina University College of Nursing (ECUCON) and East Carolina University Brody School of Medicine (BSOM). The ECUCON Nurse-Midwifery (NM) Concentration has graduated 142 students to date, the majority of whom provide care for women in rural or underserved communities in North Carolina. In 2010, *Academic Medicine* reported that BSOM ranked #9 in the nation for the percentage of graduates practicing in rural areas. Each year, 60% or more of the BSOM graduate medical class enter residency training in a primary care discipline, and more BSOM grads stay in the state to practice medicine (60%) than for any other North Carolina medical school. Based on this success, the **funding preference for rural underserved areas is requested.**

Since 2004 the ECUCON has been consistently named by U.S. News and World Report as one of the largest distance education programs in the country. In 2011 the ECUCON ranked 18th out of 79 masters' or doctorate of nursing programs in effective support of students through DE. The ECU Health Sciences Division has a thriving Department of Bioethics and Interdisciplinary Studies whose faculty, representing medicine, nursing, law, public health, education, and ethics, have published over 288 peer-reviewed and non-reviewed articles, books, and other professional publications, and have acquired over \$5 million dollars in extramural funding.

The major components of this proposal are: **1)** expansion of an existing web-based Virtual Community Clinic Learning Environment (VCCLE) to include interprofessional learning in the culturally and linguistically appropriate primary care of women throughout the lifespan for both NM and M3 students; **2)** an online interdisciplinary course in Issues in Women's Health that will incorporate VCCLE technology; and **3)** expansion of an ongoing and successful interdisciplinary Mini Business Institute (MBI) that provides essential skills to build and sustain a successful health care practice in public and private health care agencies.

The proposed technologies and the use of online simulations allows for a standardized approach to learning professional competencies and for evaluation of interprofessional student learning. Process and outcome evaluation of interprofessional education will utilize the Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel (2011) four core interprofessional competencies (values/ethics, roles and responsibilities, interprofessional communication, teams and teamwork) that are linked to the five IOM core competencies for all health professionals.