Teaching Spirituality in an Advanced Practice Health Promotion Class

The philosophy of Bernard Lonergan’s General Empirical Method (GEM) is the basis of this abstract. Knowing as a process is not simply “taking a look at what’s there” or “reporting what I feel about something” but a change in our lives. The 4-fold process of Lonergan’s cognitive theory experience, understanding, judging and deciding has given me the opportunity to change my courses in the master’s program.

Health can be viewed within a context of wholeness, in which “health” is not the absence of disease but a state of physical, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing. Yet nursing theorists (i.e., Watson, 2012) view understanding of one’s own spirituality to be central to caring for the spiritual needs of others.

Daly (2009) posited that “among Lonergan’s most important contributions stand his theory of cognitional structure, his {GEM} for human and natural science, and his theory of emergent probability to account for the evolution of the universe and the historical development of intelligent beings as part of the universe.” (p. 146).

This project aims to provide students with empirical and theoretical evidence and opportunities to answer the question “what am I doing when I am knowing?” Several multidimensional facets of holistic health from a personal and spiritual perspective was explored. Emphasis was on the integration of body, mind, and spirit. Techniques that were introduced include, but not limited to, mindfulness, reflection and other exercises to recognize the relationships between spirituality and health.

Students identified personal core belief systems and values and explored cultural aspects of healing, spirituality, and ritual. Utilizing the (GEM), students learn about the spiritual components of caring for patients. Students write a 2 part reflective journal, (one part on the change they want to make and the one on spirituality in the context of Lonergan) the journal includes reflections on that week’s spirituality discussion (guiding questions are posted separately. This reflection encourages the change they are looking for and helps them to discover their authentic self.

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**Title:**
Teaching Spirituality in an Advanced Practice Health Promotion Class

**Keywords:**
Health, Nursing- and Spirituality

**References:**
**Abstract Summary:**
This poster session will explore the implementation of integrating spirituality into a graduate health promotion course. The importance of recognizing the spirituality needs of the nurse and most importantly the patient and family.

**Content Outline:**
Teaching Spirituality in an Advanced Practice Health Promotion Class
The philosophy of Bernard Lonergan’s General Empirical Method (GEM) is the basis of this abstract. Knowing as a process is not simply “taking a look at what’s there” or “reporting what I feel about something” but a change in our lives. The 4-fold process of Lonergan’s cognitive theory experience, understanding, judging and deciding has given me the opportunity to change my courses in the master’s program.

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**First Primary Presenting Author**

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Roberts is certified as an Adult and Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. Her enduring interest is the advancement of the nurse practitioner role in
today's healthcare environment, encouraging and teaching nurse practitioners role development, advancement and the importance of staying politically active. Dr Roberts is a GEM Fellow with the Praxis Program on University Mission at Seton Hall University. Her work in Spirituality and patient care is an enduring interest.