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Requests for Proposals for COE Untenured (tenure track) Faculty
Internal Research Funding (mini-grants)

Part I

- Project Title: **Holding and Creating Space to Facilitate Healing and Well-Being in Counseling and Psychological Practice**

- Researcher & Department: Dr. Lisa Grayshield & Laura Luna, Doctoral student, Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology

- Rank & Initial Appointment Date: Dr. Grayshield is an Assistant Professor, beginning August, 2006

Part II

- Impact on Applicant's Personal Research and Development, including potential contributions to applicants' future pursuit of external grant funding.

The over-riding purpose for this research is to lay the foundation for an Indigenous Counseling Praxis. In line with my personal and academic research agenda, this study seeks to define the basic foundational tenants of a counseling psychology theory that utilizes the epistemologies of Indigenous people groups as part of the counseling process. As an extension of the previous study on Indigenous space, we will continue to look specifically at the meaning of "space" applied to the change/growth process. By examining "space", we seek to understand the interactions between people and the spaces we occupy as counselors when interacting with clients. This includes not only the setting and location of the spaces we are in when facilitating the healing process, but also the energetic vibrations that impact the mind-body-soul-spirit of both client and practitioner and the spaces created/held by them. The construct of "space" is a central foundational tenet of an indigenous ways of knowing counseling praxis, and from this epistemology, the examination of space includes the relationships we have with our clients, with our selves, the space within and between our clients, and our relationships with ecologies and cosmologies (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). In trying to conceptualize and operationalize the idea of "space" from an IWOK paradigm, this study will help to inform the field of counseling psychology in terms of how participants experience indigenous practices as well as their perception of the spaces in which healing and change may occur from a multifaceted and multidimensional holistic view toward achieving health, well-being, peace and harmony within ourselves and in the world.

Goal: The goals of this research is two fold, 1) to build on the previously funded request to support research that will ultimately lead to the operationalization of the construct referred to here as "*space*" from an IWOK paradigm" (Internal Grant, 2011) and; 2) to demonstrate methodology that is multiculturally respectful, and socially just in maintaining integrity with indigenous people.

This research is cognizant of the criticisms that have effectively worked to exploit Indigenous people and their tribal/traditional practices for the purpose of Western European consumption (Linda-Smith, 1999). Thus, "Research as Praxis (RAP)" as understood through the lens of social justice research will provide a foundational lens to ensure maximum relevancy to and from the participants of the research and the purposes for which participants share information (Torres & Reyes, 2011). It is critical when studying the *Indigenous* to ensure that the purpose for which research is contrived, conducted, and reported is congruent with the intentions of the people who

are in essence being studied. RAP work engages research from the perspective of challenging asymmetrical relations of power that legitimize oppression, exploitation, and manipulation. Torres & Reyes (2011) contend that “People’s critical understanding of who or what causes and/or benefits from their problems is central in order for them to recognize the need for solidarity, hope, and commitment to sustain collective work for radical social transformation” (p.81). Healing, is the common principal of counseling when perceived through the lens of Indigenous/Tribal people. Healing presumes that one is working on the positive or generative side of ones vibrations which leads to balance in all areas of ones life, as opposed to the negative or degenerative side which produces physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual dis-ease. A complete and thorough literature review is dedicated to the conceptualization of healing with respect to counseling as a part of this research, and will be included in the write-up for this project.

Objective: The main objective of this research is to “Continue to lay the foundational tenets for an IWOK counseling praxis” through the study of *space* as an operationalizeable construct within the healing/counseling process.

- Impact on the Field of Studies:

The impact this research will have on the field of counseling psychology is to further the development of indigenous ways of knowing [IWOK] in an effort to expand counseling traditions and theories to include a multifaceted and multidimensional holistic view of the working spaces created between the counselor and client. The goal of this study is to operationalize one of the central tenets of an IWOK counseling praxis, that is, the construct of “space.” The concept of “space” will be viewed as a viable construct in a counselors’ ability to establish a working alliance with their client. In contrast, a lack of “space” awareness in the counseling process may inhibit any real change in the clients’ ability to change in ways that meet desirable states of multifaceted holistic well-being. Examining and defining the concept of “space” will provide the field of counseling psychology with a deeper understanding of the impact practitioners may have to facilitate or inhibit the change and healing process. An IWOK counseling praxis will include the healing process within our self and the clients’ but also expand the field to become conscious of human connections to the Earth being supportive of the land we live on, while we “pursue happiness, freedom and personal fulfillment in harmony with the integrity of nature and with similar pursuits of others” (Grayshield & Mihcobey, 2010). Furthering the view of a healing process that includes our (humans) relationship to ecologies and cosmologies will allow practitioners to work with space as a construct within the change process that facilitates healing [change] to occur.

- Brief Review of Relevant Literature:

Indigenous Ways of Knowing as a viable paradigm from which to teach and do counseling and therapy has just begun to emerge in the literature. Most of the literature addressing Native Americans and relevant processes have largely focused on the lack of adequate and effective approaches to treatment in addition to its excessive reporting of the problems faced by Native American populations (Eduardo & Bonnie Duran, 1995). It is imperative that a greater understanding, acceptance, and legitimacy in mental health care research, policy and practices on IWOK be included into the literature (Gone, 2010). In this effort, it is important for the reader to note that explaining any indigenous construct comes with many challenges, one being language constraints, and the other that some concepts, such as “space” are seemingly non-tangible,

abstract, and therefore may also seem immeasurable. Yet the hope with this research is to begin to bridge across two different epistemologies that may support one another in gaining a deeper understanding in the healing process and add increased competencies which will contribute greatly to the field of counseling psychology. Examining the synergistic relational aspect of the counseling alliance through a multidimensional faceted lens utilizing indigenous ways of knowing as a framework will broaden our view in facilitating the healing/change process.

This research seeks to provide an operational definition for the understanding of space within the counselor/client alliance as is understood from people who experience healing rituals and practices lead by Indigenous/Tribal doctors and medicine people. This research in no way is intended to suggest that Western practitioners should or could become Indigenous doctors or medicine people, rather it is to glean pertinent information from which to inform best practices in the field of counseling and psychology from a paradigm other than Western European science. Therefore it is important to note that this request is not intended to study the “processes” involved in conducting the “healing” experience, the researchers who themselves are indigenous scholars have determined that this is not acceptable in maintaining the integrity of the research in consideration of the Indigenous/Tribal people who graciously have allowed non-Tribal people to participate in their practices, many of which are considered very sacred and have been built and passed down from generations to people who devote their lives to healing. Therefore it is not appropriate to seek replication, or to describe the experience. We are in effect seeking to look beyond the structures of the experience to determine the constructs; the systematic thought processes, that inform the processes. More specifically, we are looking to identify a new theory in counseling that is grounded in Indigenous Thought.

The literature on “space” as a viable and operationalizable construct in counseling psychology is primarily focused on theories that were established under Western European notions of science. Concepts of space from a western paradigm may include architectural space, physical space, psychological space, theoretical space and so on (Tuhiwai Smith, 2009). Indigenous practitioners understand that considering the multidimensional “spaces” where healing takes place are just as important as what happens within those multidimensional spaces. In this way, a more multifaceted holistic view of the person/client considering the multidimensionalities associated with psychological, physical, spiritual and soul/emotions which may enhance the facilitation process of change. Indigenous healers and medicine people understand the concept of space as multidimensional and therefore western scientific thinking does not encompass or take account the various aspects and dimensions of the person/client/community that may facilitate the change process. For example Carl Rogers’ emphasis on the core conditions of counseling/psychotherapy include unconditional positive regard as an important construct of reaching higher levels of self-actualization (Berk, 2007). Concepts of “space” can easily be inferred regarding the perception of positiveness as an environmental condition for change to take place. However, numerous other variables and considerations for the creation of space from which change can take place in a desirable and effective manner are left out of the literature. While counseling and psychotherapy models abound with notions of non-tangible variables such as “positive regard” as impacting our ability to facilitate change in clients and patients, space as a vital component of counseling has been left out.

The purpose of this study is to operationalize the construct of “space” from an IWOK paradigm. This research is concerned with the deliberate and intentional creation of space as a primary facilitator in assisting clients with the change process. Therefore the literature review for

engagement in this study will primarily be focused on concepts of space as is directly addressed in receiving clients into a working alliance with them.

The overarching research question is: What constructs do participants of indigenous practices credit to the facilitation of their perceived achievement of change/growth as a result of their experience in an Indigenous healing venue?

Part III: Research Plan

- Setting/Facilities

In building upon the previously funded request (2011), this research will engage both qualitative research methods common in social sciences for determining the essence of an experience, and a form of anthropological research known as *participant observation*. Participant observation is a form of fieldwork that is the foundation of cultural anthropology (Bernard, 2006), where researchers immerse themselves in a setting for the specific purpose of studying it to glean information. Thus, researchers will maintain a field journal with the specific purpose of recording information pertinent to their understanding of the constructs involved in the processes of healing that are taking place. These notes are strictly relative to their own perceptions and intended to promote further dialogue on identified constructs throughout the experience. The nature of the field notes will fall under the categorization of *unobtrusive observation* as informed by ethnographic research methods (Bernard, 2006).

In-depth interviews will be conducted on an additional 4 to 6 individuals drawn from a convenience sample of participants who engage in an indigenous healing experience scheduled for May 2012; and who agree to participate in the research following their experience. Investigators will conduct the interviews in person and/or by phone or e-mail with follow-up dialogues when deemed necessary to elaborate on emerging themes in the use and understanding of space in the therapeutic alliance for counselors and therapists. The interviews will take place at a convenient location for the practitioner/participant and be agreed upon via phone and/or email.

- Procedures (data collection, data analysis)

The primary research methodology that will be utilized in this research is qualitative. The researchers will use in-depth interviewing in order to find out how selected participants think about and experience the concept of space in their experience of healing in an indigenous venue. Building on the previous research study, where “Eight to ten participants will be selected from a purposeful and convenient sample of people that utilize indigenous methodologies to inform their personal work or in their career.” These participants were selected through social networking, and while in the process, the researchers were invited to participate in an indigenous healing experience in Peru. This slightly changed the nature of the previous study from learning about how practitioners *learned* to create and the space for their clients in session, to how they themselves experienced the spaces from their Indigenous teachers. Building on this research, the researchers will add to the data the experiences of lay [not counselors/practionares], but the “clients” themselves who are not looking to apply the learning to their respective practices, but who are seeking the services themselves for specific purposes they themselves identify. Thus, In-depth interviews will be conducted on a sample of Americans, who are engaging in an indigenous healing experience in Peru. Four to six participants will be recruited from a group of Americans who are traveling to Peru in May, 2012 to participate in a 10 day traditional

indigenous healing experience in the tradition of the Peruvian Amazon Tribal people. Participants will be recruited through social networking channels, following leads from participants that recommend others who are planning to participate in the May 2012 trip.

Following their experience, participants will be first contacted via email or phone to discuss available dates to schedule a 60 to 90 minute single session interview and agreed upon follow-up interviews as deemed necessary for clarification of concepts or themes. Participants will be interviewed by Dr. Lisa Grayshield (professor) and graduate student (Laura Luna). All participants will be provided with an informed consent with a brief overview of the goals of the study where a pseudonym will be created to protect the identity and confidentiality of the participants. Participants' interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed for emerging themes. The data will be analyzed for themes that may emerge and questions that may arise will be addressed in follow-up interviews. The results will be reported to the participants along with any conclusions drawn for accuracy of interpretation. All participants will be provided with a copy of their transcribed interview and may elect to delete or rephrase any information provided during the interview. Maintaining the purpose for which this research is being conducted--- To examine the experiences of, the *spaces* that were created which facilitated growth/change as identified by the participants.

Transcriptions will be kept in locked file cabinet in Dr. Grayshield's office where only the investigators will have access. All audio recordings will be destroyed after transcriptions are completed. In-depth interviews will be conducted in accordance with Grounded Theory (Fassinger, 2005) and phenomenological research methodology (Wertz, 2005). Narrative interviews will follow a semi-structured approach. Grounded Theory allows for some structure in organizing and presenting questions to participants, but allows them to tell their stories without interference, (Fassinger, 2005). Phenomenological research methodology was originally developed by the philosopher Edmund Husserl in an attempt to broaden the concepts and methods of modern science to include the study of consciousness. Space, as a construct of counseling psychology, must be studied from a phenomenological perspective given the limitations of Western scientific method in recognizing relationships from a multi-dimensional perspective.

- Study Timeline

The interviews will take place immediately after an indigenous healing experience with a healing practitioner. The interviews will take place during the months of May, June and July of 2012. The data will be compiled into transcription manuscripts and analyzed during the Months of August, September, and October. The write-up for the study is scheduled to commence by December of 2012.

- Use of findings/dissemination of results

The results of the study will be reported in publication format and submitted to the Journal of Multi-cultural Counseling Development (ACA).

Part IV: Budget and Budget Justification

Qualitative research is highly rigorous and engaging taking significant time and constant reflexivity throughout the entire research process beginning with the conceptualization of the research question (Agee, 2009). Qualitative researchers extensively rely on in-depth interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) and therefore it is important for the qualitative researcher to

capture even the slightest physical movement as well as the unspoken and energetic exchanges occurring (Agee, 2009) in the spaces created by indigenous healers. Given the methodological framework of this study, utilizing grounded theory and reflexive science, which includes researcher as a participant it is important for the researchers to participate in healing rituals led by Indigenous practitioners. Given the networks the researchers have established with communities in Peru, a viable opportunity to engage in healing practices is present and will provide an additional avenue to identify participants for the current study. The goal of this study is to conduct interviews with a minimum of 5 to 6 participants. Due to the use of in-depth interviewing through a phenomenological framework, several interviews may need to be conducted before data saturation is reached (Amedeo, 1997), therefore identifying more participants is deemed necessary for this purpose.

Travel to and from Peru for Dr. Lisa Grayshield & Laura Luna for and Indigenous Way of Knowing healing experience under the direction and supervision of Indigineous Healing Practitioners for the specified purpose of studying the concept of space from and indigenous perspective.

- **Total = \$2000**
- **Travel for conferences or presentations is not permissible**

Part V: References

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Grant Evaluation Scale

The Research Committee will review grant proposals based on the rating system below. You will be rated on 9 areas of your proposal. Ensure you carefully prepare your proposal to meet these requirements.

1=Minimally meets criteria, but this aspect of the proposal is weak
2=Adequate for consideration of the proposal, but not a strength area
3=Clear, precise, valid presentation of this aspect
4=Commendably above average presentation of this aspect
5=Excellent presentation of this aspect

The various aspects of your proposal to be rated:

1. The proposal demonstrates/explains the value the project has for promoting the applicant's research agenda, including potential contributions to the applicant's future pursuit of external grant funding.
2. The proposal demonstrates/explains the value that the project has to the applicant's field/discipline.
3. The review of the literature provides sufficient background to justify the study.
4. The objectives of the proposal are clearly stated.
5. The procedures and methods are clearly explained.
6. The procedures and methods are adequate to achieve objectives.
7. The project is manageable within prescribed time limits.
8. The uses to be made of the findings are clearly stated and substantial.
9. The budget and justification of expenses are valid.

Applicant: _____

1=Minimally meets criteria, but this aspect of the proposal is weak
 2=Adequate for consideration of the proposal, but not a strength area
 3=Clear, precise, valid presentation of this aspect
 4=Commendably above average presentation of this aspect
 5=Excellent presentation of this aspect

1. _____ The proposal demonstrates/explains the value the project has for promoting the applicant's research agenda, including potential contributions to the applicant's future pursuit of external grant funding.

Comments:

2. _____ The proposal demonstrates/explains the value that the project has to the applicant's field/discipline.

Comments:

3. _____ The review of the literature provides sufficient background to justify the study.

Comments:

4. _____ The objectives of the proposal are clearly stated.

Comments:

5. _____ The procedures and methods are clearly explained.

Comments:

6. _____ The procedures and methods are adequate to achieve objectives.

Comments:

7. _____ The project is manageable within prescribed time limits.

Comments:

8. _____ The uses to be made of the findings are clearly stated and substantial.

Comments:

9. _____ The budget and justification of expenses are valid.

Comments:

_____ Total Score