

June 23, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Carl W. Lejuez, Ph.D. 
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: New Graduate Certificate in Life Story Practice and Research

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve a new Graduate Certificate in Life Story Practice and Research in the School of Nursing.

BACKGROUND:

Life stories play a vital role in promoting the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. They are increasingly the focus of academic research and practice in many disciplines including psychology, social work, anthropology, history, linguistics, technology, health sciences, nursing, and gerontology. The purpose of this online certificate program is to prepare graduate students and professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to conduct life story interventions and/or programs with individuals, families, and groups.

At the completion of this one-year program (Fall, Spring, Summer), students will be able to:

1. Analyze the similarities and differences in life story approaches for individuals, families, and groups.
2. Evaluate the effect of life story best practices on the health and well-being of individuals and groups.
3. Develop a plan to conduct life story sessions for a particular individual, family or group.
4. Implement life story methods with individuals, families, or groups.
5. Evaluate process and outcomes related to life story sessions.

There are no known online Life Story Research and Practice certificate programs. This Life Story certificate program is unique in that it will encompass all approaches from reminiscence and life review to narrative and oral history. This fully-online program will be administered through the Graduate School and the School of Nursing.

Request for New UConn Academic Degree Program

General Information

Name of degree program:	Graduate Certificate in Life Story Practice and Research
Name of sponsoring Department:	N/A
Name of sponsoring College:	School of Nursing
Campuses:	Program Entirely Online
Contact persons:	Juliette Shellman
Type of Proposal:	New
Type of Program:	Graduate Certificate
Entrepreneurial program, approved by Provost's Office:	Yes
Tuition for the program approved by Provost's Office:	Fee-based
CIP Code:	Unknown

Justification for the New Program

There are no known online Life Story Research and Practice certificate programs. The Life Story Practice and Research Certificate Program evolved because the University of Wisconsin – Superior (UWS) Center for Continuing Education provided a Reminiscence and Life Review Online Certificate Program (non-credit), but the program manager retired and UWS decided to stop the program. The program was successful with 45 students graduating since the program's start in 2014. Only 10 students, as reported by the Program Manager, withdrew from the program. According to UWS, 33 potential students have inquired about the program. The last cohort from UWS graduated in November 2019. Juliette Shellman, the initiator of the Graduate Certificate in Life Story Practice and Research at UConn was involved in the UWS program as a developer and instructor. There are online programs such as Narrative Medicine at Columbia University and Guided Autobiography from UCLA. This Life Story certificate program is unique in that it will encompass all approaches from reminiscence and life review to narrative and oral history.

Are there similar programs in CT or elsewhere?

No.

What are the desired learning outcomes of the program?

At the completion of this one-year program (Fall, Spring, Summer), students will be able to:

1. Analyze the similarities and differences in life story approaches for individuals, families, and groups.

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2. Evaluate the effect of life story best practices on the health and well-being of individuals and groups.
3. Develop a plan to conduct life story sessions for a particular individual, family or group.
4. Implement life story methods with individuals, families, or groups.
5. Evaluate process and outcomes related to life story sessions.

Program Description

Life stories play a vital role in promoting the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. They are increasingly the focus of academic research and practice in many disciplines including psychology, social work, anthropology, history, linguistics, technology, health sciences, nursing, and gerontology. The purpose of this online certificate program is to prepare graduate students and professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to conduct life story interventions and/or programs with individuals, families, and groups. Students must have a baccalaureate degree to apply. This certificate program is open to students from all disciplines. The program consists of five sequential courses (Spring, Summer, Fall).

This program requires the completion of two, 3-credit didactic courses including NURSXXXX Foundations of Life Story Practice and Research, and NURS XXXX Life Story Methods. The didactic courses will be followed by three, 2 credit courses including NURSXXXX Seminar in Life Story Innovations and Practice, NURSXXXX Fieldwork I in Life Story Innovations and Practice, and NURS XXXX Fieldwork II in Life Story Innovations and Practice.

Proposed Graduate Catalogue Copy

The School of Nursing offers a 12 credit online certificate program in Life Story Practice and Research. The purpose of this online certificate program is to prepare graduate students and professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to conduct life story interventions and/or programs with individuals, families, and groups. Students will examine different life story methods including written and oral narratives, reminiscence, life review, autobiographical memory, and guided autobiography. Two fieldwork courses provide opportunities for students to apply life story methods under the mentorship of experts in the field. Required Courses: NURS 5191 Foundations of Life Story Practice and Research, NURS 5193 Life Story Methods, NURS 5194 Seminar in Life Story Practice and Research, NURS 5190 Fieldwork I in Life Story Practice and Research, NURS 5192 Fieldwork II in Life Story Practice and Research.

Faculty Involvement

Juliette Shellman will play a key role in the development of the program working with CETL to develop the online courses. Faculty from the International Center for Life Story Innovations and Practice (ICLIP) will also play an important role in teaching and advising students in the program (<https://iclip.nursing.uconn.edu/our-team/>). ICLIP, a university approved center, is

housed within the School of Nursing. The Life Story Practice and Research Certificate Program fits well with the mission of the Center. Mission The International Center for Life Story Innovations and Practice (ICLIP) brings together researchers, educators, practitioners, students, historians, and artists from around the world to promote the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through written and oral narratives, personal histories, reminiscence, life review, autobiographical memory, and guided autobiographies. With the overarching goal of generating new knowledge in this emerging field, ICLIP provides a collaborative infrastructure to establish programs of research, implement educational programs, develop innovative applications in practice, and disseminate life story best practices. The Center (<https://iclip.nursing.uconn.edu/>) is a membership organization that includes life story experts from around the world as well as UConn faculty and students from other schools and departments. While the School of Nursing will provide faculty support (Juliette Shellman, Millicent Malcolm, Thomas Long) for teaching within the certificate program, ICLIP members will serve as preceptors/mentors for the Fieldwork I and Fieldwork II courses lessening the workload for UConn.

Enrollment and graduate projections

10-15.

Program Evaluation

The program will be evaluated through the following indicators: 1) Course evaluations: we will monitor course evaluations for the five courses that are part of the certificate program. 2) Certificate completion: we will monitor the percentage of participants who complete all five courses. Exit interviews will be conducted with any student withdrawing from the program to identify the reasons for the withdrawal. 3) Alumni surveys: online surveys for graduates to gather data regarding their perceptions about program strengths and areas for improvement in regard to preparing them to utilize life story approaches in research, education, and practice.

Program Administration

The program will be administered through the Graduate School and the School of Nursing. The Program Director, Juliette Shellman, will be responsible for admissions, advising and oversight. Future programmatic changes will be discussed with Associate Dean Angela Starkweather as well as other faculty involved in the program.

Funding and Financial Resources Needed

None at this time. Administrative assistance may be needed depending on enrollment.

Other Resource Needs

This is a fully online program. Initially, I will work with CETL to develop the courses.

Consultation with other potentially affected units

The School of Social Work, the Human Development and Family Sciences Department have been enthusiastically supportive of the International Center for Life Story Innovations and Practice from the beginning through faculty and student membership and collaborations in the development of the Center. It is anticipated that this certificate program will have a positive impact on other units providing more opportunities for interdisciplinary practice and research collaborations and additional course offerings for students interested in Life Story.

Who can apply to this program?

Internal applicants (current UConn students enrolled in another UConn degree or certificate program)

External applicants (individuals who are not currently UConn students)

Anticipated term and year of first enrollment

Spring 2021

Admission Requirements

Baccalaureate degree with minimum of a 3.0 GPA.

Required for application:

- Personal statement
- 1 letter of recommendation

Term(s) to which students will be admitted

- Spring

Application deadline: Unsure at this time

Initiator

Juliette Shellman, School of Nursing, juliette.shellman@uconn.edu, 860-212-4044

Program Director Name

Juliette Shellman, School of Nursing, juliette.shellman@uconn.edu, 860-212-4044

Administrative Contact Email

Juliette Shellman, School of Nursing, juliette.shellman@uconn.edu, 860-212-4044