PROPOSAL TO LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL GRANTS
Marquette Faculty Fellowship Proposal

Name: Rae Taylor College/Department: CSS/Criminal Justice

Rank: Assistant Professor

Title of Project: Human Trafficking in New Orleans: Covenant House Data Collection and Analysis
Year of Project Summer 2014

Project Summary (100 words):
Acting as principal investigator, I will oversee a team of four Loyola co-researchers in a study of homeless and marginally housed youth seeking services at the Covenant House New Orleans. This study will be part of a nationwide replication study, as we were approached by researchers at Fordham University who conducted a study at Covenant House New York to establish prevalence and service needs of the homeless youth in their client population who had been victims of labor and/or sex trafficking. We will use their validated survey instrument, augmented with New Orleans-specific interview questions to establish nature and scope of human trafficking among youth in the New Orleans area. This research will inform local intervention and policy efforts, as well as contribute to important nationwide efforts to establish prevalence and determine needs of this vulnerable population.

Stipend ($400) Budget Justification:
An additional $400 will be used for interviewing supplies and travel expenses associated with conducting interviews for the research team.

Supplies: Digital Voice Recorder for Interviews: $150
Recording interviews is common for social researchers and encouraged by qualitative methodology experts, as it allows the researcher to focus on the qualitative data being gathered, rather than taking notes and trying to capture responses accurately and completely. Further, it can be very distracting to the natural conversational flow of an in-depth interview for a researcher to act also as a note taker.

*This DVR request is for this applicant, but would be shared with one other research team member. An additional recorder is being requested through another grant application (see Dr. Laura Murphy’s Faculty Research Grant Proposal) for the two other researchers to share.
Transportation costs: $250.00
We estimate about 30 trips total to the Covenant House through the months of May and June to interview clients. Round trip from Loyola to the Covenant House (611 N. Rampart St.) is 14.32 miles. At the university mileage reimbursement rate of $0.56, this would cost approximately 250.00.

Where will the results be published, exhibited or performed?
The results of this study will be published first in a research report (i.e. white paper) format and submitted to the Fordham University research team who has approached us to conduct this replication study. The full report will also have contributions from other replication sites around the country. After the study with the Covenant House, we plan to use the research instrument at other sites in the New Orleans area to interview other survivors of human trafficking, expanding the initial data collection and analysis. After the study is complete and the report submitted to Fordham, we intend to write a social science research paper (or papers, depending on the extent of our findings) and submit it for publication in a top tier social science peer-reviewed journal (or multiple journals if findings lead to multiple papers). Additionally, we will be presenting individual components of the study at human trafficking and criminology conferences in the 2014-2015 academic year, as well as to local groups and city officials.

What other sources of funding (internal and external) have you identified for this project?
While Covenant House is seeking funding from a donor to support this project, that funding will support their own costs incurred from the research and will not overlap with the funding provided by this fellowship. In addition, Dr. Laura Murphy has submitted a faculty research grant proposal to fund an additional digital voice recorder (two are needed for simultaneous interviewing in separate rooms) for participant incentives, and for an undergraduate research assistant.

List years and amounts of prior Loyola University faculty grants (for the last three years):

2011- First-Year Seminar for Non-Traditional Students Collaborative Grant: Awarded through the Common Curriculum Implementation Task Force Provost-Funded Grants to develop FYS for evening division students. $1,500 per honoree


2010- Loyola University Course Development Grant: $1,876.00 Comparative Criminology and the Restorative Justice Movement: A Study of the United States and Scandinavia.

2009- Loyola University Faculty Development Grant: $2,475 National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) Basic and Advanced Crisis Response Training.

Does your research involve human subjects? _X_ Yes  ____ No. If yes, funding for this project is contingent on receiving IRB approval. If you have IRB approval prior to
submitting your proposal, please attach the approval memo to your application. If you do not have IRB approval at the time of your submission, please complete the IRB protocol as soon as possible after your proposal submission.

We intend to submit our IRB application by the end of November. We are in the latter stages of writing the IRB protocols, and are guided largely by the approved IRB application used by Fordham University in the original study we are replicating.

I have submitted the Employee Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.  yes

I have read and understand the University’s reimbursement policy. yes

Narrative Description of Project:

Background
In May 2013, a group of researchers from Fordham University conducted a study at Covenant House New York to establish prevalence and service needs of the homeless youth in their client population who had been victims of labor and/or sex trafficking. From this study, a report was released and the original researchers have reached out to a team of experts at Loyola to be a part of a nationwide replication study. If provided the resources through this fellowship, I will be acting as principal investigator for the four-member research team of Loyola experts in the New Orleans replication study with Covenant House New Orleans. This role designates me as the researcher in charge of the study, wherein I will coordinate interviews with homeless and marginally housed youth seeking services at the Covenant House New Orleans (we have full cooperation and enthusiasm of their staff), oversee the data collection by other three researchers and student research assistant, assemble the data collected into a dataset for quantitative and qualitative data analysis, and conduct the statistical and qualitative analysis. Finally, I will be the senior author of our research report where we report our methodology and findings, and I will be a co-author of the subsequent peer-reviewed journal articles and co-presenter for local and professional conference presentations. In addition to myself (among my areas of expertise are lethal and non-lethal violent crime and victimology- see attached CV), the team consists of Drs. Laura Murphy (English), Christian Bolden (Criminal Justice), and Brenda Vollman (Criminal Justice).

Study Design
For the New Orleans study, we will administer the same survey instrument validated by the Fordham research team (this instrument will also be used at the other replication sites around the U.S.), but augmented with open-ended questions specific to the New Orleans population (providing qualitative data collection and analysis). The interviews will be conducted by the four research team members with the aid of a paid undergraduate student research assistant. The Covenant House New Orleans Executive Director, Mr. Jim Kelly, has enthusiastically agreed to fully cooperate our study, allowing us to conduct the interviews at the Covenant House where these youth will be receiving services and shelter, recruiting participants for us, and facilitating communication with other social services agencies around the city we may be able to later approach for expansion of the study.
We will administer the surveys/interviews to approximately 150 Covenant House New Orleans clients, ages 18 and over. The survey instrument will allow us to identify those who have been trafficked using terminology and an approach that has been tested and deemed to be effective in collecting these types of data by experts in the area of trafficking. We are hopeful that we can move to other New Orleans social services agencies after the conclusion of this study in July using the same instrument to expand our investigation into the nature and scope of human trafficking in New Orleans.

Each interview will be conducted by one of the research team members, all of whom have extensive experience and expertise in research of a sensitive nature with vulnerable populations. Each interview will be voice recorded, later transcribed by the student assistant. Per IRB protocols we have outlined, we will guarantee confidentiality for each research respondent, as no identifying information will be collected or recorded. In addition, conducting the interviews on site at the Covenant House allows for the accessibility of counselors and various social service professionals to address any problems that may arise from the subjects recounting their experiences with homeless and other social issues, and, as we anticipate, trafficking victimization. As is common with research of this nature, each participant will be offered an incentive for his/her participation in the form of a $10 Rouses gift card (pending approval of Dr. Laura Murphy’s grant proposal).

After the data collection phase in May and the first part of June, I will begin coding the quantitative and qualitative data, which should take approximately two weeks. I will then conduct analysis on the data, including statistical analyses as well as qualitative content analyses of the open-ended interview questions. This should take about two weeks. During the month of July, I will complete any remaining data analysis and write the research report to be submitted to Fordham and to Loyola, in compliance with the Marquette Fellowship requirement. This writing process, including first draft, review by the research team, and revisions, should take about one month. We plan to have the report submitted to Fordham and Loyola in early August.

We have nearly completed our IRB application, guided largely by the IRB approval granted to the Fordham team. We anticipate approval from Loyola’s IRB as well, particularly since the instrument we are using has been validated previously and because we are focusing on clients ages 18 and over.

**Study Significance**

One of the most significant components of this study is estimating prevalence of human trafficking in the New Orleans area. There is a severe shortage of data on prevalence and all the various forms of human trafficking in the U.S., and studies such as these in major cities (particularly tourism-heavy port cities, such as New Orleans) are absolutely critical in identifying nationwide prevalence and determining the nature and scope of the phenomenon. Our sample of Covenant House youth clients will allow us entrée to one of the most at-risk groups; those who are young, homeless, and essentially hidden from society. This is an ideal scenario for studying the trafficking phenomenon and we are grateful for the opportunity to take part in this nationwide study on human trafficking. The goals of this study proposal are both consistent with the Jesuit mission and emphasis in social justice, and is pioneering in the way of social research in this understudied, puzzling phenomenon: a phenomenon we know exists in our community. Our
goal is to establish prevalence, gain understanding into the nature and scope of human trafficking in the New Orleans area, and to inform the law enforcement and social services community in hopes of reaching out to this population with potential life-saving interventions. In addition, our data and findings will contribute to the larger nationwide study on human trafficking which began with the Fordham team.

**Timetable**

The interviews will be conducted during May and June by the research team. After data collection, I will begin data cleaning and coding, creating both a quantitative data set and a set of qualitative findings. Throughout the remainder of the summer (i.e. half of June and all of July), I will analyze the data we collect and prepare our research report to be submitted to the Fordham team.

**Plans for Publication**

Upon completion of the project, we plan to prepare a research report of our findings, which will be sent to Fordham, and also to the Covenant House and other local service providers. Following those initial reports, we will write at least one, but likely two to three, scholarly articles for publication in peer-reviewed social science journals. We will also present the findings of this study at several national professional conferences. The research report will also be submitted to Loyola in conjunction with the Marquette Fellowship report.