

# **Teaching Sabbatical**

## **Lessons learned from a semester at The School of Nursing UCLA**



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STINT – The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research  
and Higher Education

## Foreword

I first heard about STINT from Karin Enskär, my colleague at Jönköping University. Karin who is a professor at the Department of Nursing had received a Teaching Sabbatical scholarship at the National University of Singapore. Her stay during the fall semester 2013 was a great experience and our discussions made me curious. I collected information about the scholarship and application procedure from the STINT website, thought about it, and spoke to my family. *“Could this be something for us?”* We thought it was very interesting, but decided to wait. I also spoke to Ewa Wigaeus Tornqvist, Dean at Hälsohögskolan about my thoughts. She was positive and very supportive. Time passed by quickly and in January 2016 I saw a flyer by the copier at my department informing about the application process for the scholarship. I felt *“Now’s the time!”*, spoke to my family who agreed. After getting approval from Karin and Ewa, who were my bosses, I started to write on my application. A funny thing is that a couple of weeks later I met Per Nilsen, professor at Linköping University. Per is a great friend and research collaborator. We spoke about STINT and I described the Teaching Sabbatical scholarship. I think I passed on some positive vibes, since he soon began on his own application. After an intensive summer, writing on my application, I got an approval from Jönköping University to submit. I was very happy when I was selected to be interviewed by Hans Pohl and Christofer Carlsson in October 2016. A nervous wait followed. Then, on December 21st, I received an email, I had been selected as a STINT-fellow at UCLA, Los Angeles. My family and I were overwhelmed! *“What a great Christmas present!”* I had in my application written that I had been at UCLA before and still had research links, but was open to whatever university would be suggested, assuming my application was accepted. During the interview, we discussed several options, and just briefly mentioned UCLA, so I was a bit surprised. However, I’m very happy for the decision from a professional perspective and my family and I greatly enjoyed our stay in Los Angeles. I soon heard from Per that he had received a scholarship for The Chinese University of Hong Kong. So, in the end we both ended up as STINT scholars, but on different continents. We have, as a consequence, shared many discussions about pedagogical experiences during, but above all after our sabbaticals, comparing our teaching experiences at The Chinese University of Hong Kong and UCLA (which might be an unexpected, but positive bonus for STINT?).

I am of course much obliged for this opportunity provided by STINT. It was great to step out of my comfort zone and be engaged at such an internationally renowned university as UCLA. As a professor, I have sometimes missed the possibility to reflect over *“the pedagogical tools”* I use. A recurrent thought I have is: *“How can I renew my teaching?”*. Another pedagogical challenge related to clinical practice is: *“How can we optimize the use of our skills lab Jönköping University?”*. STINT gave me the possibility to explore these questions. I have seen new teaching techniques, and practiced at a well-equipped skills lab. The scholarship also gave me time to reflect over different *“teaching styles”*. Time passed by quickly, but I am sure that my teaching at Jönköping University will be different in the future. My experiences about *“podcasts as lectures”* will be a new tool most certainly used in upcoming courses. I am eager to share my reflections on these experiences with my colleagues back home.

## **Introduction**

In my current position as professor in Health and Nursing Science at Jönköping University I devote 50% of my time to teaching, including lecturing, supervising seminars, and acting as examiner in different courses at bachelor's and master's degree programs as well as at PhD level. I have, all in all been teaching for almost twenty years at two different universities, Linköping and Jönköping, 10 years at each. I still remember the warm positive feeling I had during my first semester as a lecturer at Linköping University 20 years ago. I was so proud. Years have passed, but I still have a strong interest in, and truly enjoy all aspects of teaching. I also supervise PhD students, often in clinically based research projects conducted, one way or the other, in a sleep medicine context. Pedagogical topics are often discussed.

I have in this report, based on my experiences and reflections, followed the outline requested by STINT. I will also try to recapture my experiences regarding general issues of various type, such as the VISA application procedure, housing, which is a big and important issue, but also the approach to daily life issues in Los Angeles. But above all, the challenges and activities as a visiting professor at the Department of Nursing at UCLA will be focused. Being a scholar at UCLA was a great pleasure, but there are many "non-pedagogical tasks" to deal with before and early after arrival, involving different people, so being patient and having a flexible attitude is of great importance. I hope this report will help future STINT scholars to understand the challenges and be well prepared. I will also reflect over pedagogical lessons I have learned, make comparisons to my teaching at the Department of Nursing at Jönköping University and come up with some implications for educational planning and future teaching at Jönköping University.

## **Preparation and Planning**

### *Initial contacts and "pre-planning"*

In early January 2017 I was informed by STINT that Professor Lynn Doering (Associate Dean for Student & Academic Affairs at the Department of Nursing at UCLA) was my academic contact. Ms. Sheila Davis (HR Director), Stephanie Stern (Senior Personnel Academic Manager) and Willie Dawson (Senior Administrative Analyst) would be my administrative contacts. I had read reports from previous STINT scholars at UCLA and was keen to find out what I was expected to do. I wanted to be well prepared and plan beforehand. Hence, I immediately emailed all four to set the date for my planning trip and to start the discussion about my tasks. It took a couple of weeks before I received a proper reply, which I perceived as a bit frustrating since I was so enthusiastic. I later understood that Professor Doering was very busy at the time heading an important National review of the UCLA School of Nursing. However, after a couple of reminders I received a welcoming email from Professor Doering. I was instructed to study the Student Handbook for the School of Nursing

that described the courses at Bachelor-, Master-, and PhD level. I read the handbook carefully and studied the programs, but it was difficult to get a grip of the content since the descriptions in general were brief. I also scrutinized the faculty roster to identify people teaching courses of interest. I made suggestions to Professor Doering of people I wished to meet. The date for my arrival was set to the 5<sup>th</sup> of April. At the same time, parallel to my inquiries regarding my teaching role, we set about examining different housing options, both through UCLA and different web-sites. My intention was to have a predetermined program, including meetings with Professor Doering, different faculty I had identified as important, and all the administrative contacts, as well as a suitable housing option before I left Sweden. Despite several email reminders I left for my week-long planning trip excited, but a bit frustrated, since no schedule or meetings were decided. Happily, my wife had on HomeAway found a small house located in Santa Monica that seemed to suit our requests.

### *Planning trip*

### *Arriving at Los Angeles airport*

We flew out from Stockholm on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April and arrived on schedule at Los Angeles airport. We are used to travel, but arriving at LAX was a bit stressful. However, after all documents had been scrutinized by mildly interested custom inspectors we received our baggage and ordered an Uber to get to *The Tiverton House*, a hotel in Westwood.



The hotel can be recommended, not only for being nice, clean and cheap, but foremost since it is ideally located close to the campus in the center of Westwood. The friendly staff and small kitchen, where we could prepare own food, were other things we appreciated.



Even if being a bit jet-lagged, we directly went for a walk to take a look at the neighborhood. Westwood is a small, nice and wealthy commercial and residential neighborhood surrounding UCLA. Around fifty thousand people with a generally high level of income and moderately diverse ethnicity are living in the neighborhood. There are several motion picture theaters, restaurants and small shops to be found in walking distance from the campus area. The modern Hammer Museum, known for its artist-centric and progressive array of exhibitions and public programs is one of the taller buildings located in the center. The houses are nicely kept and exclusive, in many cases inhabited by UCLA faculty.



We initially saw Westwood as a suitable option for our stay during the fall. However, housing is very expensive and we soon understood that even small, relatively run-down two room apartments were on the limit of our budget. Another aspect was the high number of homeless people, one in each and every corner, in many cases suffering from some sort of abuse or mental illnesses. Sadly, we learned that the number have increased in all areas in Los Angeles during the last couple of years, even in wealthy areas, such as Westwood. So, even if I voted for Westwood with its closeness to UCLA, I happily agreed to look for housing elsewhere.



### *Initial experiences of UCLA*

I was as thrilled by the feeling of walking around the sunny UCLA's campus area as I was being a new employee at Linköping University 20 years ago. A lot of students were enjoying the warm April weather and studied outdoors. I sensed a lot of “*positive energy*”!



UCLA enrolls about 31 000 undergraduate and 13 000 graduate students. The university had 119 000 applicants for Fall 2016, including transfer applicants, the most applicants for any American university. In 2017–2018, US News & World Report ranked UCLA as the #1 public university in the United States in a tie with its sister campus, UC Berkeley. The university is organized into six undergraduate colleges, seven professional schools, and four professional health science schools. When walking the campus, I soon identified The Factor building, one of the tallest buildings on campus, where the School of Nursing is located.

I hoped that all practical matters could be solved, that I could establish all necessary academic contacts and that my teaching task could be defined while I still was available in Los Angeles. I travelled with my wife and youngest daughter and the plan was, while I had my meetings, they should take care of practical matters, such as housing, use of public transports, malls for shopping and suitable activities for the family in the area where we planned to stay during the fall.

### *Meetings at the UCLA*

Even if nothing had been planned in advanced things worked out nicely. I was assigned a personal assistant, Carl Tyler, who picked me up at the Tiverton House every morning, guided me all over campus and helped to arrange my meetings. Carl, a very warm and caring person, always with a kind word to offer, took great care of me and became a great friend.



Unfortunately, Professor Doering was still very busy so I had to make appointments with several other faculty first. At this stage, with everything “a bit up in the air”, I focused on “selling” my teaching experiences and my own needs to all the faculty I met. I was eager to get an opportunity to co-teach a course or two to have a possibility to interact with and learn from another professor, if possible, in areas where I could bring back new valuable experience to Jönköping University. Hence, during the visit I had the following meetings:

My first day started with a meeting with Dr *Mary Ann Shinnick*, Director of the simulation lab at UCLA. I felt warmly welcome and very inspired. Dr Shinnick described the pedagogical foundation for the simulation lab and how it was used in different courses at different levels at the school. The premises and equipment, as well as the outline for different scenarios was of great interest and “spot on” in relation to my needs. I was very satisfied when we agreed that I should take part in two simulation courses during the fall semester. Next on the agenda was a lunch meeting with Dr *Eunice Lee*, Program director for the PhD program at the School of Nursing. We spoke about differences and similarities regarding content and layout of the PhD program at UCLA and Jönköping University. I expressed my interest in co-teaching a course, we identified a PhD course in qualitative methods as an option, but nothing was decided. In the end I sat in on several of the lectures and seminars in the course.

The second day began with a meeting with my administrative contacts; Ms. *Sheila Davis*, Ms. *Stephanie Stern* and Mr. *Willie Dawson*. Practical aspects regarding teaching obligations, UCLA policies, the VISA application procedure, need of insurance, public transportation, housing etc. was discussed and I was provided a lot of both oral and written information. Ms.

Stern made sure I met all administrative staff I needed to meet and gave invaluable support in preparing and following up on the extensive paperwork necessary to be accepted as a visiting scholar at UCLA. She was an invaluable asset in the process to waive out of UCLA's insurance, as well as in the preparation of my VISA application. After lunch, I had the pleasure to meet Professor *Mary Woo* who 15 years ago, when I was a young PhD student, kindly accepted my inquiry for a two-week auscultation at UCLA's sleep lab. We have thereafter both done research in obstructive sleep apnea and met at several international congresses during the years. Professor Woo is now deeply involved in the running of the simulation lab at UCLA and supervises several studies evaluating technical equipment used in the lab. I enthusiastically listened to her description of an ongoing study using a new eye-tracking device, a new pedagogical tool at the simulation lab. We decided that I during my stay should take part in a course during the fall quarter to become a certified simulation instructor at UCLA, as well as be a part of the discussed study. Above all, she also invited me as a guest at the MRI lab with access to a large data set. I was amazed.

Another person I was delighted to meet again was Associate professor Dr *Paul Macey*. Dr Macey, who along the years have published a lot of significant MRI studies on brain damage in obstructive sleep apnea, teach research design and quantitative methods at the School of Nursing. He happily shared valuable insights about his teaching approaches and we discussed his syllabuses in two courses on research design. Dr Macey gave me valuable tips about teaching at UCLA and became an inspiring discussant during my whole stay. We "hit it off" both regarding research and teaching and to my satisfaction shared some seminars and lectures during the fall quarter. I also met Dr *Jo-Ann Eastwood*, Program director for the MSN-Advanced Practice Nurse (APRN) Post license Program. Dr Eastwood teaches classes in different types of cardiovascular diseases, which interested me. We could unfortunately not identify any specific teaching options for me during the fall quarter, but decided to keep in touch for an auscultation in one of her classes. At the end of my visit I finally met with Professor *Doering* and we agreed that I would focus on Dr Shinnicks courses in the simulation lab, but also follow Dr Macey's two courses on research design. I was given the freedom to do auscultations in all courses I found interesting. We also decided that I should take some courses in research ethics, since I would take part in a research study on simulations. We also had time to watch several Olympic track & field athletes make their season debut in a local campus competition and UCLA lose vs Hawaii in a Volleyball game.





## *Initial experiences of Los Angeles*

Los Angeles, often called "The City of Angels", is huge. With a population of around 4 million in the central parts it is the second largest city in the United States. Including the metropolitan area figures over 13 million are mentioned, and if combining the Los Angeles and Long Beach areas, the estimated population rises to almost 19 million.



There are over 80 districts and neighborhoods that are merged into Los Angeles, covering an area of over 1 000 km<sup>2</sup>. This must be considered when deciding up on housing, as well as when travelling back and forth to the campus. Everyone said, *"You have to have a car in LA!"*. But at the same time, *"The traffic situation is terrible, especially in the morning and afternoon, so you often spend several hours a day in a car"*. Therefore, finding housing in "the right area" was of great importance. We wanted to try traveling by bus, the question was; *"Can we avoid having a car for daily transportation?"*. Our answer is, *"Yes, absolutely!"*. The public transportation system is poor, but there are plenty of buses connecting the districts, it takes time, the busses are slow, but the same goes for driving if you end up in a traffic jam.

## *Housing*

Housing in Los Angeles is extremely complicated to find and expensive. Since we travelled as a family, it was important to find decent accommodation. Directly as I received the confirmation in December we began to search housing. I contacted previous scholars and my administrative contacts at UCLA. To make a long story short, our intention was to find "a calm and nice neighborhood for the family, within reasonable distance from UCLA to an affordable price". We started to look at the Westwood and Santa Monica areas on HomeAway. After a couple of weeks, we found a small, but nice two-bedroom house located on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, 5 minutes' walk from restaurants and shops on Main Street, and the same distance to the lovely beach in Santa Monica. The rent for the house was reasonable since we could negotiate a bit based on our long-term agreement. The area was calm, which was important. It felt like "a small city in the big city" with a very laidback lifestyle. You could meet surfers with their boards at 7 AM, when you were on your way to work, as well as at 7 PM, when you got back from work. Shopping groceries was easy with Whole Foods Market, Trader Joes, and Ralph's, as well as several smaller shops in the close neighborhood. I took

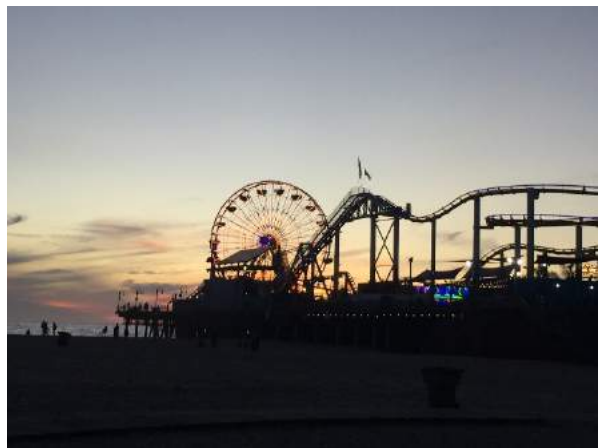
the #1 Big Blue Bus from Santa Monica to UCLA. A Tap card bought at UCLA valid from September to January for 33 USD gave me free rides on all Big Blue Bus lines in Los Angeles. There were busses every fifteenth minutes. Early in the morning or late in the evening the bus ride took approximately 45-60 minutes. All in all, we were extremely satisfied with our choice to stay in Santa Monica. Life was easy for the whole family!



Our small two-bedroom house located on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in lovely Santa Monica.



Urth Caffé, a cool place for organic coffee next to “my” bus stop on Main Street.



Surfers are frequent at the beach. The Santa Monica Pier is a place where people gather.

### *Planning and preparations post-planning trip - arrival at UCLA*

The period after the planning trip, until we arrived again in mid-August involved solving many practical matters. Many emails were exchanged with Ms. Stern regarding VISA and insurance issues. I also had an extensive correspondence with Dr Shinnick and Professor Woo. Below, I make some reference to the most important and time consuming practical matters we faced. Hopefully, our experiences and dealings with such matters may be helpful to other STINT scholars going to UCLA and Los Angeles in the future.

#### *VISA*

The VISA application requires substantial work in filling in numerous paperwork both on and off line, making an appointment at the American Embassy in Stockholm for interviews in good time, and making sure to get the VISA in time. We had great help by Ms. Stern at the School of Nursing, but even then, it was time consuming and stressful. At the time of our interview at the Embassy on June 13<sup>th</sup> we were informed that it could take up to six weeks before our passports could be returned. In the end we received them after one week. An important advice is to begin all preparations in time, be patient and document *everything*.

#### *Insurance*

UCLA demands you and your family to be insured. There is an established, but expensive insurance policy offered by Garnet and Powers. However, you have the possibility of wave out of their insurance if you provide proof of your own choice of insurance covering their very strict requirements. Understanding all requirements was difficult and I am very grateful to Jönköping University who provided me with an insurance from Europeiska, including a letter establishing exactly what it covered with respect to UCLA demands. The rest of my family bought supplementary insurances to our regular home insurance, which also had to be approved by UCLA. This process is as time consuming as the VISA procedure.

#### *Family issues*

An important advice is to take all family members interests and needs into consideration. Our initial plan was that my youngest daughter should take some courses at UCLA. However, Los Angeles has so much to offer in terms of museums, concerts, a wonderful climate and access to the beach, among other things, so these plans were cancelled. My wife was on leave and dedicated her time to supervising all activities and took care of the house keeping. All in all, we had a wonderful time. Be well prepared, chose housing carefully, arrive in time and deal with all mentioned matters as they occur. We arrived August 18th, well in time for the fall quarter, and even though I was well prepared, I needed time to get things in order and to settle in. I was very glad to have my wife who took care of all practical matters, as well as all support from faculty and staff at UCLA.

## The School of Nursing at UCLA

It was a great honor for me to do my STINT Teaching Sabbatical at UCLA. The Factor building that houses The School of Nursing is one of the tallest buildings in the modern area of campus and easy to identify.



The School of Nursing is ranked as one of the top nursing schools in the country with a long history regarding both teaching and groundbreaking nursing research. I learned in the student handbook that the undergraduate program in nursing was authorized by the Regents of the University of California in 1949. This led to the establishment of a Bachelor of Science degree and soon also a graduate program to award a Master of Science. In 1986, the Doctor of Nursing Science (DNSc) degree program was established. A change from DNSc to PhD in Nursing was accepted in 1995. The programs are approved by the Academic Senate of the University of California, the California Board of Registered Nursing, and are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Curricular oversight and periodic reviews are conducted by the UCLA Academic Senate's Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. UCLA holds accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In 2010, the existing bachelor's and master's degree programs were accredited for a term of 10 years.

The mission of the school is *"to prepare nurses and scholars to lead and transform nursing care in a rapidly changing, diverse and complex healthcare environment through academic excellence, innovative research, superior clinical practice, strong community partnerships, and global initiatives."* Research is a core component and the handbook states that research of all types *"from the laboratory bench to the patient's bedside, from pediatrics to geriatrics, from prevention to cause, ground-breaking advances are being driven by nursing research"* are included in the curricula.

Successful nursing students are, according to the Student Handbook, “*active learners who bring unique gender, cultural and ethnic life experiences to the professional practice of nursing and its advancement as a discipline*”. An interdisciplinary learning environment is used. Whether at the beginning practice, advanced practice, or scholar level, students should apply knowledge, skills and professional attitudes in their work, which may include educative, administrative and research arenas. While students have the right and responsibility to participate in their own learning, faculty members have the right and responsibility to structure the teaching/learning environment to facilitate learning. Individual academic counseling and a variety of one- on-one, small-group, and interactive learning formats assist students to meet program and individual learning goals.

A bachelor’s degree in Nursing is based on a 4-year full-time program combining theoretical and clinical courses. New undergraduate students are admitted once a year and recommended to be enrolled to a minimum of 12 units each quarter. The freshman year of the Curriculum plan includes courses in mathematics, English, chemistry, life science, communication/psychology and anatomy. The second year focuses on physiology, pathophysiology, epidemiology, biostatistics and research methods. During year three courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, pediatrics, fundamentals in nursing, and health promotion are studied, as well as two courses called Medical-Surgical A and B. The fourth year includes public health nursing, gerontology, critical care, mental health, integration and advanced leadership.



After successfully completing the program students receive a major in Nursing and eligibility to take the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX) to be licensed as a registered nurse. Students can also enter into the master's program that prepares nurses for clinical practice for the hospital or advanced practice nurses for roles as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and administrators in primary and acute care.

## **My activities at the School of Nursing**

I was titled visiting professor and granted a nice office on the third floor of the Factor building. My main activities included (1) teaching in the simulation lab together with Dr Shinnick; (2) participating in research projects related to simulations, brain damage and cognitive function together with Professor Woo; (3) acting as research discussant to members of the faculty and advising on research applications; and (4) sitting in on lectures and meetings at the department.

### *Preparations*

My first two weeks at UCLA was spent “studying”. As I was planned to take part in research conducted in the simulation lab I needed to show I had sufficient knowledge in ethics. Several UCLA courses in ethics included in the CITI program had to be taken and examined. The content was pretty basic, but some US related regulations made it a bit difficult. However, I passed the examinations in the 7 CITI modules with satisfactory results and was ready to participate in two studies evaluating teaching instruments and devices used at the simulation lab.

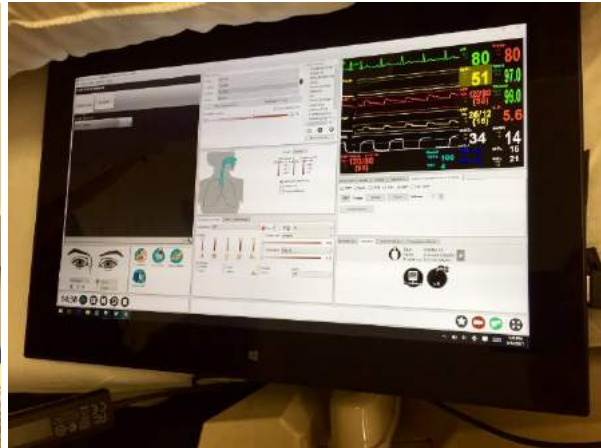
### *The simulation lab*

Initially, I took part in a UCLA course to become a certified simulation teacher. The course, given by Dr Shinnick included theories around teaching simulations, how to write scenarios, how to create a pedagogical climate, as well as how to give constructive feedback. A lot of practical training was also included. I did a lot of reading, going through studies describing different forms of pedagogical aspects of simulations to be well prepared.



I also spent time alone in the lab trying to get used to the equipment. I want to acknowledge Ricky Carrillo and Christian Cannady, Skills Lab Technicians, and Staff Research Associate

Cristina Cabrera-Mino who kindly advised me how to use equipment and hi-tech devices. All manikins had names. Mr. Seymour Salter, seen below, soon became “a friend”. The technical level of the manikins differed, some were basic, while others, were highly sophisticated. For example, Mr. Salter provided several palpable pulses, heart murmurs, and different types of pulmonary sounds, but could also blink and “speak”. Bedside monitors indicated his heart rate, blood pressure, ECG rhythm, saturation and several other parameters. As an instructor you could during the scenario manipulate all these parameters in relation to the disease/signs/symptoms in focus, as well as the students actions. All types of medication could be administered. This gave numerous options for “real life” scenarios to be created.

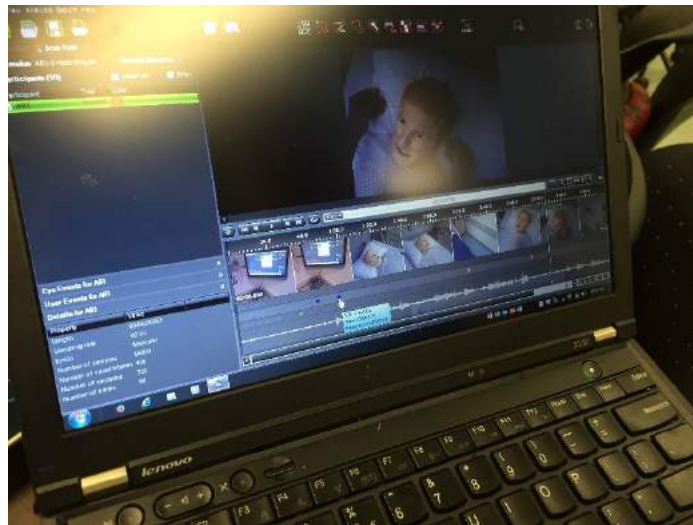


However, the most interesting device was without question the *Eye-tracking glasses* (seen below). Traditionally efforts to confirm competency in clinical situations include knowledge and skill tests, but there is a lack of standardized objective assessment tools. At Jönköping University for example, when clinical competencies are examined we rely upon expert opinions based on so called OSCE protocols, but even if the faculty is experienced and the protocol grounded in nursing theory, I admit that subjective assessments have problems with interrater reliability and validity and lack standardization between groups and institutions.



In nursing, the use of *Eye-tracking glasses* is a novel teaching approach seldom used in simulation training. The device records eye movements and gives objective information of where the students attention is being directed. They are also able to produce a video, including

a clear audio track. A faculty assessing a student can get a “birds-eye” view of all actions and items in the subject’s line of sight, as well as listen to the “communication” with the manakin. Thus, the glasses provide a unique and more valid assessment of student performance, which ordinary cameras cannot capture. One could therefore conclude that the *Eye-tracking glasses* fills a gap in clinical education since they give the ability to objectively assess performance. Furthermore, and eye scanning record of the visual track of the subject’s iris with a small “target” placed by the software in the exact location of the subject’s gaze (i.e., visual scanning data) can be uploaded into computer programs and provide quantitative data of the visual, cognitive, and attention features of the performance. I was thrilled to have this possibility.



I was also invited to a group of faculty who was trained by Dr Nancy Pike who introduced us to questionnaires to be used; The Quint Leveled Clinical Competency Tool; The Lasater Clinical Judgment Rubric, the Montreal Cognitive Assessment Questionnaire (MOCA) and the Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning (WRAML2). The two latter ones need a lot of training to be used correctly.

### *Teaching at the simulation lab*

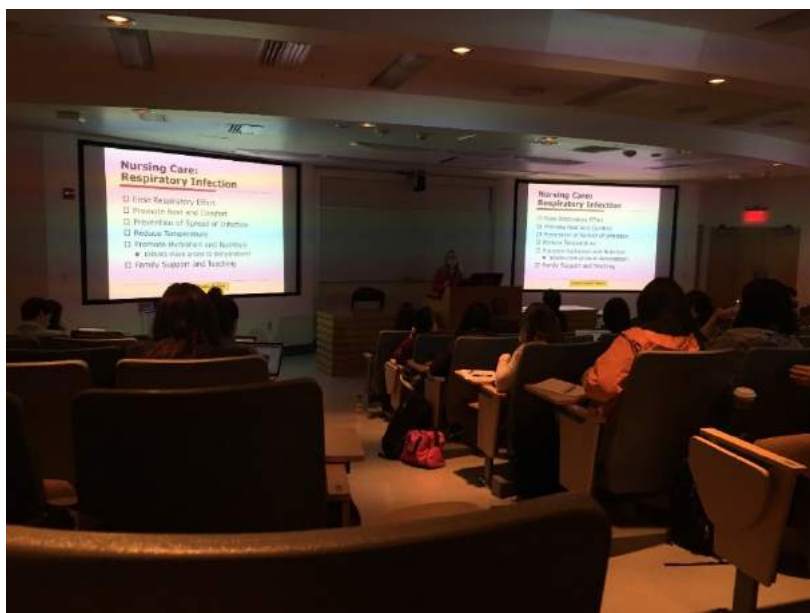
The simulations were part of “*Medical-Surgical A/B/C*” at bachelor’s level, and “*Human Responses to Critical Illness: An Introduction to Critical Care*” at master’s level. Students are given credits for both theory and practice (simulations) in the courses. All simulation classes included four or five different scenarios focusing different diagnoses. The content and complexity of the situations differed, some included only a patient, while other included a patient, several spouses and caregivers. The students were given different roles and in most cases 5 to 6 roles were played. Beforehand a script was handed to the students including a brief explanation of their role. A short introduction to the patients diagnose and status was given by one of the students who acted as “hand over nurse” before the scenario began. I felt a mix of excitement and nervousness. Even if I knew the scenarios and how to handle the included diagnoses very well, I did not know what to expect from the students, and how they would experience my “Swedish approach” to teaching. In addition, I worried that my



language skills would not be sufficient to express everything I had in my mind during the feedback sessions. My impression was that the students were very ambitious, well prepared, engaged in the acting, and willing to take part in discussions and listen to my experiences. In many cases I was positively surprised by a good understanding of the medical side of the situations in “my scenario”. The students showed a sufficient knowledge of physiology, pathophysiology and pharmacology. At the end of each simulation class the students filled in questionnaires to be used in a research project, as well as to develop teaching aspects.

### *Teaching in other courses*

I sat in on numerous lectures and seminars at different levels. The length of lectures in general was 3 hours, with one or two shorter breaks. Students always attended and the crowds most often included 80-90 students in auditoria rooms. The pedagogical methods used by lecturers at bachelor’s and master’s level did not differ significantly to what I am used to see back home. All lecturers depended on traditional slide presentations delivered by PowerPoint. However, the speed was in many cases high, many slides presented in a very short time, and the content (i.e., lines/slide) was, from my point of view “to much”. The teachers often adhered to the content on their slides, which the students had received in advance. Some teachers tried to create discussions with questions written on slides, which I felt stimulated to more activity among students. At the end of each lecture, as well as after all courses, the students fill in evaluation forms. I had the possibility to see the evaluation of a lecture I sat in on given by Dr Pike. The evaluation of the lecture was very positive. A 5 point Likert type scale with 4 subscales (i.e., content, organization, interest, audiovisual) was used. Dr Pikes mean score was very close to 5 and she received many positive comments in free text around the lecture.



At PhD level the groups were smaller, in most cases 10 students, and the lecturers used an approach focusing on creating discussions. The sessions could be up to 4 hours with a short

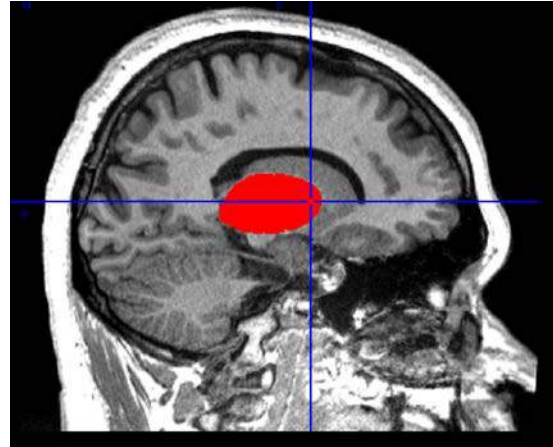
20 minutes' break. However, to keep attention, traditional power point delivered lectures were mixed with group discussions and individual written assignment done in class. I frequently sat in on lectures and seminars in a PhD course in qualitative methods. The course was taken by first year students and seen as a beginner's level for students interested in qualitative methods. Dr Huibrie C. Pieters, Associate professor was teaching the course with the assistance of some guest lecturers every other week. I was highly impressed by the calm and warm attitude shown by Dr Pieters towards the students, which I think had a positive effect on the activity. I had the feeling that everyone wanted to share their experiences to speak their minds. Lectures and seminars were used combined with individual assignments for e.g., collection and analyses of qualitative data. Roleplays were also used. After each session, Dr Pieters provided office hours for the students. The syllabus of the course clearly described the content of the lectures and seminars for each week and gave clear reading instructions. Written assignments evaluating activities were delivered and followed up by Dr Pieters each week. A traditional letter based grading system (i.e., A-F) was used.

### *Examination and grading*

UCLA applies a letter-grading system, not that different to what I am used to at Jönköping University, where each assignment gives a percentage share in the courses grading system. In line with this, I had an interesting conversation with Shelli Shepherd, Director of Students Affairs at the School of Nursing which I will describe more in detail in relation to grading.

### *Involvement in research projects*

UCLA provided me with the possibility to participate in several interesting studies. In one: "Validation of a Method to Objectively Assess Clinical Competence" I was given the role as "expert reviewer". I viewed 160 videos collected with the *Eye-tracking glasses* using the "bird-eye" view. Students, or already registered nurses, acted in clinical scenarios with manikins like Mr. Seymour Salter. All videos were between 10-20 minutes and clinical competence was assessed with The Quint Leveled Clinical Competency Tool and The Lasater Clinical Judgment Rubric. The work was very time consuming, but gave thoughts around how to use the Eye-tracking glasses in different pedagogical situations. This led to an editorial for European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing concerning simulation techniques used in a cardiovascular context together with Dr Shinnick and Professor Woo and a colleague from Jönköping University. Together with Professor Woo, I worked on a very interesting project evaluating brain damage in obstructive sleep apnea patients, and how it is associated to sleep quality and cognitive function. The implications can be of clinical importance since an improved understanding of the cognitive dysfunction among these patients can be used to improve pedagogical interventions used by healthcare personnel. The project is still ongoing and we plan to use e-mail communication and Skype meetings to continue during 2018.



### *Participation in meetings and conferences*

I was invited to all meetings for staff and faculty at the Department of Nursing, and regularly attended those for faculty at the PhD program. The meetings were in most cases held as 2 hour long lunch meetings and not always well structured. Interestingly many of the questions discussed, were the same as the ones discussed in meetings at Jönköping University. A topic recurrently debated was critical thinking and writing skills among PhD students. Several members of the UCLA faculty perceived this to be a growing problem. I presented the design and content of a PhD course in Scientific Writing at Linköping University, supervised by Per Nilsen, in which I participate as a guest lecturer. The pedagogical approach, which focuses on writing as a process to be learned, was very different to the problem oriented approach taken by UCLA. The course was perceived as very interesting and thought of as an inspiration for future UCLA courses to improve scientific writing. I also contributed as a research discussant in several projects and provided feedback as an external reviewer on both design of studies grant applications. Especially Dr Macey and I used several hours to discuss these topics.

### *Miscellaneous*

I attended one seminar workshop series for students and researchers on how to implement research findings into commercial products or patents. A wide range of fields were represented and the discussions were very interesting.

I conducted interviews and had informal conversations with staff, faculty, researchers, and students at bachelor-, Master-, and PhD level to gain a better understanding of conditions for teaching and research at UCLA. Regarding lecturers, I got the impression that students at the lower levels in general are used to “being spoon fed” and asks for lecturers presenting “hard facts” without creating discussions. The clinical perspective was perceived as much more important than presenting scientific studies, something I was surprised by. Also at a bachelor level, all Swedish lecturers are instructed to include references and scientific evidence, which I hardly ever saw in any of the lecturers slides when I sat in.

## **Comparison between UCLA and Jönköping University**

### *Student population*

My impression is that UCLA students do not differ that much to our students. All students were polite and respectful. The biggest difference was that few if any referred to me by first name. Most of them called me Doctor Brostrom or Professor Brostrom. In the beginning this felt strange and I repeatedly tried to correct them, but after a while I gave up. An explanation might be that the Student Handbook includes very clear and strict rules for communication and how to behave towards teachers and other students. In the simulation lab students were well prepared and demonstrated high levels of both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the debriefing sessions after the scenarios I found most students to be very openminded, asking questions to get specific information on my experiences of situations like the ones we simulated. Participation in lectures affected grades. Understandably, most students participated in all classes, and if they did not they were very careful to notify the teacher a relevant cause for their absence. In lectures at the bachelor program comments or questions were few, especially in bigger groups/lecture rooms, as in Sweden, but students often strived to get one to one with the teacher to discuss things after the lectures. The low interaction might be caused by the lecturer's "spoon feeding approach" with a high number of slides including plenty of text. During some lectures, students sitting at the back used their mobile phones to surf, text to each other, or play games. Maybe a behavior not that different to Swedish students? At PhD courses students were always very eager to debate with the teachers, which was the intention and expressed as an important part of the learning process. In general, at all levels, students seemed to be hard-working and ambitious, maybe based on the grading system and the consequences if they did not reach the expressed "Minimum Passing Grade" for the course.

### *Pedagogy*

Even if UCLA is a top ranked university, traditional pedagogical methods were advocated by both teachers and students. I understood that teachers using "old fashioned" teaching methods, such as traditional lectures, were favored compared to innovative teachers, in student evaluations. Sadly, I cannot say I saw any form of specific "pedagogical investments". The working environment was in many cases old, white boards not seen in all classrooms. No specific forum for pedagogical discussions was used and pedagogical issues were shortly discussed in regular faculty meetings. Recorded lectures and "flipped classrooms" were sometimes used but criticized by students in course evaluations, maybe based on the lack of discussions. However, podcasts, as used in the courses on research design delivered by Dr Macey, was a pedagogical tool I found very interesting. I have not seen it in Jönköping, and we talked a lot about possible pros and cons. Dr Macey used a series of pre-recorded lectures, 5 to 15 minutes long. Questions were asked a couple of times to check the "focus" of the student. If not correctly answered, the student could not continue the podcast/lecture. Computers or phones were also used to increase interaction during his lectures. Students

posted questions without asking aloud. He perceived the number of questions to be higher and saw it as a way for shy students to participate in the lecture. I found these approaches interesting and plan to use them in the future.

Another interesting thing was the use of Teaching Assistants (TA:s). According to Dr Macey the role is often taken by a Master- or PhD student, or a newly assigned faculty and involves supervising assignments, discussions, and online communication with students in close co-operation with the faculty in charge of the course. I can see several advantages with TA:s since it frees time to focus on lecturing and research. On the other hand, I believe that it is not easy to transfer all types of assignments to someone not in charge of the course. However, since we are used to work in teams in Sweden I do not think this is a practical problem. I wish I have the opportunity to try this system back home.

### *Structure*

When looking at the content of courses at bachelor level, having the combination of theoretical and clinical courses in mind, I do not think UCLA and Jönköping University differ that much. At UCLA there are more theoretical courses in the first year, and the focus of medical aspects of caring (i.e., anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology and pharmacology and therapeutics) is more obvious. Students are doing clinical courses during year two, three and four combined with session in the simulation lab to increase their clinical skills. I hope Jönköping University can increase the use of simulations as a pedagogical tool both in learning and examinations as a complement to clinical studies.

Research was without question of great importance at the School of Nursing. The department is ranked as one of the top departments in the United States. Approximately one fourth of the faculty are highly ranked researchers running projects funded by large (NIH) grants. The Student Handbook highlights research as an indicator of quality, also at a bachelor level. UCLA is one of the biggest public research universities in the country.

The structure of the PhD education at UCLA was a bit different compared to the structure used at the School of Health and Welfare at Jönköping University. The students take more theoretical courses early in the program at UCLA. My impression is that our structure, which implies students to focus on design of their empirical studies at an early stages gives pedagogical advantages for both students and supervisors. Looking at the number of students, Jönköping University has around one fourth of UCLA's capacity, 10,000 vs 40,000 students. Research universities in the United States, as opposed to teaching universities, have graduate programs and their focus is very much on doing research. Research and education at Jönköping University are carried out at four schools: Jönköping International Business School, School of Education and Communication, School of Engineering and School of

Health and Welfare (i.e., my school). The Department of Nursing at the school of School of Health and Welfare is research active, even if I as a professor must devote at least 50% of my time to teaching. My impression is that professors at UCLA with grants teach less and have more time available for research. Whereas UCLA is a top ranked research university, I would characterize the School of Health and Welfare at Jönköping University more in terms of a teaching university where research is gaining more and more ground.

Another remarkable thing regarding structure was “the working environment”. At UCLA many faculty were absent, worked at home, or only came into the department to teach, for seminars or office hours. Doors were closed, no common coffee breaks or lunches. People brought their coffee to the computer, and in many cases, ate their lunch boxes in their room. Partially, this might be due to the traffic situation and the time spent traveling back and forth to UCLA. Opportunities and spaces for interaction were rare. It was not easy to make appointments. Particularly, during my first weeks in August and the beginning of September the department was empty. In Jönköping, few faculty work at home, the intention is to have an open “working environment” without closed doors. I arrived at 8 every morning and left the department at 4 or 4.30 pm from the start of my stay until the end of the fall quarter. In average, I worked around ten hours/day and adapted my hours to the Big Blue Bus schedule.

### *Examination and grading*

The A-B-C-D-F grading system used at the School of Nursing has pros and cons. With all sublevels (e.g., A+, A, A-) it includes 13 levels, which might cause difficulties for the teachers. Minimum Passing Grade is in many cases C, (i.e., the 8<sup>th</sup> level). It is easy to understand that students are focused on grades. The Student handbook clearly states that the student had to wait a year to take the course next time it is given if a lower level than a C is given. Many students were aiming for an A level, and anything below B was not acceptable in their eyes. If a student were told he or she could get a C some dropped the course to avoid getting a C. Students do not get any opportunity to redo exams if they fail. Therefore, the syllabuses were very clear, using a percentage system for each level in the courses. All courses are designed and given by individual faculty. If a student has to retake a course, it may be different, since the faculty in charge of the course can change the syllabus (i.e., develop) for the actual course. In conversations with several faculty, and Shelli Sheppard, Director for Students Affairs, grade inflation was mentioned because of the very competitive environment, students' generally high level of ambition, as well as a pressure from their families to perform well. I got the impression that a C level, or lower, *very seldom* was used.

### *Syllabuses*

The possibility for faculty to easily change syllabuses, as at UCLA, has both pros and cons. It allows for more creativity and relevance with respect to teacher's competences and updated research. It may also bring recent evidence based clinical practice, for example new updated

content in treatment guidelines, into the classroom. Designing and giving a whole course alone is often done at UCLA. However, courses such as my simulation courses had to be co-taught. I can see both pros and cons. If giving a course alone, you will be in control of pedagogical structure, content and examination. In a course that includes both theory and simulations, it can be difficult based on the demand of resources (e.g., a high number of faculty needed to handle the manikins used in the scenarios). Another negative aspect is the lack of others to discuss course content and course design with. A positive aspect used in the PhD course I sat in on was the clear instructions on reading material related to all lectures and seminars.

## **Lessons learned**

I was given a high degree of freedom to develop my schedule with respect to my own needs. This is something I am very grateful for and want to pass on as important to future STINT scholars. UCLA is renowned for excellence. Acting as a co-teacher in different courses gave me the opportunity to get different views and perspectives of teaching at bachelor's and master's as well as PhD level at UCLA. This gave me the opportunity to discuss with different faculty, receive different pedagogical advice and to be challenged in my own role as teaching professor.

UCLA professors are expected to teach 2-3 courses annually, and to keep high standards in both teaching and research. They have the rest of the time available for research. Hence, time for research may be planned according to how many courses they choose to do during one or two quarters. A better possibility for the individual to plan sabbaticals for research, is something I believe could give Swedish professors fair opportunities to engage in research during extended periods without heavy teaching duties, and with sufficient resources.

In nursing, strict national educational goals are transmitted down to syllabuses in each university to secure quality. The diversity and distinction of theory and clinical practice in nursing is always a problem. Students often see the nursing program as a practical "hands-on" education and miss clinical practice. In the courses I was involved in, different devices and high-tech manikins were used with the aim to combine theoretical and clinical aspects. I will promote the use of a holistic nursing perspective in suitable courses.

Carl Tyler's staff gave effective administration support to the faculty at UCLA. In addition other administrative aspects were handled by TA:s. This allowed faculty and professors to focus on their teaching and research and not spend time on administrative tasks, such as room schedules etc. At Jönköping University the situation is the total opposite with a reduced number of administrative support staff giving a higher work load for faculty.

## Summary

Without question, I had an amazing time at the School of Nursing. UCLA is an internationally renowned university and especially the simulation lab provided great learning experiences that left me with a feeling of wanting more. The time passed by too fast! There was so much left to be explored. It was an extremely rewarding experience professionally for me, but also for my family. We all truly tried to make the best use of the time, and I think we succeeded. There are so many experiences and lessons to be learned by living abroad during a longer period!

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