College of Education Assistant Professor Antonio Gutierrez, working with Georgia Southern’s School of Nursing, has been awarded a 3-year, $1.5 million grant to create an Advanced Practice Nurse-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (APN-PMHNP) track to serve the psychiatric/mental health needs of south Georgia’s rural and underserved community. Gutierrez will serve as the evaluation coordinator on the project, assisting with data collection, analysis, measurement and substantive interpretation of findings for the purposes of program evaluation of the APN-PMHNP. He assisted the project team with developing the logic model and aligning all measurement to HRSA’s Rapid Cycle Quality Improvement (RCQI) metrics.

“This educational program development grant will allow Georgia Southern’s nursing faculty to develop this much needed psychiatric mental health specialization, which will aid in improving the mental health of residents in rural Georgia. Being part of this interdisciplinary team of scholar-educators will help me learn more about these topics as well as to serve by helping the team evaluate the success of the program. I am very excited to embark on this mission with them,” Gutierrez said.

The grant calls for a focused 7-course online track on PMHNP practice that will partner with clinical environments that provide team-based care, include on campus APN-PMHN simulation learning experiences and short summer intensive sessions with national content experts. Students will be eligible for national certification as Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner.

The grant was funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.