Provide an abstract/succinct summary of the proposal (50 words or less): 

Research shows family caregivers experience physical and emotional burdens caring for a family member with heart failure. Absent from the literature are studies regarding the burden heart failure patients who are caregivers of family members may experience and the resulting impact on their health, hence a study is needed.

Describe your proposed work (e.g., objectives or goals, activities, timeline, outcomes, products, or other relevant information), including the connection, if one exists, with any previous SFSA or FRACAA project.: 

A review of the literature shows numerous studies outlying the negative impact on the quality of life and one’s health as family caregivers care for a family member with heart failure. Absent from the literature is information on the burden placed on the heart failure patient who is the caregiver of a family member, e.g., wife with heart failure who is the caregiver of husband with
Alzheimer's disease. The goal of this proposed research is to evaluate the usefulness of a previously validated instrument, the Caregiver Burden Scale, to assess the impact of caregiver burdens on the health of the heart failure patient. Heart failure impacts six million Americans, many of whom have caregiver responsibilities. This study has the potential to inform future research which can ease the caregiver burden of those living with heart failure.

Following HISRB approval, heart failure patients, who self-report being the caregiver of a family member, will be asked to sign consent and complete the Caregiver Burden Scale questionnaire. A total of 30 completed questionnaires will be analyzed to determine what burdens and the consequential impacts on physical and emotional health may be experienced relative to caring for a family member. The central research question that guides this inquiry is: Is the Caregiver Burden Scale useful for capturing the burdens experienced by heart failure patients as they care for a family member?

I intend to work with the local medical centers to identify heart failure patients who meet criteria for the study and ask them to complete the questionnaire.

Describe how the proposed work will make (a) a significant and (b) original contribution to the discipline: The knowledge gained from this study will help guide healthcare providers, social service providers, and palliative care providers in their care of heart failure patients who provide care for family members. This work will allow the preparation of a manuscript reporting the finding of the burdens and impact on health and quality of life experienced by heart failure patients as they care for family members. Lastly, the knowledge gained from this study may inform the development of a questionnaire which may be used to assess heart failure patients as caregivers relative to burdens and impact on health.

Currently hospitals incur a 3% penalty on Medicare reimbursement if a patient with heart failure is readmitted to the hospital within 30 days of discharge regardless of the diagnosis. Ascertaining the burdens and impacts on the health these patients experience while caring for a family member may also help the healthcare provider to order home care (visiting nurses, visiting physical therapy, or home health aide) which may prevent the caregiver from being re-hospitalized with the 30 day window.

Describe the mechanism for dissemination: To fill the gap in the research literature the results of this study will be submitted to a research publication such as *The Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing*. Findings will also be disseminated through paper and or poster presentations at professional research conferences such as the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses and or The Heart Failure Society of America.

Describe how the proposed work will enhance your reputation and that of WMU:
This is an area that impacts a large number of Americans and is not currently being investigated. The development of a questionnaire which ascertains the burdens and impacts on health and quality of life of heart failure patients who are caregivers of others is needed. Understanding this information may allow healthcare providers to effectively screen patients for burdens encountered and how these burdens may negatively impact their health.

As the primary author, and as an Assistant Professor at WMU Bronson School of Nursing, my research findings will be disseminated to other healthcare practitioners who care for heart failure patients. Publishing my research will expose WMU in an area where the university has limited discovery (nursing research) and enhance my reputation as a nurse researcher as well as that of WMU Bronson School of Nursing. The information gained will inform my research within the care of patients with heart failure.

Provide an itemized budget and budget justification. A proposed budget greater than the allowed maximum amount of $2,000 will disqualify the proposal. Such a proposal will not be reviewed. Fully justify why the budgeted expense is necessary for the project:

Requested amount $750 for the purchase of gift cards in the amount of $25 for each subject for their participation.