

## Examples of Successful Sabbatical Requests

Four Month Sabbaticals:

### Example 1

#### **An Investigation For The Possible Creation Of An International Student Office at Suffolk County Community College**

##### **Abstract**

More international students decide to attend colleges and universities in the United States than any other country in the world. Historically, international students have tended to enroll in traditional liberal arts and graduate institutions; however, there has been a significant increase recently by international students in community colleges as well. The Institute of International Education reports a “nearly 32 percent increase the past five years” in community college enrollment in international students. This increase is present at SCCC as demonstrated in Table 1. The purpose of this sabbatical request is to fully research and investigate the feasibility of creating an office to coordinate the specialized needs of this student population and to examine the means to significantly increase international student enrollment at SCCC. International students bring twice the revenue as all other students and therefore a very positive impact on the budget of the College can be realized.

The tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup> in New York City will undoubtedly have a significant and as of yet unknown impact upon the processing, tracking, and admissions of international students. While it may have been a positive step for the College to consider the development of an International Student Office it may well become a State and Federal requirement in the future. This proposal is particularly appropriate at this time so that the College has the proper information to deal appropriately with the international student population.

##### **Narrative on Activity**

There has been a dramatic growth in the international student population at the College. We are processing more and more applications which is good for overall enrollment particularly when these students are required to pay double the tuition rates (revenue which, I believe, accrues directly to the College budget). There are a number of research questions that would be investigated:

- What are the trends in international student enrollment in general?
- What have other comparable community colleges without residence halls experienced in this area?
- What programs do international students typically enroll in?
- How many community colleges have created offices and/or positions for international students?
- How have community colleges recruited for the international student market?

- What are the regulatory issues involved, particularly those of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)?
- What benefits, other than financial, occur in the classroom by the presence of international students?
- What are potential negative outcomes from significantly increased international student enrollment (e.g. need for residence halls and off-campus housing)?
- What type of international student office would most benefit SCCC?
- How has the Internet affected recruitment, marketing, application procedures, and even registration?

While this list is neither exhaustive nor definitive it does represent many of the critical issues to explore prior to developing a major investment in an international student office or offices. A variety of research methodologies would be required to properly address the questions posed. It is unlikely that given the press of normal duties research of this type would not be accomplished in a thorough and timely manner. Concentrated and focused research would be the most appropriate approach to obtain solid information upon which to base informed decisions.

### **Benefit to Applicant**

This sabbatical would permit me to focus on what I strongly believe to be an important issue for the College particularly now. At present, as the person designated to verify visas and other admissions requirements, I know that we do not have depth of knowledge and experience in handling international students who are enrolling in greater numbers at SCCC every year. In addition, much has happened with respect to the web and it is happening at an alarming rate. It would be of great professional benefit to me as well as for the College to be able to do this type of intensive research. It would represent a great sense of achievement and satisfaction to me if this project resulted in a major new initiative for the College. The scope of this project is simply too large and complex to be undertaken during my regular professional duties.

### **Benefit to the College**

- Increased enrollment
- Increase in College revenue from double tuition rates for international students.
- International students add diversity; the Western Campus, for example, has had students from forty countries in the past six years.
- Academically, international students are among the best performers and both faculty and students are enriched by their presence in the student body.
- International students are required to attend on a full-time basis and retention rates are high.
- The College must maintain compliance with INS at every campus; a central office to insure such compliance would avoid potential problems in this area.
- A strong international component adds significantly to the overall prestige and national reputation of the College.

- Research on use of the web for international recruiting may have College-wide benefits.

A well-researched and comprehensive strategic plan to increase the overall number of international students would have important, academic, and cultural benefits for the College. This report would include specific recommendations on:

- Recommendations on methods of compliance for new laws.
- A plan for marketing and recruitment of international students.
- Staffing and budget requirements.
- Off campus housing procedures.
- Orientation and counseling for international students.
- A timetable for implementation.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this sabbatical proposal. Naturally, I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have concerning any aspect of the proposal.

Example 2

### **Production of a Suffolk County Community College Distance Education Compact Disc.**

#### **Abstract**

The sabbatical will culminate in the production of a Suffolk County Community College Distance Education compact disc (CD). The CD will contain video and text clips that will incorporate student, faculty, and administrative perspectives surrounding SCCC's distance education program. The CD would then be disseminated to newly registered SCCC distance education or College Seminar students in order for them to gain a better understanding of the distance education experience at the College.

#### **Narrative on Activity:**

**Rationale.** By the nature of the project, a three-month period of full-time uninterrupted attention is required to complete it. Moreover, the division of instructional technology has attempted this project during regular working periods, but has been unsuccessful in its development of the CD. Finally, a CD containing videos would be a far better delivery method than a website. The use of a CD would not interfere with the use of the College's backbone.

**Project activities.** During the first month of the sabbatical the applicant would research and design scripts that would be used in the production of three videos. Furthermore, this time period would be used to research content on the web that would be incorporated in the production of the CD that will be used to deliver the videos.

In cooperation with the College's video department, the applicant would prepare three digital videos during the second month of the sabbatical leave. The first would be an

overview, for students, of the distance education program at SCCC incorporating blended/hybrid courses, distance learning classroom courses, online courses, telecourses, and the use of the distance education website. The second video will give a student overview of the SUNY Learning Network and SUNY CourseSpace course management systems. The third video would be an overview on downloading freeware to be used with the distance education program.

During the third month of the sabbatical leave the applicant would prepare a CD to contain the three outlined videos as well all accompanying freeware. A web page would be prepared to lead the CD-user through the videos, instructions developed to use the CD, and instructions on using the freeware contained on the CD. Finally, a CD jacket would be designed for the product.

Finally, the Division of Instructional Technology would produce these CDs each semester. The cost surrounding this process would be less than 75 cents per CD, including jacket, which would be supported through the distance education fee.

**Professional Benefit to Applicant:**

The applicant would gain facility in the use of video authoring and editing software (Video Studio) as well as web design software (Macromedia Dreamweaver and Flash).

**Benefit to the College:**

The College would be given the CD to be distributed to students as a means of orientation to the College's distance education program.

Eight month (75% pay) Sabbatical Example:

Example 3

**Wildlife Biology – In the Wild and in the Classroom.**

**Abstract:**

I plan to spend my sabbatical leave carrying out research and learning activities on the North American wolf. I may also work as a researcher at the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands, a part of Ecuador. Every continent on the earth has threatened ecosystems and wildlife that is endangered by human activity. Biologists consider conservation of habitat and biodiversity to be essential. These objectives frequently conflict with the reality of human population growth and the economic goals of societies. The two areas I plan to study are specific examples where this general conflict has erupted. After my sabbatical I will incorporate updated material from this study in BY14, BY50, and an extensively updated version of BY18. These studies could also form the basis of an updated curriculum for BY16.

**Narrative on Activity:**

The largest wolf population in the lower 48 states of the United States is located in Northeastern Minnesota. I plan to go there to work on education and research projects that focus on the timber wolf. A portion of this time will be devoted to activities at the International Wolf Center in Ely, MN. The International Wolf Center was established in 1989. Its mission is to support the survival of the wolf around the world by teaching about its life, its association with other species and its dynamic relationships to humans. The IWC facility includes a 120 seat wolf-viewing theater, classrooms, and laboratories. Observation windows look into a 1.25 acre wolf enclosure that houses a small resident wolf pack. The IWC is affiliated with Bergen Community College, which offers courses in Intensive Wolf Study (BIO 119) and Ecology of the North Woods (Bio 137) at the IWC site. I plan to take both courses.

I will spend additional time in Minnesota working as a volunteer researcher with the Minnesota Field Station wolf Project. This research is based at the Kawishiwi Field Station in the Superior National Forest, and is near Ely, MN. The research at the Field Station is sponsored by the US Dept. of Agriculture in cooperation with the Dept. of the Interior. Dr. David Mech, an internationally renowned expert on wolf biology, supervises the research. The projects are also affiliated with the University of Minnesota and accept both undergraduate interns and graduate student participants. The volunteer guest researcher program requires a commitment of at least three months and offers opportunities to learn live-trapping, radio-tagging and tracking of wolves and deer, and advanced techniques of monitoring physiology and overall health of wildlife. Information about both these sites and the volunteer research opportunities are included in the appendix.

I hope to spend the remainder of my sabbatical as a volunteer researcher at the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands. Island systems such as the Galapagos provide environments where the results of biological evolution are unique. Species that exist nowhere else evolved here, separated from mainland relatives. Charles Darwin made extensive observations in the Galapagos chain that contributed in fundamental ways to the theory of evolution. Evolution continues to be the intellectual framework through which biologists understand and explain an enormous range of specific observations. The Galapagos Islands were, and continue to be, a natural laboratory for the study evolution.

Extinction of species is now occurring at a rapid pace. Every extinction is a permanent loss of a unique organism and decreases biodiversity. The two major problems that lead to extinction are loss of habitat due to over-exploitation and the introduction of non-native species that then become invasive. Both these problems exist in the Galapagos Islands and both are areas of active research. Projects that attempt to restore the fragile Galapagos ecosystems are ongoing and provide important examples that can be transferred to other locales.

The Charles Darwin Foundation has an extensive international volunteer program. Participants are placed in projects based on their abilities, skills, and areas of interest and may spend time working on terrestrial conservation projects, marine conservation

projects, or both. More detailed information about these programs is included in the appendix to this application.

### **Professional Benefit to Applicant**

The projects I have proposed will afford me an opportunity to learn an area of biology that has been a strong interest of mine, but was not my area of specialization during my prior professional training. Evolution is a central topic in both BY14 and BY50. My experiences during the sabbatical will provide me with a wealth of current examples of evolution in action now. Vivid personal experiences that illuminate a topic ignite student interest. I am excited about these opportunities to carry out fieldwork, enthusiastic about trying something different, and I will bring that excitement, as well as updated information to my students.

### **Benefit to the College**

Students learn in many ways. Conversation of wildlife and maintenance or restoration of healthy environments are topics that speak to students, biology majors and non-majors alike. I plan to develop an updated version of BY18 that will focus on these issues and will incorporate material from my sabbatical. I plan to include detailed consideration of the following example in this updated course. Conflict has erupted between groups who favor wolf reintroduction/range expansion and groups who are opposed, such as cattlemen. This controversy may soon “come home” as wolves extend their range, possibly back into portions of upstate NY. There is already public debate about the pros and cons and the arguments are likely to intensify. My goal will be to prepare students to evaluate the arguments of conservationists and of developers, attempt to develop innovative solutions, and contribute to the public debate on this issue.

As I have researched opportunities for sabbatical work myself, I have discovered that there are also opportunities for undergraduate participation as volunteer researchers. The best way to learn about wildlife is to do some field-work/research. I intent to develop a file of such options to offer to students, and hope to place some well-qualified ones in programs of this type.

Example of a sabbatical request that was awarded 40 days for completion:

Example 4

### **Updating My Research and Revising and Editing My Dissertation**

#### **Abstract**

I request a sabbatical to concentrate on updating my research and revising and editing my dissertation on the narrative technique of Charles Brockden Brown. My goal is to submit this revision for publication as a book-length critical study of the way in which Brown pioneered the technique of having his narrators use an extended first person monologue about a critical personal experience, recounted after the events had taken place, to confront and to attempt to understand that experience more fully.

**Narrative on Activity:**

Writing between 1798 and 1801, Charles Brockden Brown is the first American novelist to attempt to establish a truly American literature. His novels represent his efforts to use the relatively new genre of the novel as the means to establish a uniquely American perspective. Brown is traditionally considered an imitator of the tradition of the Gothic novel which had become popular in England. However, I argue that Brown has not been given enough credit for experimenting with narrative technique in his efforts to present the developing American social, cultural, and intellectual point of view...

I have completed my dissertation so my basic premise and my studies and interpretations of Brown's novels are already established. I need the sabbatical to

- Conduct additional research on studies of Brown's works that have emerged since I completed my work.
- In addition, I plan to travel to Philadelphia to conduct further research on the original Brown documents held by the Pennsylvania Historical Society.
- Once I complete all additional research, I would also need the time permitted by the sabbatical to revise and edit my dissertation to prepare it for publication as a critical study of Brown's narrative technique.

**Professional benefit to Applicant**

This project will enable me to refresh my scholarly background in early American literature and to deepen my understanding and interpretation of the work of Charles Brockden Brown as a pioneer of the American novel.

I am also excited by the prospect of being able to concentrate for a semester upon the scholarly work that I have done and that is being done in my field of early American literature. The demands of my regular schedule at the College make it difficult to devote a significant block of time to fundamental research and to revising my dissertation in light of such research. Further, the search for a publisher and working with an editor would also be an invaluable experience in exploring and dealing with the complexities of scholarly publishing.

**Benefit to the College**

As I indicated above, my work on Brown would contribute to my teaching at the College and publication of a critical study on Brown's narrative technique would enhance the reputation of the College among scholars.

In addition, one of the motivations for my interpretation of the significance of Brown's narrative technique grew out of my interest in and work with composition at the College. Having worked with community college students to explore the idea that writing is essentially a way of learning, I was struck by Brown's attempt to discover meaning through the use of an extended monologue, interspersed with the monologues of other significant participants in the action. He demonstrates that as his narrators tell their stories and are influenced by the stories of others, those narrators change. The act of writing becomes an act of learning, of clarifying in their own minds the significance of the events that have lived through and that they are now describing after the fact.

Probing even more deeply into these ideas will allow me to explore the premise that re-interpreting events through writing can bring fuller understanding. I can continue to expand upon this premise in my writing classes. In addition, possible presentations of these findings at workshops or conferences would add to the College's reputation as an institution concerned not only with literary scholarship but also with direct application of such scholarship to the College's writing program.