

Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Proposal: For Fall 2010
Application submitted by Marian Carrasco Nungaray, M.S.

Background for Sabbatical:

As a full-time Ventura College general counselor I have often contemplated how some community college students are successful with the transfer process, and others are not. A number of research studies (Chapa & Shrink, 2006; Laanan, 2000; Engle, et al, 2006) make efforts to understand educational experiences of students in community colleges. These studies inquire into understanding students' personal attributes, barriers and success factors that position "transfer success or failure" as students' responsibility. While students do have a great responsibility for their own success, the overrepresentation of studies that depict transfer success as the sole responsibility of the student paints an incomplete picture. Much less literature turns to the faculty, counselors, and administrators who can act on behalf of students to enable them to transfer. Described in another way, failure to transfer is often associated with students' academic backgrounds, study skills, or behaviors in college, not with the ways in which higher education professionals approach and interact with them. This focus in the literature is problematic because the majority of these studies unintentionally place the onus of educational success or failure on students who cannot help the fact that they often come from marginalized, low-income, under-resourced, and first-generation communities.

Purpose of Sabbatical

The purpose of this one semester sabbatical is to undertake full-time doctoral studies at California Lutheran University where I am a third year doctoral student. I am in the process of conducting research as part of the completion of my dissertation. My study investigates the role that institutional agent's (faculty, counselors, administrators) play in examining how they utilize their networks, resources or contacts to assist students with forward transfer to a university. I plan to complete the data collection and data analysis of my study, and write the first drafts of chapters four and five.

This research is directly related to my full-time assignment as a counselor, and relates to the mission of the college; to provide transfer assistance for students. According to VCCCD Institutional Research (Fall 2009) 48.3% of full-time students indicate "transfer to a 4-year university" as their educational goal. I plan to share my research with colleagues and develop resources (handouts, group counseling materials, PowerPoint) for the counseling department on transfer to universities. My research will provide me with knowledge and increased expertise which directly impacts the quality of services for students and as a result, student success with transferring to a university.