

Sabbatical Leave Proposal for Fall 2010
By Tom Stough, Associate Librarian
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Statement of Purposes

- A. I intend to examine Library Instruction practices by librarians in 10-15 California community college and university libraries around the State.

Library instruction (aka “library orientation” or “bibliographic instruction”) is the process by which a certificated librarian teaches research and information literacy skills. Delivery methods may include: guest-lecturing to a class cohort upon the request of that class’s instructor, offering one-time lectures and workshops, tutoring individual learners and/or teaching a for-credit course, either in-person or online. It is vital for me to observe, to report on and to incorporate the latest LI techniques into my own teaching. A sabbatical offers a unique opportunity to travel to and learn from other campus libraries without the usual time constraints and deadlines imposed by one’s normal “day job”.

- B. I propose to learn how to create effective and attractive pages and documents on the Internet/World Wide Web, including online coursework.

Gate counts of library users began to decline in all types of libraries in the mid-1990s as more users started seeking information on the Internet. In the university and college setting, fewer students now interact with library faculty and staff in person. Therefore, the ability to fulfill their needs via the Internet takes on greater importance. This includes connecting library resources to distance learners. I would like to take formal classes in Web site content creation and use those skills to enhance our students’ online interactions with their library. This could take the form of distance learning tutorials, research guides and webliographies and/or video clips illustrating research techniques. All of these methods and more are in use by “cutting-edge” college and university libraries around the State.

- C. I plan to take adult education classes in speech reading (commonly known as “lip reading”) and other comprehension techniques for hard-of-hearing people.

Even in our electronically connected world, speech communication remains vital. The reference desk in the OC Library was recently moved to a quieter location, partly to improve my communication with students. (The rearrangement has also provided benefits in connecting the reference desk with the circulation desk.) The learned behavior of library patrons everywhere is that they must speak quietly in the “temple of learning”. I wish to reduce some of these mutual frustrations through speech reading.

I. Rationale

A. Professional Development

1. Improvement of teaching techniques, thereby increasing student learning and understanding of research, citation and source documentation for college assignments.

Besides seeking improvement of individual teaching, the librarian intends to research how certain colleges have successfully offered for-credit courses in library/research skills. For example: at what level of overall enrollment does a for-credit LI program become viable and self-sustaining? Can LI become a “money-maker” for library and related services in the context of California community colleges? And, how can increased interest in “all things library” generated by a new facility (ca. mid-2012) be leveraged into greater campus support?

2. Creation of new online resources for students.

As more classes are offered in a hybrid or totally online fashion, library services must change to accommodate students’ needs. For example: college libraries have long offered reserve textbooks, class readings and other materials. How do we make the transition to an online reserves “shelf”? Also, additional communications methods for today’s students need to be considered, such as live chat, social networking and other Web 2.0 technologies. These methods will better serve distance learners and those too shy to ask for assistance in person, as well as facilitate interaction with their hearing-impaired librarian.

3. Overall improvement in communication via speech reading.

Speech reading instruction is a logical way to increase the librarian’s understanding of the College’s “auditory environment”.

B. Value to Department or Discipline—

1. Familiarization with and local implementation of best practices found at innovative campuses around the State.
2. Integration of new and emerging classroom and distance learning technologies into Library Instruction and library services in general.
3. Application of such knowledge to services provided by Library/Learning Resources in anticipation of the renovated/expanded Learning Resource Center, opening ca. mid- 2012.

C. Value to College and/or District—subsequent presentations on lessons learned to be made to:

1. Academic Senate

During the sabbatical, I will contact the Academic Senate President to schedule “air time” as soon as possible during Spring 2011. In addition, my attendance at department and committee meetings will be required to “hash out” the details of integrating distance learning and Library resources.

2. Other librarians in the District

For several years, the full-time and many part-time librarians in the District have held informal meetings once or twice a year to discuss issues of mutual concern. This provides an ideal additional venue for presenting my results.

3. At librarian conferences

The Southern California Instruction Librarians (SCIL) interest group of California Academic and Research Libraries (CARL) offers annual conferences and workshops where results and papers may be presented. Other possibilities: meetings of the Council of Chief Librarians/Community College League of California (CCL/CCLC) and Gold Coast Library Network (GCLN), a local consortium.

D. Value to Students and Community

1. Improved teaching delivery by Associate Librarian.
2. Teaching students research skills, information literacy and how to be more savvy “information consumers” in life as well as in college.
3. Increased auditory/content understanding of students’ questions directed to their librarian.

III. Implementation

A. Implementation Procedure—

1. Determine list of colleges to be visited. Methods:
 - a. Email messaging
 - b. Querying respected colleagues
 - c. Researching Internet/Web page presences of college and university libraries

Preliminary inquiries have yielded the following colleges and universities as having innovative and forward-thinking library services from which much could be learned:

- Santa Barbara City College
- Pasadena College
- Glendale College
- Mt. San Antonio College
- Cuesta College
- Chabot College
- Santa Rosa Junior College
- California State University, Channel Islands
- California Lutheran University

I will identify additional colleges and universities, especially in the San Francisco Bay area, as candidates for site visits.

2. Creation and administration of survey instrument to be completed by library faculty at each college (history, goals and objectives of LI at each institution).

During Summer 2010, I will create the survey instrument and “beta test” it among librarians on summer duty in our district, as well as at CSUCI and CLU. Once the survey questions have been formulated, I will telephone the out-of-town librarians beginning in late August as they return from summer break.

3. Creation of timetable for site visits and observation of LI at each college.

While querying the librarians, I will schedule visits to their campuses in general and to their libraries in particular.

4. Conducting actual site visits.

Southern California site visits will most likely take place in September and October 2010, with Northern California visits in November and early December 2010.

5. Enrollment in and completion of adult education courses in Web page design, distance learning and speech reading.

The following are typical course offerings from @One, an organization that creates courses especially for community college instructors (<http://www.ccone.org/online-courses/index.php>):

- Introduction to Online Teaching and Learning
- Creating Accessible Online Courses

- Dreamweaver I: Design and Build a Basic Website
- Video and Vodcasting for Teaching
- Audio and Podcasting for Teaching

With the college's push to increase distance learning, the Librarian intends to partake of these and other learning opportunities. The Library must be in a position to effectively connect its resources to distance learners. For the same reason, courses specific to the newly-chosen Desire2Learn platform will also be chosen.

Speech reading opportunities are more difficult to reach, especially in Ventura County. However, the Librarian intends to take a class offered on Monday and Wednesday mornings at the Jewish Home for the Aging in Reseda, as well as any other similar classes in Los Angeles County. There are also online and CD-ROM courses in speech reading that I will complete.

B. Projected Results—

1. Creating lecture notes and PowerPoint presentations.
2. Scheduling presentations as detailed above under Ic 1,2 and 3.
3. Creating a Web site of documents, photographs and related information.

C. Benefits to Colleagues/Students/College

The overarching goals of my sabbatical leave will be to learn from the best practices of as many college and university libraries as possible, to spread that knowledge as widely as possible and to improve my own library instruction at all three colleges in the District. Creating additional Web content for OC Library users and increasing comprehension of their questions will also contribute to these goals, as well as working toward a true integration of library resources with online learning. Finally, learning speech reading techniques will improve my communications not only with students, but also with my co-workers. This will allow me to participate more fully in collegiate life in general.

IV. Past Contributions to the Library Profession and to the District

I have been employed in library services since 1982, beginning as a Library Assistant at the Metropolitan Library System in Oklahoma City. Service also includes the Central Library of the Los Angeles Public Library system and at Sonnenschein LLP (a private law firm) in Los Angeles. My work for the District began in January 2000 at Oxnard College. I have served on many College and District committees related to budget allocation, the Learning Resource Center Renovation & Expansion and two accreditation cycles. I have also worked overload assignments during evenings, Saturdays and summer sessions at Moorpark and Ventura Colleges. I have been a member of many

hiring committees for faculty and staff at all three colleges, as well as on a screening panel at Oxnard College Library.

Ten years ago, libraries were making the transition from CD-ROM-based electronic services to Web-based delivery. I was responsible for moving the OC Library to its current service model: the College now offers 10 paid database services and 13,000 electronic books in addition to its 25,000-item paper book collection. As libraries in general move toward more electronic sources and fewer paper ones, we at OC Library will also be planning our move to the new/renovated Learning Resource Center in 2012. I believe that the learning opportunities as outlined in this sabbatical leave proposal will prepare me to deal with myriad challenges, especially in a time of tight budgets. I have neither applied for nor received any sabbatical leaves prior to this semester, though I have served on the Sabbatical Committee in the recent past.

When I am off-duty, I volunteer as a registered Disaster Service Worker with the County of Ventura. Additional volunteer duties include service at Conejo Elementary School in Thousand Oaks, as well as in church-related activities with children and adults.

I wish to thank the 2009-10 Sabbatical Committee for its consideration of this leave proposal.

Collegially,

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