

Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Proposal
Curriculum Development and Enhancement Project for Spring 2012
Submitted by Maria Teresa (Gigi) Fiumerodo
Anthropology Department
November 2010

Instructor's Sabbatical Leave Status

Full-time hire date: August 2004 **Part-time district hire date:** August 2001

Previous Sabbaticals: 0

Background of Sabbatical Project

The discipline of anthropology can be simply described as the study of humans. However, a closer look reveals a broad based approach that spans from the biological and scientific understanding of humans to the interpretations of culture and the humanities. Specifically, the field is divided into four sub fields: Biological Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology and Linguistics. While my specialization is in cultural anthropology, I have had training in all four fields. Both as undergraduate and graduate anthropology majors, students are required to take the four fields in their curriculum.

At the lower division level, many four year institutions require major prep in Biological Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology and Archaeology. However, several, local four year institutions require a linguistics course for their lower division major preparation requirements. These institutions include: CSU Long Beach; CSU Sacramento; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, Irvine and University of California, Riverside. A review of the top 10 schools for Anthropology majors in California revealed Pitzer College- a Liberal Arts College (ranked #3) and UCLA (ranked #4) both require the lower division linguistics course as major prep (see <http://colleges.collegetoolkit.com>).

A linguistics course is listed in the Moorpark College and Oxnard College catalogues and is currently offered at several local community colleges, including: Santa Barbara City College (ANTH 104), Pierce College (ANTH 161) and Moorpark College (ANTH M08). Enrollment in the course at Santa Barbara City College is steady, averaging 32 students a semester (since spring 2008- see www.sbccc.edu). Currently, there is not linguistic anthropology course being offered at Ventura College.

While I may be able to teach biological anthropology and archaeology (and have in the past), my exposure to linguistics has been limited. I am specifically trained in cultural anthropology and have conducted my graduate research and fieldwork in various cultural topics. Cultural anthropology emphasizes ethnographic fieldwork-the first hand collection of information about culture using participant observation techniques. I have conducted fieldwork in Italy on various aspects of community life since 1995.

My goal is to use the sabbatical leave to advance my own proficiency in the four fields in order to provide a well rounded experience in anthropology for Ventura College students. Furthermore, it will provide the possibility for improving my skills in curriculum development and teaching methodologies.

Purpose of Sabbatical Project

The purpose of this sabbatical project is twofold: (1) to build curriculum for the anthropology program, in particular, develop an Introduction to Linguistics course and (2) to create classroom materials from my dissertation research study.

Components of Sabbatical Project

- Curriculum Development

The first phase of my sabbatical leave project includes research and academic study for new course development for the Anthropology Department. This would include an Introduction to Linguistics course. I will review articulation guidelines, textbooks and related articles and teaching strategies. I will formulate PowerPoint presentations for class lectures and review appropriate videos and films for classroom use. I will then devise a course outline for the curriculum review process.

- Academic Study

In order to fulfill the first phase of the project, I will enroll in a linguistics course at California State University, Northridge (ANTH 319) in preparation for teaching the course in the future. Since Anthropology is a broad based discipline, my sabbatical leave will allow the opportunity to strengthen my knowledge in this subfield.

- Creation of Classroom Materials

The final phase of my sabbatical project will include creation of teaching aids and classroom materials for my culture based courses. In 2008, I completed my Ph.D. at UCLA. My dissertation, titled "Celebrating Community and Cuisine: Tradition and Change in the *Sagre* Festival in Italy" focused on a variety of socio-cultural topics including: festival, ritual, food traditions, globalization and tourism. My sabbatical leave will allow me the time to review and update my previous research, consult the current literature and if possible, contribute additional research to my study. I aim to transfer my video recordings of interviews and cultural events to current technology that I may utilize for classroom instruction. Upon completion of my assessment, my intent is to submit the article to a peer reviewed academic journal, including the Journal of American Folklore, a scholarly journal devoted to cultural studies and folklore. Finally, I would revise the article into a paper for presentation at an academic conference; both the American Folklore Society and the American Anthropological Association will hold their annual conferences in the fall of 2012.

This scholarship would then be utilized in my Cultural Anthropology course (ANTH V02) and my Anthropology of Magic, Witchcraft and Religion course (ANTH V07). Both these courses are identified as core and have strong enrollment numbers. I will also be able to use these materials in the Anthropology of Women course (ANTH V06). I can implement this material in my classes as examples of ethnographic fieldwork, ritual, festival, gender, expression of ethnic/regional/national cultural identity and globalization. I will be able to revise my current lecture notes, PowerPoint presentations and video documentation I have collected over years to provide my students with greater understanding of the fieldwork experience.

Value of Sabbatical Project to VCCCD and Ventura College

The goals I have identified for my project will value both the Ventura County Community College District and Ventura College. Submitting an article for publication in a scholarly journal will provide recognition to the district and the college. Presenting a paper based on original research will also provide recognition to the college. The development of the linguistics course will overall benefit the anthropology program and supplement the college's course catalog.

Value of Sabbatical Project to Ventura College Students

Overall, I believe my proposed project(s) will enhance my teaching skills benefitting the students at Ventura College. First, the linguistics course will provide for majors the preparation for transfer to many California universities and be better prepared for upper division studies in all four fields of anthropology. The course would essentially make our program complete and will eliminate the need to redirect students to Moorpark College or Santa Barbara City College to fulfill the requirement.

The course will also serve non majors interested in linguistic studies. The course will provide students an introduction linguistic anthropology but also to the fields of sociolinguistics. Some consideration will include the ways in which language is implicated in the social construction of gender, race, class, and cultural identity. The course will develop students' skills in the analysis of communication.

Secondly, the review of my own research materials will enrich the classroom experience for students. I currently have one class lecture I present in my ANTH V02 cultural anthropology course that is devoted to my own ethnographic fieldwork. While I bring my travel and ethnographic experiences to the classroom discussion, I do not use many of my own resources. This came to my attention recently when student in my ANTH V07 course asked about my own ethnographic work. We had spent time discussing various anthropologists and their work but when it came to my own fieldwork, I realized I had not specifically covered the topic. There is great potential for bringing anthropology alive by providing more of my own research into the classroom. While I have 15 years worth of valuable data including videos, photographs, field notes along with my master's thesis and dissertation, I have not had the time and opportunity to evaluate, update and include these various materials in all my courses. With an evaluation of my research and the production of an article, I can bring this additional layer of experience and knowledge to my students.

Value of Sabbatical Project to the Instructor

Completion of this project during my sabbatical leave would contribute to my teaching and be of benefit to my students. My goal is to become a more effective instructor and scholar. With this opportunity, I can broaden my contribution to the college and the discipline of anthropology. I believe this experience will greatly enhance my service to Ventura College.

I thank the committee for their time and consideration.
Respectfully yours,

Maria Teresa (Gigi) Fiumerodo Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Anthropology