

## Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Application for Fall 2023

### SABBATICAL PROJECT AND DESCRIPTION

#### I. Background

Social Work/Human Services (SWHS) V10 and Social Work /Human Services (SWHS) V10L are corequisites, consisting of a seminar, lecture component course (SWHS V10) and a 2-unit, supervised field experience (SWHS V10L). When I first joined Ventura College in 2015, there was an existing program at Ventura College which at the time was called Human Services. However, it did not have any field experience/real world learning component as part of the coursework. Additionally, there was no Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) at the state level; therefore, no universal guidelines from the California Chancellor for Community Colleges on how to structure and what to include in such courses.

I was hired as a new, tenure-track faculty in Sociology but I hold Master's degrees in both Sociology and Social Work. Besides teaching sociology courses and committee requirements, additional components of my professional role over the last seven years have included being the sole faculty member responsible for revising, developing and instructing all courses in the Social Work/Human Services Program at Ventura College and facilitating real world, experiential learning for students. I also frequently mentor students in progressing towards their goals within the field such as through identifying transfer programs in social work, job opportunities, completing cover letters, statements of interest, or preparing for interviews. Since my date of hire, I have created or revised all existing courses (five total) within the program, revised and updated the Certificates of Achievement and Proficiency awards, and revised/rewritten both the AA in Social Work as well as the AA-T in Social Work. Given that there were no state guidelines at the time when I first commenced this, and the Transfer Model Curriculum as well as the two C-ID courses were created in 2017, I have revised all of the above multiple times, both in Curricunet and now, most recently in Courseleaf.

In 2021, the Chancellor's office created the final version of the C-ID descriptor for the existing SWHS V10L course<sup>1</sup> outlining the requirements for a supervised field experience for social work students in community college. This course, as well as its corequisite lecture course, are requirements to complete the AA-T for transfer to a Bachelor's of Social Work Program as specified in the Template Model Curriculum<sup>2</sup>. Currently, there are several California State Universities, such as CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Humboldt and CSU Sacramento, offering BSW (Bachelor of Social Work) Programs. Admission is extremely competitive and most require at least 50 hours of volunteer experience in the social service field as part of an application for admission to the major for transfer students. This volunteer experience would be completed as part of the SWHW V10L course. In addition, this course is a requirement for the AA in Social Work/Human Services at Ventura College.

Furthermore, the Social Work/Human Services Program at Ventura College qualifies as a CTE program and is aligned with the Strong Workforce Initiative and California Senate Bill SB 1348<sup>3</sup>

which prioritizes funding and development of community college programs that offer certificates or degrees related to allied health professions. The Social Work/Human services program is also a Health and Wellness program under Guided Pathways. Guided Pathways seeks to advance equity, transform institutions, redefine readiness, and redesign supports for students.<sup>4</sup> Other programs included in this Pathway at Ventura College include Nursing, Medical Assisting and Emergency Medical Services. Similar programs typical feature a structured clinical training program with a standardized manual delineating guidelines.

As the Social Work/Human Services Program is also part of Career Technical Education (CTE) I also hold yearly advisory meetings in which I seek the feedback of local industry leaders such as hiring and training managers at various social service agencies. One consistent point of note is the need for trainable and reliable student volunteers. Currently this is no existing document or standardized protocol to guide the field experience and supervision of the SWHS V10 and SWHS V10L courses at Ventura College. As it has been extremely challenging to be the sole faculty developing all curriculum and programs for the SWHS program, I am applying for sabbatical leave to give me the time and opportunity to focus solely on the multifaceted process of developing an internship handbook to be used for SWHS V10L -Student Supervised Field Experience in Social Work.

## **II. Components of the Sabbatical Project**

- a. **Part One:** Create an Internship (field experience) Handbook which will involve
  - Streamlining a process to identify interested students and reach out to them in advance of the start of the semester
  - Development of a placement process to screen and match students with appropriate agencies
  - Interfacing with existing community agencies to network and develop standard agreements with a list of agencies within different specialty areas to provide students with a wide range of different opportunities. These might include agencies such as:
    - Turning Point (<https://turningpointfoundation.org/>) serving adults with severe mental health issues).
    - Step Up (<https://www.stepupventura.org/>) Working at a child care Center with children living in homeless families.
    - Project Understanding (<https://www.projectunderstanding.org/>) supporting homeless individuals in meeting basic needs and finding housing.
    - Casa Pacifica (<https://www.casapacific.org/>) residential treatment center for teens in foster care or requiring drug and alcohol intervention
  - Creation of a physical handbook that can be referenced semester after semester and will include:
    - Philosophy and learning goals for the field experience
    - NASW (National Association of Social Workers) Code of Ethics

- Standardized forms (applications for students to complete)
  - Application process for **paid opportunities**
  - Criteria for selecting agencies for student placements
  - Release of liability and formal agreement with agency
  - detailed guidelines for what type of tasks, activities, and time commitments should be included during the field experiences
  - Procedural guidelines for calling out sick, making up hours etc.
  - Schedule of learning evaluation with on-site supervisor and assessment form to be completed by on-site supervisor
  - Grading policies
  - Policies for problem/conflict resolution
  - Safety Policies
  - Collaboration, as appropriate, with necessary campus resources such as admissions and records and counseling to identify students in the major, the district for applicable liability forms as well as the Career Center
  - Researching and prioritizing **paid learning opportunities** for students, which currently exist at Casa Pacifica under a new Memorandum of Understanding as well as possible Strong Workforce funding available for student stipends for volunteer field experiences.
- b. Part two:** Align existing curriculum as appropriate to more closely prepare students for the supervised field experience:
- During the process of interfacing with local agencies to create partnerships and standing field experience agreements for students, I will also seek feedback from agencies about the type of knowledge and academic skills they would find helpful in student volunteers at the community college level.
    - Within previous advisory group meetings, some social work clinical skills that were mentioned include cultural humility, empathy, trauma informed practice and an understanding of the harm reduction model.
    - Currently, many, but not all of these topics are covered in the other three SWHS courses at Ventura College. Taking the time to develop a field manual and focus on helping students prepare for real-world placement may result in some curriculum revisions as needed.
    - Therefore, a smaller portion of my sabbatical leave may be devoted to some curriculum updates and revisions based on the types of agencies willing to develop standard agreements for student volunteers and the sorts of skills they need.

### III. Value of Sabbatical Project Ventura College and Ventura County Community College District

The Mission Statements of both Ventura College and The VCCCD share the focus of providing high quality, innovative educational programs that place students first. This sabbatical project will support this mission through further developing an important component of an innovative discipline that will continue to grow and become a state-wide community college priority as the need for trained employees in this field increases. Developing a cohesive, clear, well-organized manual for a supervised field experience will support best practices in real world learning for social work students at Ventura College. Furthermore, this program will support our diverse student population by “meeting students where they are”- providing stackable certificates and degrees that lead to living-wage employment in fulfilling careers serving our community as well the opportunity to continue on for a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in their own time.

#### IV. Value of Sabbatical Project to Students

Students who are majoring in Social Work/Human services as well as students who are simply interested in the exploring the field of social services will be provided with a more cohesive, organized, and streamlined supervised field experience. This will include more advanced notice to have time to process for (such as complete paperwork and required background screenings) for the internships as well as a standardized process to guide the field experience itself as well as outline grading and evaluation criteria. In the past, students have completed a less formal version of this volunteer experience (minimum of 50 hours throughout one semester) and a majority of these students either were able to transfer to a BSW or-for those not ready to pursue a BSW yet- were offered employment either at the site where they volunteered or were able to obtain another entry-level social service job within the community. Furthermore, the jobs that are categorized as occupations obtainable with a community college level degree by the U.S. Department of Labor, such as Community and Social Service Specialists and Social and Human Service Assistants are both projected to have a “bright outlook” with an anticipated 8-10% projected growth in job openings (this is much more rapid than average. These jobs are also projected to provide hourly wages between \$22.79 and \$30.05 within the Ventura County Area.

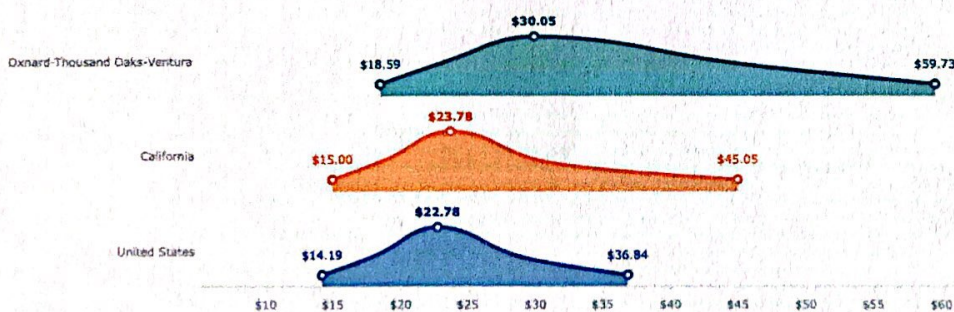
#### Local Wages

21-1099.00 - Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other ★ Bright Outlook

Wages for state:

Wages near ZIP Code:

Annual Wages  Hourly Wages

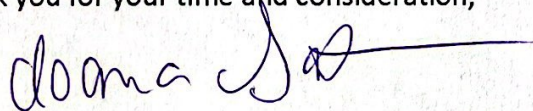


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics [2021 wage data external site](#) and [2021-2031 employment projections external site](#).  
"Projected growth" represents the estimated change in total employment over the projections period (2021-2031). "Projected job openings" represent openings due to growth and replacement.

## V. Value of Sabbatical Project to Instructor

Given my role as a full-time instructor, it has been extremely challenging to teach a full load of courses while also devoting time to development of the curriculum and program components for the Social Work/Human Services program. As the only faculty member facilitator for this program, it is important to me to also be able to provide guidance and mentorship for students who hope to continue their educational journey in social work or pursue a career within the field. Being approved for a sabbatical leave will allow me the opportunity to focus solely on advancing an important and necessary component of the social work program- real world, service learning. It will also allow me to better develop networking relations within the local social service field as well as refreshing my knowledge of employer needs. This will provide me an updated perspective I can then apply to the courses I teach and guiding students towards their own success.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



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## References

<sup>1</sup> Course-ID for SWHS 120 B (SWHS V10L at VC) <https://c-id.net/descriptors/final/show/748>

<sup>2</sup> Template Model Curriculum for Social Work/Human Services

<https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/About-Us/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Academic-Affairs/What-we-do/Curriculum-and-Instruction-Unit/TMC-Templates-2021/tmc-social-work-and-humand-services-template-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=8A2F044C256BBAD3C0FC9CBD8B2E9C7DB691E578>

<sup>3</sup> California Senate Bill 1348 <https://openstates.org/ca/bills/20172018/SB1348/>

<sup>4</sup> California Community Colleges Guided Pathways <https://www.cccco.edu/College-Professionals/Guided-Pathways>