Sabbatical Proposal for Fall 2023

Oxnard College

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Music – Visual and Performing Arts

Project Description:

I plan to develop an open educational resource / zero cost eBook for the guitar family of courses I currently teach. The current text for the course focuses too much on classical music reading and has some issues with pacing (the learning curve is too steep). I plan to create a more dynamic experience for the student in which each lesson of the online text would incorporate traditional music reading, repertoire, technical exercises, music theory drills, and popular music techniques such as chord strumming and pick technique, each with video and other multi-media content where applicable.

There are currently no comparable multi-media textbooks available for guitar courses at the college level. While course development may be part of the required work for all faculty, creating a set of multi-media learning tools (along with composing chamber works versatile enough to be performed by students at various levels) far exceeds the scope of normal course updates, and providing tutorial videos and musical works to the public will potentially serve as to attract new students to the college. All the resources taken together will serve as a modern and innovative approach to teaching class guitar that will likely be adopted by various other instructors at like institutions, helping to bolster Oxnard College's visibility and reputation among its peers. Additionally, I believe that this will enhance student success in these courses, as these new resources will directly influence students' ability to achieve and surpass the course objects and learning outcomes (SLOs are below), as well as increasing access to educational opportunity, all satisfying important elements of the Oxnard College Educational Master Plan.

Course SLOs

Guitar I:
- Students will demonstrate their ability to read the common notation systems for the guitar, such as standard notation, tablature, and chord diagrams.
- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of guitar technique by playing the natural note scale in the first position, basic arpeggios, and a work representative of beginning guitar repertoire.

Guitar II:

- Students will demonstrate their ability to read the common notation systems for the guitar, such as standard notation beyond the first position, tablature, and chord diagrams.
- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of guitar technique by playing a two-octave C-major scale, basic bar chords, and a work representative of a second semester guitar course.

Guitar III:

- Students will demonstrate their ability to read music by sight-reading basic pieces, up to the fifth position.
- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of guitar technique by playing a two-octave C-major, G-Major, and D-Major scale, basic moveable 7th chords, and performing intermediate guitar repertoire.

Guitar IV:

- Students will demonstrate their ability to read music by sight-reading basic pieces, up to the seventh position.
- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of guitar technique by playing a two-octave major scale in any key, moveable 7th chords, and performing intermediate to advanced guitar repertoire.

Your background as it relates to the project and to your role at Oxnard College:

I am lead faculty in music at Oxnard College, and I have been teaching the guitar courses at the college level since 2007, and at Oxnard College since my start of employment in 2015. My Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees all have a primary concentration in guitar performance.

Project Objectives:

- Bring the curriculum of the guitar courses up to date with more modern methods of instruction, such as video, online exercises, and more contemporary repertoire
- Achieve greater equity by incorporating more diverse musical styles

- Improve the reputation and visibility of the college through publicly available video tutorials and chamber works
- Make the course family more affordable by offering an eBook and other learning materials that are free of cost
- Work towards having the entire catalog of Music courses at Oxnard College be zero textbook cost

Project Methodology:

This project will require composing new multi-level reading exercises or arranging existing works to fit a multi-level ensemble, writing new lessons and explanations to replace the current textbook, creating captivating video and online content for the standard repertoire, as well as popular music examples and blues/jazz repertoire, and organizing materials into a logical series of lessons.

The structure of the eBook will likely be split into between fifteen and eighteen chapters/lessons, each with a similar format, with the addition of an introductory chapter dedicated to basic guitar terminology and an introduction into the various techniques necessary for playing the guitar in a "fingerstyle" manner, including free stroke (*tirando*), and rest stroke (*apoyando*), and flamenco *rasgueado* strumming , as well as some basic picking techniques like up and down stroke alternation, and basic strumming patterns for popular music. Following the introductory section, each chapter should follow a consistent format:

- Technical Exercises and Warm-ups
  - Scale patterns, Slurs, Arpeggios, Finger Independence, etc.
  - Video walkthrough of Exercises/Warm-ups
- Music Reading
  - These will all be duets, trios, or quartets in which each part is set for a specific skill level so that the advanced students will be able to play with the beginning students as a group
- Online Drills
  - Simple online exercises developed to practice new concepts
- Repertoire

- o Over the course of the term, students will learn 2-4 larger musical works which will have accompanying walkthrough videos, each larger work should take 3-4 weeks to learn
- Popular Music
  - o Strumming basic popular and folk chord progressions
  - o Popular music examples notated in tablature
  - o Learning to improvise over Blues and Jazz chord progressions
  - o Learning chord changes for the 12-bar blues, with upper levels learning some jazz standards or other more advanced harmonies, as well as more advanced techniques for improvisation

Product of the sabbatical (a paper, a film, an exhibit, etc):

The eBook and other media should be an easy product to display at the end of the sabbatical, most easily through the demonstration of a Canvas course built that incorporates all the new materials and allows them to be presented in a logical semester-long format, or through a publicly available website that does the same.

- 15-18 Chapters of a new eText
- 3-4 Music Reading Exercises in the form of short chamber works for guitar ensemble at various skill levels – minimum 45 pieces
- 2-4 Public Instructional Videos per chapter (repertoire, popular music, and warm-ups/technical exercises) per chapter - a minimum of 30 videos
- 2-3 Automated Drills for Music Reading, Theory, and Fretboard Knowledge per chapter – a minimum of 30 drills

How do you plan to share your sabbatical results at Oxnard College? Do you have plans for sharing your results more broadly?

I will be happy to demonstrate the final product to my department and/or the committee. I will likely make the resulting eBook publicly available as an OER resource for any instructor teaching class guitar courses, however the video tutorials and the new music for guitar ensemble will most certainly be made public and it is my hope they will help generate interest in the college's offerings.

Work plan and schedule (Show the committee the steps in your plan and approximately when you will complete each one, including the product or method of sharing your work).

- By October 1, 2023, have a complete series of graduated class guitar reading exercises composed. Beginning guitar exercises should progress from the first string through the completion of the first position with 2-3 short 8 measure exercises per week, Guitar 2-4 should have more complex accompaniment parts to play for each of the Beginning guitar works
- By November 1, 2023, complete videos and written technical exercises, 1 per week for Beginning Guitar, 1 per week for the upper levels
- By December 1, 2023, complete videos and tablature for popular music examples and Blues/Jazz repertoire
- By January 1, 2024, complete organization of the various topics/lessons into an organized web resource and/or Canvas course

Value of Project (here, given an overall statement of how this project will benefit you, personally and professionally, as well as how it will benefit others).

I believe this project will be of great benefit to my students, both in terms of more varied learning resources, and music that resonates better with them, as well as the obvious financial benefits of having a free text. I also think that the project will serve the college's Educational Master Plan in greater access, promoting the college's reputation, and improving student success. I also think a greater sense of cohesion between the students will come from having music reading exercises designed to allow all levels to play together as an ensemble, which is one of the most rewarding parts of being a musician.

Personally, I look forward to creating something new that more closely fits my current teaching style in the classroom, as well as the rejuvenation that I know will come from composing new music. I am also excited to create new works for guitar ensemble and tutorial videos that have the potential to attract new students and resources to benefit the guitar community at large.