



**Sabbatical Proposal: Spring 2027**

**Submitted By**

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**AI-Enhanced Academic Counseling: Leveraging  
Technology to Support Student Success**

## **Project Description**

This sabbatical project proposes a forward-thinking exploration into the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) within academic counseling practices at Oxnard College, with the aim of transforming how counselors support students in navigating their educational journeys. By leveraging AI technologies, the project seeks to enhance the efficiency, personalization, and overall impact of counseling services—ultimately improving student outcomes and success rates.

The research will focus on identifying and evaluating AI-driven tools that can assist with key counseling functions, including the development of comprehensive student education plans, automated prerequisite clearance, and the facilitation of more meaningful counselor-student interactions. These tools have the potential to reduce administrative burdens, allowing counselors to redirect their time and energy toward deeper engagement with students.

Oxnard College serves a uniquely diverse and resilient student population, many of whom are low-income, first-generation college students balancing academic responsibilities with work, caregiving, and other life commitments. This project will prioritize solutions that are not only technically effective but also culturally responsive and equity-centered—ensuring that education plans are tailored to reflect each student's academic goals, personal circumstances, and long-term aspirations.

A critical component of the project will be assessing the limitations of current systems such as DegreeWorks, which, while functional, often lack the flexibility and user-friendliness needed to support dynamic, student-centered advising. By exploring AI alternatives or enhancements, the project aims to identify tools that can adapt to individual student profiles, flag potential academic risks, and provide real-time recommendations—empowering both counselors and students to make informed decisions.

The ultimate goal is to position Oxnard College at the forefront of innovative, student-centered counseling practices by integrating AI in ways that uphold human connection, foster trust, and promote academic equity. This sabbatical will lay the groundwork for a scalable model that can be shared across departments and potentially replicated at other institutions serving similar student populations.

## **Background and Role at Oxnard College**

Since joining the institution full-time in May 2016 as the Equity Counselor, I have been deeply committed to advancing student success through targeted, equity-driven initiatives. My initial role involved leading the OMEGA program, a strategic effort focused on improving graduation rates among male students—particularly those from historically underrepresented backgrounds. This work laid the foundation for my ongoing dedication to closing achievement gaps and fostering inclusive academic environments.

Building on that experience, I transitioned to support student-athletes, guiding them through the complex landscape of academic eligibility, transfer planning, and NCAA compliance. This role required not only a deep understanding of academic policies but also a proactive approach to advising that balanced athletic commitments with educational goals.

Currently, I serve as the General Counseling Department Chair, where I lead efforts to evaluate and enhance departmental practices. My leadership has focused on improving service delivery, increasing operational efficiency, and promoting a culture of continuous improvement. I've championed initiatives that integrate data-informed decision-making and collaborative problem-solving to better meet the evolving needs of our diverse student population.

In addition to my counseling expertise, I hold a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering—a background that informs my interest in leveraging technology to transform educational systems. This technical foundation has inspired me to explore innovative solutions that streamline counseling workflows, improve access to student services, and enhance the overall advising experience.

Throughout my tenure, I have remained steadfast in my commitment to student-centered counseling. However, the increasing complexity of educational planning and the limited time available for individualized appointments present persistent challenges. I believe that emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, offer transformative potential in this space. AI-driven tools could provide real-time, personalized academic guidance by dynamically integrating key variables such as:

- Student major and academic standing
- Enrollment status (full-time/part-time)
- Transfer goals and university-specific requirements
- Course availability and equivalencies

- General education patterns and catalog rights
- Prior academic history and performance trends

By pursuing this sabbatical, I aim to deepen my understanding of these technologies and explore their practical applications in counseling. My goal is to develop scalable, tech-enhanced advising models that empower students to make informed decisions while allowing counselors to focus on high-impact, relational support. This work will not only enhance my professional competence but also contribute meaningfully to the future of student services at our institution.

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### **Project Objectives**

- **Research AI tools** currently used in community colleges to support academic counseling.
- **Evaluate best practices** and challenges from institutions already implementing AI.
- **Identify AI solutions** that can integrate with Oxnard College's systems and meet our specific needs.
- **Develop a proposal** for district-wide adoption of AI-enhanced counseling tools.
- **Create a framework** for counselor training and implementation of AI tools.
- **Ensure equity and personalization** in education planning for underserved student populations.

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### **Criteria for Evaluation**

1. **Efficiency Gains:** Reduction in time spent creating education plans.
2. **Student-Centered Planning:** Improved personalization of plans based on student context.
3. **Counselor Satisfaction:** Feedback on usability and effectiveness of AI tools.
4. **Student Outcomes:** Impact on persistence, completion, and transfer rates.
5. **Equity Impact:** Effectiveness in serving first-generation, low-income students.
6. **System Integration:** Compatibility with DegreeWorks and other platforms.

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## **Project Methodology**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Research</b>	Identify and analyze AI tools used at other colleges (e.g., Santa Monica College, Foothill College, etc.).
<b>Interviews</b>	Conduct interviews with counseling departments using AI to understand implementation, benefits, and challenges.
<b>Site Visits</b>	Visit 6 California Community Colleges Using or Exploring AI in Counseling <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foothill College</li><li>• Santa Monica College</li><li>• San Diego Mesa College</li><li>• De Anza College</li><li>• Los Angeles City College</li><li>• Irvine Valley College</li></ul>
<b>Professional Development</b>	Attend conferences, webinars, and workshops on AI in education and student services.
<b>District Engagement</b>	Develop a pitch and proposal for district leadership to consider AI adoption.
<b>Pilot Framework</b>	Draft a pilot implementation plan for Oxnard College.

## **Sabbatical Product**

The final product of this sabbatical will consist of a **comprehensive, research-informed report** and a **pilot framework for AI-enhanced academic counseling**, tailored to the needs of community college students and counseling professionals. This deliverable will include:

- **A detailed analysis** of current counseling challenges and opportunities for AI integration, grounded in both institutional data and best practices in student services.
- **A pilot model** for AI-assisted educational planning, capable of dynamically incorporating key student variables such as major, academic standing, transfer goals, course availability, catalog rights, and prior academic history.
- **Implementation recommendations**, including phased rollout strategies, ethical considerations, data privacy protocols, and integration pathways with existing student information systems.
- **A Canvas-based training shell**, designed to support professional development for counselors and staff. This interactive module will include:
  - Tutorials on AI tools and their application in student advising
  - Case studies and simulations for hands-on learning
  - Assessment tools to measure counselor readiness and effectiveness
  - Feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement

The project will culminate in a **presentation of findings and pilot outcomes** to key stakeholders, including counseling faculty, administrators, and technology teams. Metrics for success will include improved counselor efficiency, enhanced student satisfaction, and increased accuracy in educational planning.

This sabbatical will not only advance my professional competence in educational technology and strategic leadership, but also contribute to the development of scalable, equity-minded innovations in student support services.

## **Schedule Timeline**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Research & Site Visits	January – February 2027
Interviews & Data Collection	March – April 2027
Professional Development	January – April 2027
District Proposal Development	April – May 2027
Drafting Pilot Framework	May 2027
Final Report & Presentation Prep	May 2027

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## **Sharing Sabbatical Results**

I will present findings and recommendations to:

- Counseling Division & Department Meetings
- Student Equity and Success Committee
- Academic Senate
- District Leadership
- New Counselor Trainings
- Technology and Student Services Committees

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## **Value of Project**

### **To Students:**

Students will benefit from more personalized, efficient, and holistic education planning, especially those from underserved backgrounds.

### **To Oxnard College:**

The college will gain insights into scalable AI solutions that improve counseling services and student success metrics.

### **Value to the District**

This sabbatical will provide a scalable model for integrating AI into counseling practices across the district. It supports innovation, equity, and student success, and can serve as a blueprint for other colleges seeking to modernize their support services.

### **To Myself as a Counselor:**

This project will deepen my understanding of emerging technologies in education and empower me to lead innovation in student services.