

Professional Standards Committee

2023-2024 Final Report to Cosumnes River College Academic Senate

Submitted by Mun Kang and Anastasia Panagakos, Co-Chairs

Purpose and Area of Responsibility

The Professional Standards Committee receives and reviews the applications of faculty members desiring Type A and B Professional (Sabbatical) Leaves. Every semester the College President sends a letter to all full-time faculty describing the application procedures and timelines for these leaves. The committee reviews the proposals using an approved rubric and interviews the applicants. Following established equitable guidelines, each committee member is given an opportunity to ask questions of applicants during the interview process as well as voice opinions and concerns during the deliberation phase. The committee then makes recommendations to the College President who sends recommended leaves to the Board of Trustees for approval (Please see current Article 9 of the LRCCD/LRCFT Agreement for information on purpose and criteria). The committee chair refrains from casting a vote during deliberation or voicing an opinion regarding an application but can vote to break a tie if one should arise. Within three months of completion of approved sabbatical leaves, the committee collects reports, reviews and then assesses them by an approved rubric.

Membership

All areas/units shall be represented. At least ten faculty members should be appointed including a representative from the LRCFT union. At least one voting member of the committee should be current in equity and diversity training. The chair and chair elect shall be designated by the Academic Senate President, in consultation with the College President.

The Vice President for Instruction and Student Learning serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member.

2023-2024 Committee Members:

- Naomi Bahm (SBS)
- Lisa Beebe (AME)
- Iris Dimond (LRCFT)
- Kurt Erickson (AME)
- Markus Geissler (BCS)
- Patty Felkner (AME)
- Michael Frigm (AFNR)
- Norman Hom (ELS)
- Mu Kang (AME, Chair)
- Lap Ly (SME)
- Ray Mapeso (SSC)
- Kathryn Mayo (AME)
- Anastasia Panagakos (SBS, Chair)
- Sarah Pollock (SME)
- Mike Yarbrough (SME)

2023-2024 Committee Activities

- Review committee charge and update/amend/change if needed
- Adhere to established standards for collecting and reviewing applications and interviewing faculty applying for sabbaticals for both the fall and spring semesters.
- Collect and review sabbatical reports from faculty who have completed sabbatical projects
- Recruit new committee members
- Outreach to colleagues to encourage them to apply for sabbaticals
- Assist faculty in developing sabbatical projects

The Professional Standards Committee recommended the following projects for approval:

Spring 2024

Lesley Gale's project "Neurodiversity in the English Classroom" engages in research related to best practices for teaching neurodivergent college students, particularly with Autism Spectrum Difference and ADHD, with a focus on language-related topics such as writing and studying literature. Lesley's goal is to identify and experiment with practices that will appeal to all students, leading to enhanced success for neurodivergent students while also addressing the needs of neurotypical students. By increasing neurodivergent students' enjoyment of classroom learning, Lesley hopes to expand students' willingness to participate, fulfill the requirements of the class, and have a more positive college experience overall. Her project directly addresses our campus commitment to creating an equitable learning environment. The committee supports Lesley's proposal for a 40% Type B sabbatical in Spring 2024.

Kerstin Feindert's "Special: Students with Hidden Disabilities and a Personal Reflection" is a two-part project that researches the impact of learning disabilities for CRC students with the goal of creating best practices for other faculty, enriching her own teaching, and to prepare to teach the inaugural section of SJS 320: Introduction to Disability Studies in Fall 2024. The second part of the project is a personal reflection - Kerstin experienced a significant stroke in February 2023 and during this traumatic event she had to relearn to walk, talk, and write. She will be using her own experiences to better understand and serve students with disabilities and the sabbatical will give her space to do a deep dive into reflecting on her own recovery, career journey, and future path. The committee supports Kerstin's proposal for a Type A sabbatical in Spring 2024.

Danielle Heard Mollel and Tanika Byrd's joint proposal "Making Study Abroad Inclusive and Equitable: Developing the First Study Abroad Program in Africa Offered at Los Rios" addresses a gap in the study abroad opportunities available to our students. The intent of this project is to fully develop a study abroad program with the goal of bringing a cohort of Umoja/Diaspora students to Tanzania in Summer 2024. This sabbatical request continues the sabbatical work Danielle began in Spring 2023 (40% Type B) and Fall 2023 (Type A) respectively to finish creating the study abroad program. Tanika Byrd has joined the project to lend assistance given that the project has entered its completion phase with a heightened workload to secure funding and refine the program.

Additionally, the committee wants to share two serious concerns regarding the study abroad project that were also conveyed to Danielle and Tanika. First, the committee was curious about the personal financial connections that Danielle Heard Mollel has with Adumu Safaris, a company in which she is a co-founder and stands to gain financially, and the use of this company's services for study abroad logistics. Danielle explained that this concern

would be addressed by the District, but we thought it important to note here. Danielle also conveyed salient reasons for using the company - for example, that it would provide services at cost, thus making the program more affordable. Second, the committee is concerned about the state of LGBTQ rights in Tanzania, a country that actively suppresses and criminalizes homosexuality. We are concerned with supporting study abroad in a country whose values do not align with CRC's values of inclusion, diversity, and equity. We are also concerned with how CRC and Los Rios LGBTQ students and faculty who participate in the program may be put at risk and hope that there are procedures in place to safeguard their visit.

The Professional Standards committee has recommended unprecedented financial support to this project considering how rarely we fund continuation of the same project beyond one semester, let alone two. In total, we will have funded 2.2 FTE for this project based on our enthusiastic support of Danielle's vision and hard work, and the positive impact to our Black and African American students. That said, the committee feels it has done all it can to support this project and encourages CRC administrators to help institutionalize this new study abroad program, including lending financial support through presidential release time or other sources. The committee supports Danielle's proposal for a 60% Type B sabbatical in Spring 2024. The committee supports Tanika's proposal for a 20% Type B sabbatical in Spring 2024.

Fall 2024

Jennifer Francisco's Proposal: "Support for English Language Learners in English Writing Courses"

This proposal will develop a system of support for English Language Learners (ELL) taking English Writing courses. It will implement support for ELL students and address AB1705 and AB705. The number of English Language Learners attending Los Rios campuses is enormous and reflects the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the Sacramento area. To be precise, the number of CRC students currently enrolled who report English as a second language is 1244, which is 8.4% of the 14,757 students. In addition, the number of CRC students who have taken an ESL assessment is 671 (4.5% of the 14,757 students), which reflects students who are actively acquiring the language in order to take college level coursework in the near future. These students represent both the roughly 20% of public school students who are actively learning English and new immigrant students who enter Los Rios colleges. To ensure their success in English Writing coursework, this will evaluate the current support given to ELLs at CRC, research best practices and existing successful programs, create ELL-friendly materials, explore the possibility of offering ENGWR sections designed for ELLs, and work with CRC Student Services to create a robust system of support for ELLs. This will help achieve the goal of AB705/1705 to have every student complete English Composition in a timely manner. This project could be used by other colleges in the district to comply with AB-705 & 1705 and increase support for ELLs in English and other disciplines.

The committee supports this proposal for a 0.4 Type B sabbatical in Fall 2024.

Eric Neff's Proposal: "A Research and Study of Genetics, Molecules, and Genes at CSU"

Eric Neff's proposal involves auditing two courses at CSU Sacramento titled BIO 184: General Genetics and BIO 2: Cells, Molecules, and Genes. This endeavor is designed to fulfill three primary objectives: enrich knowledge in the rapid field of genetics and molecular

biology, enhance curriculum alignment between CRC and local 4-year transfer institutions, and facilitating a smoother transition for our students from community college to university-level education. Firstly, it aims to align our current BIOL 400 (BIO 2 equivalent) course content with a regional transfer partner for many of our students. The plan is to be immersed in the curriculum and pedagogical practices at CSU Sacramento. This seeks to identify areas of improvement to better align CRC's Principles of Biology course with the CSUS equivalent Cells, Molecules, and Genes. Secondly, this sabbatical presents an opportunity to deepen the understanding of the rapidly evolving field of genetics. Beyond personal growth, this sabbatical endeavor holds significant implications for our college and students. This proposal is aimed at professional development, curriculum enhancement, and transfer facilitation. This experience would serve as a testament to our institution's commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation in pursuit of student success. The committee supports this proposal for a 0.3 Type B sabbatical in Fall 2024.

Kathryn Mayo's Proposal: "Navigating Photographic Frontiers: A Sabbatical Exploration into Underrepresented Practitioners and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy"

This proposal focuses on the underrepresented photographic practitioners, their contributions to current photographic trends, and to the photographic history with relevant pedagogy techniques that can be applied into future classes. All the research and content produced in Canvas will be available to the entire AME faculty. This will benefit all of CRC photography related courses. The interest in the topic sparked in 2023 with the creation of a new Photo course titled PHOTO 421: Photographic Theory, Concepts, and Aesthetics. It focuses on incorporating content from underrepresented photographic practitioners into the realm of photographic development and history. The content in the course brought out the expansion of the incorporation of culturally relevant content and pedagogy into all CRC photography classes. With the new class, Kathryn realized she needed much more time to research and produce the content. In recent years, there has been a push to incorporate more culturally responsive teaching into CRC courses. This project will allow for time to research, learn more about current culturally relevant teaching practices, and develop ways to implement them into current courses. It will also allow the development of knowledge that will help stay on top of current photographic practitioners who are underrepresented. This project has the potential to directly benefit students in all the photo classes. This project promises a deep dive into the photographic world, where the intersections of diverse photographic practices and effective pedagogical methodologies converge. The sabbatical aims to contribute to a more inclusive and comprehensive educational experience, fostering a dynamic and culturally aware learning environment within the realm of photography education.

The committee supports this proposal for a 0.2 Type B sabbatical in Fall 2024.

Anastasia Panagakos's Proposal: "Every Costume Tells a Story: Understanding Traditional Folk Dress Through Ethnography"

For the past three years, Anastasia has been documenting Greek folk dress among Greek Americans in California. During the process, knowledge of traditional Greek dress history, textile production, and sewing craftsmanship was learned and attained. This project includes three distinct aspects. The first part conducts ethnographic and archival research on traditional Greek folk dress and will then participate in a series of folk dress/textile workshops hosted by the Benaki Museum and Hellenic Costume Society in Greece. The second part will use the data from the ethnographic project to enhance the anthropology curriculum. The third part of the project would organize an exhibition of traditional folk costumes at CRC that would incorporate the project themes (connection to the ethnic heritage, traditional handicraft skills, immigrant, and community pride) and feature the

Greek folk dress, along with other traditional dresses from other cultures represented on campus such as Hmong, Cambodian, Ukrainian, Guatemalan, Nigerian, Norwegian, or Afghan dress. This would include collaboration with students through the Center for Inclusion and Belonging or clubs and colleagues in the campus community in providing a space to showcase the uniqueness of folk dress traditions while also highlighting how all human groups share a universal need to adorn and outfit the body for different purposes. The proposal is an opportunity for professional and intellectual growth, and personal rejuvenation. The committee supports this proposal for a 0.4 Type B sabbatical in Fall 2024.

Sabbatical Reports Received:

These reports are available to review on our committee's BoardDocs site:

Spring 2023 Sabbatical Reports (Submitted Fall 2023)

- Patty Felkner
- Phuong Le
- Teresa Aldredge (from 2020)

Fall 2023 Sabbatical Reports (Submitted Spring 2024)

- Tamyra Carmona
- Kurt Erickson (from Spring 2023)
- Rick Schubert