

LOS RIOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Sabbatical Leave Application

Name _____ Lesley Gale _____

College: CRC

Present Assignment: ____Professor of English_____

Type of Leave Requested:

A. Type A One Semester: Fall _____ Spring _____ Entire Year _____

Will you be a tenured faculty member at the commencement of this leave? Yes ____ No ____

If you have previously been awarded a Type A leave, have you completed a sequence of seven full years of service with the District since the last Type A leave? Yes ____ No ____

B. Type B Fall _____%
Spring ____40____%

Will you have completed a sequence of at least three full years of service with the District at the commencement of this leave? Yes X No ____

Title of Proposal: ____Training the Teachers: Talking about Race with Each Other and Our Students_____

Brief Description of Proposal

With this Type B sabbatical project I seek to collect the theories and best practices of facilitating conversations about race, gender, sexuality, religion, political ideologies, and other demanding topics and create opportunities to practice them myself. I will also use these practices with the Equity Academy participants and then train the participants to use the strategies in their own spheres of influence, including divisions, departments, committees, and their students.

What are your qualifications to undertake and complete your proposed project?

I have been immersed in student equity work for a decade. In 2009, I had a Type B sabbatical to study culturally responsive teaching and subsequently held semester-long faculty discussion groups to try out and report on culturally responsive practices. Through my doctoral program's diversity courses I was inspired to choose my dissertation topic on community college professional development related to culturally responsive teaching. My past work as Foundations for Academic Success Chair gave me leadership experience in advocating for our most vulnerable students, and as Professional Development Chair and CASSL Coordinator, I oversaw and provided professional development opportunities for the college. I have served as Equity Academy Faculty Coordinator for the past three years. Prior to that, I served as Equity Professional Development Co-Chair with Kathryn Mayo. Last semester I reapplied and was offered two additional years as the Equity Academy Faculty Coordinator. I currently work closely with the current Professional Development Chair, Lisa Abraham, providing an equity context for the Teaching and Learning Leads and facilitating workshops on topics such as equity minded syllabi and capitalizing on student strengths.

Explain in detail how the accomplishment of your proposal will promote the objectives of serving students within the Los Rios District:

The purpose of the New Faculty Equity Academy is to foster and promote student equity through faculty roles such as instructors, librarians, and counselors. Equity Academy graduates use their learning and experiences to influence campus policies and to better support our diverse student population.

From the time I launched the Equity Academy in spring of 2017, I have continually sought ways to improve and enhance the program with updated readings that directly address current issues on our campus and in our community and with emerging pedagogical/andragogical theories and best practices. As the facilitator, I try to demonstrate culturally responsive practices and explicitly identify a funds of knowledge approach in having the participants share their expertise and experiences and to explore their particular interests in assignments throughout the semester and in their final research projects. The application for the Equity Academy asks prospective participants if they would be willing to be an equity coach after completing the program, and almost all of them agree. However, the potential for this endeavor has not yet been realized.

When the new faculty complete the program, I feel confident they will move forward with greater awareness of personal and institutional equity, the ability to self-reflect, and an understanding of culturally relevant practices. Many of them have gone on to implement their research projects into their spheres of influence. However, I am not confident that they are equipped to become equity coaches or to have conversations about race and other identities in their departments, divisions, and classrooms because I have not been formally trained to facilitate such interactions. I learned to facilitate by closely observing skilled facilitators from The Center for Urban Education and other talented presenters at various trainings and workshops I have attended. I realize this is a gap in my training and experience and would like to hone this skill through study and training with more experienced mentors. I feel an urgency to fulfill this goal because of recent and current local and national conflicts including immigration policies, police use of force, and acts of hate and violence.

Divisiveness, aggression, and hostility are becoming common in today's political and social climate. An unfortunate byproduct has been a decline in cooperation, civility, and empathy in mass and social media as well as an increase in hate crimes. Information from the FBI reveals a national surge in hate crimes starting in 2016, the majority of them Anti-Black offenses (Hate crime data, 2019). Over the past three years, hate crimes on college campuses have continually increased, with California leading all states with 161 hate crimes recorded at 122 colleges just last spring semester (White supremacists, 2019). Los Rios Community College District also reports an increase in hate crimes over the same time period (Booth & Holmes, 2018). According to the Anti-Defamation League, helping faculty and students respond to hate crimes is key to mobilizing against organizations promoting hate, most of which can be traced to alt-right white supremacist groups recruiting young people both on and off campus (White supremacists, 2019).

In addition to hate crimes, recent publications related to White Fragility (white people's discomfort and defensiveness when confronted with racial issues) and Racial Battle Fatigue (mental and physical exhaustion for people of color from racist interactions) emphasize the importance of discussing racial conflicts to ameliorate the impact and equip individuals to prevent future conflicts.

The spring 2019 Equity Academy cohort will include 24 new faculty members. There is also a plan to identify cohorts of faculty who are not new hires to participate beginning fall, 2020 semester. Providing training in conversations about race in future cohorts could have an exponential impact on faculty and students' ability to respond to and prevent hate crimes as well as bias and microaggressions on campus.

Will you be receiving any outside remuneration for the proposed activities during your requested leave?
Yes ____ No ☒ (If yes, please submit explanation on separate sheet.)

Do you anticipate receiving any commercial benefit from your project or product through future sales?

Yes ____ No X (If yes, please submit explanation on separate sheet.)

Please submit on a separate sheet:

- I. A narrative on your planned program containing a statement of purpose and objectives, a detailed description of the proposed activities, and budget or resources support.
- II. An appropriate method of evaluation.
- III. A plan for sharing the results of the project. If the project significantly affects other Faculty, please include plans for including them in the process.
- IV. Professional Growth Attachment (you can also include letters of support)
- V. Explain how you arrived at the requested leave time.
- VI. Explain why the project is outside of your normal duties.

I agree to comply with all requirements stipulated in the faculty contract if awarded this leave.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Approval/endorsement of immediate or appropriate supervisor:

I have reviewed this proposal and believe ____, do not believe ____, that it is an appropriate project/activity, which will promote the objectives of the college/district.

Comments

Signature of Supervisor

Date