Sabbatical Leave Application

Name: Isela Gonzalez Santana   Date: April 2, 2014

Years of Service in PCCD: 10+ years   Faculty Service Areas (FSA) English

Leave Period Requested: Fall 2014

Have you had previous Professional Development (Sabbatical) Leaves? **YES / {NO}**
If "yes" list time periods and activities:

Type of Leave: Indicate type of program. Check more than one, if applicable, and complete forms as applicable.

☐   Formal Coursework at university / college or other institutions

X   Research / Study / Creative Work / Internship

X   Travel / Study / Site Visits

Time Requested: There are three possible time arrangements for Leaves as shown below. Indicate your preference by writing 'first choice', 'second choice' etc. in the spaces provided. The Committee will try to give you your first choice. It will be assumed that you are not interested in any option you leave blank.

Select Option
1. One semester @ 100% salary for Fall 2014   1
2. One semester @ 100% salary for Spring 2015   2
3. Two semesters @ 66.66% salary for Fall 2014/Spring 2015   3

Upon return from professional leave, you are required to submit to the Chancellor, in writing, two copies of a report detailing the outcome of your leave (see Article 26 #13 M of the PFT Contract for details – see appendix). Please also send an electronic and a hard copy of the report to the Chair of

Name: Isela González Santana

Department: English

Type of Leave (Coursework, Independent Study, Project):
Independent Study & Project

Sabbatical Leave Dates:
Fall 2014

1) Project Title:
A Model for Enhancing Individualized Instructional Support for Students Across the Curriculum

2) Action Plan:
I will develop a model for enhancing tutorial services and resources for the Student Learning Center at Merritt College. To this end, I will complete the following tasks:

1) Examine successful models of learning centers at a wide variety other colleges; study relevant literature about effective tutor training programs;

2) Meet with Learning Center Director and staff coordinators to gather information about current tutor training practices and design an action plan for implementing a certified tutor training program;

3) Create and disseminate a survey for instructors to gather ideas and issues concerning tutor services in the Learning Center; survey will be a collaborative effort with Learning Center Director and staff; information gathered will be analyzed and used to inform dialogue for enhancing services in the Learning Center, with special emphasis on tutor training;

4) Research best practices in providing individualized instructional support across disciplines;

5) Examine effective online learning resources that target instruction and interactive learning including online exercises and quizzes; these resources will help create awareness in one's own learning (metacognitive awareness) and increase student independence;

6) Participate in the NCLCA's 29th Annual Conference Reaching New Academic Heights a ACTLA on October 1-4 in Albuquerque, New Mexico;

7) Research Tutor/Academic Coaches and Mentor Selection and Training Programs;

8) Investigate College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), a tutor certification program, and work closely with the Director of the Learning Center to begin the design and implementation of a tutor certification program;

9) Examine best practices for engaging faculty involvement in the Learning Center

10) Develop a system of communication between the Learning Center Staff, faculty, and Counseling that may involve an Early Alert Program;

11) Serve as the District SSSP Merritt Representative (appointed this semester) and report back to SSSP Committee at Merritt College

3) Leave Objectives

In my objective to enhance services that engage and support student learning, I will accomplish the following:

1) Adopt LRNE 030-- *Introduction to the Methods of Effective Tutoring,* a credit-bearing course consisting of various modules/topics relevant to tutor training (i.e., The Tutor's Role, Positive Reinforcement, Listening Skills, The Student's Ideas, Importance of Student Verbalization, Questioning Skills, Helping the Student Become and Independent Learner, Direct Techniques, and more); this course may be a hybrid of both in-class and on-line instruction with videos for each module;

2) Provide on-going training and tutor support with cross-curricular faculty and counseling input;

3) Include tutors in a community of "experts" with guest lecturers;

4) Evaluate tutors new and experienced tutors on a regular basis;

5) Increase interaction with instruction and course material through the use of various online tools including Moodle, Viddler, eTutoring, and other developing educational applications/tools;

6) Work closely with the Director of LC and staff to align tutor training program with Area Learning Outcomes and reflect the Mission/History of the Learning Center as well as the Mission/Vision of the College;

7) Join organizations and networks such as CRLA and ACTLA which will provide necessary assistance with designing and implementing a tutor certification program;

8) Study the *1-2-1 Tutoring* program model which uses relationship-building by the tutor with the student to facilitate the student's hope and enthusiasm for learning, thus engaging the student in the tutoring services; with this program, students receive progress feedback after each tutoring session, and written progress reports each month; study best practices that foster positive tutoring experiences.

4) Benefits to the English Department, My Teaching, and My Students:

Students gravitate to a learning center that fosters a community environment and utilizes a learner-centered approach. A highly functioning learning center engages and affirms all students, both on the receiving end as a tutee and the giving end as a tutor. Tutors, who are highly trained and feel validated in their tutoring experience, work enthusiastically with students on an individual basis, offering them reading and writing support and guiding them toward becoming independent learners. As students build more confidence in the services provided in the Learning Center, they are more likely to utilize the services on an on-going and frequent basis. In turn, more students will gain a deeper understanding of the value of the recursive writing and revision process. Instead of perceiving tutors as "editors" or "elite" students, they will gain an appreciation for the tutor-student relationship, focusing on skill-building rather than solely on the "product."

A highly functioning learning center must engage faculty from across all disciplines to create an inter-dependent relationship with tutors. Together, students, faculty and staff form a community of experts who support and enhance instruction throughout the College. In my department, English instructors will observe students' writing confidence develop; students' attitudes and perceptions towards writing and overall learning will grow more favorable, manifesting itself in an improved skill level in the classroom. As an English instructor, I will be able to cover course material in greater depth because students will have access to reliable, high-quality instructional support that incorporates my direct relationship with tutors and my input in the tutor training experience.

As tutors participate in on-going high quality training, they will become more adept at assisting students from diverse backgrounds including second language learners, students with differentiated learning needs, etc. they will also understand the role of the writing tutor as coach and peer mentor rather than "editor" or "elite" student. As tutors become more aware of various learning modalities and cultural communication styles, they will be more effective in assisting students and, in turn, students will become skillful and confident readers and writers.

Abstract

"Experience alone does not enable tutors to select more appropriate responses to presented tutoring situations…Training was found to make a significant difference in the appropriateness of tutor responses to presented tutoring situations (Sheets 1994)."

The Student Learning Center is the heart and hub of intellectual, cultural, and linguistic exchange at Merritt College. Students find solace in safe, supportive places where they can access tutors who are reliable, knowledgeable, and sensitive to their individual needs, and as well, can utilize technology that builds their independent learning. The purpose of my sabbatical project is to help enhance the services and resources in the Student Learning Center at Merritt College, primarily through the design and implementation of a vibrant tutor-training program and increased faculty engagement. The sabbatical project objectives will be achieved by conducting an in-depth review of academic literature about learning centers and tutor training programs. By becoming a member of the Association of Colleges and Universities for Tutoring and Learning Assistance (ACTLA), our Learning Center will gain direct access to a wide variety of California Community College learning support center networks including National College Learning Center (NCLC), College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), and National Association for Developmental Education (NADE). In collaboration with the Director of the Student Learning Center, I will implement a 1-unit LRNE -- *Introduction to Tutoring* course, which will function as the first level towards a certification tutor-training program. The design and implementation of a high-quality, sustainable and comprehensive tutor-training program will serve as an essential resource for students, faculty, and staff at Merritt College.

Sheets, R. A., (1994). The effects of training and experience on adult peer tutors in community colleges. Doctoral Dissertation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.