

Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Proposal
Curriculum Development for 1-Unit Career Exploration Counseling Course
Submitted by Erica Rebeca Ruiz
Counseling Department
October 2021

Instructor's Sabbatical Leave Status

Full-time hire date: January 2015

Previous Sabbaticals: 0

Background of Sabbatical Project

One of the core elements of Guided Pathways is to help clarify an academic path for students.

Different avenues of support that help meet this goal include:

- K-12 partnerships focused on career/college program exploration
- Use of multiple measures to assess student needs
- First-year experienc

worked with the FYE program at Ventura College for the last 6 years. During this time FYE
ltergone various changes. H

Purpose of Sabbatical Project

As a professor of Counseling V02: Career and Life Planning

Value of Sabbatical Project to VCCCD and Ventura College

Building healthy relationships across our local county high schools can help foster a sense of trust and collaboration with high school partners. Presently, I am only aware of two school districts that are requiring the career counseling course as part of their graduation requirements: Ventura and Santa Paula. I would like to research and learn more about which high schools are requiring this course and how we can get more data on those who will be coming into our district and college with the course completed.

Value of Sabbatical Project to Ventura College Students

As an FYE counselor, I often find that most first-year students enter college with an exploratory mindset. When prompted with questions such as, "What is your academic goal?" or "What do you plan on studying while at VC?" I find that students need time to delve deeper into their values, skills and interests, in order to make the connection between these characteristics and their academic and career goals. In my counseling appointments and workshops, I try to demystify the idea that a major is equivalent to a career and take the time to model how to research and understand the versatility of majors. I also stress the importance of research and understanding how your major and career should align with your most natural abilities and personality type. A 45-minute appointment is often not enough time to truly deconstruct what this means. In any counselor/client relationship the ability to return on a weekly basis and revisit specific goals and ideas makes for a healing process. Offering students the option of taking a 1-unit course where they can dedicate the time, effort and commitment to this research would help clarify their academic path.

Values of Sabbatical Project to the Instructor

A sabbatical by definition is the concept of taking an intentional break from our professional routines and devote time to re-invigorate our careers and reframe our approach to the world of work. I strongly believe that this project will help enhance my dedication to helping students explore and understand their vocation and how it relates to being their most authentic selves. Per the AFT contract, the primary purpose of a sabbatical is to help maintain dynamic faculty and encourage professional growth. Through this opportunity I will be able to build a stronger foundation to my counseling skills and assist students as they navigate their academic and personal goals.

I thank the committee for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erica Ruiz, M.Ed.
Associate Professor of Counseling