Sabbatical Application Abstract
Tim Roberts
Fall, 2014

I propose a 3-part, independent project.

We in the Ohlone Music Department are dissatisfied with the sightreading and ear training abilities of our music majors. I propose to write a new online and face-to-face Musicianship (MUS 111A, B, C, D) curriculum. I'll design the courses to run in Blackboard. This should make the content consistent in look and feel with our other core courses (especially music theory), and make the cost of curriculum much lower for our students.

I'd like to create a new collection of arrangements for Ohlone's Guitar Ensemble. This album would not be for public distribution unless mechanical and derivative copyright licenses were purchased. But it would be a great opportunity to coordinate and involve the student musicians of Ohlone's Guitar Ensemble with the Studio Recording class and Pro Tools classes in a professional-level project.

Write and record a new jazz fusion album
Poets and historians write books; composers and musicians create albums. I'd like to compose and record some new tunes featuring my guitar playing in a band setting. Ohlone students can serve as sidemen and engineers on this project. Going forward, our Jazz/Rock Combo classes will use these original tunes as concert repertoire.
Sabbatical Leaves are based on Article 15.11 of the Agreement Between the Ohlone Community College District and the United Faculty of Ohlone: "The objective of the sabbatical leave is professional improvement of the employee which will benefit the College, the instructional program and, specifically, the students of the College. While the importance of including sabbatical leave is recognized, higher priority at Ohlone College shall be the instructional program and the offering of courses which meet the needs of our students and the community. Budget priorities will place the needs of the College including the instructional needs of the students above sabbatical leave."..."First priority shall be given to sabbatical leave applications relating to teaching assignments, whether academic work toward a degree, special courses, or other learning experiences." No more than one leave shall be granted in each six-year period.

All projects must be of sufficient scope to match the time requested. This application will be the prime material used by the committee to rank the applicants. All applicants will be interviewed. Brief interviews will consist of questions by the committee to clarify how the applicant meets the criteria listed.

The Sabbatical Leave Committee bases recommendations on the following criteria:

A. Relative benefits to the students and the College as a whole: how does the proposal fit the mission and goals of the college?

B. Specific benefits to applicant’s department/division, for example:

1. Updating/modifying existing courses/programs through the acquisition of additional knowledge and skills.

2. Generating new programs, courses.

3. Acquisition of new and/or improved instructional or counseling methodology, curriculum development, research skills, or other innovative approaches.

4. Aiding and/or improving applicant’s execution of assigned professional duties.

5. Other.

Application Instructions: Submit the original and one copy of this application, complete with Division Dean’s signature, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs no later than February 18, 2014. Retain a copy for yourself.

Distribution:

(a) The original is retained in the office of the Vice President, Academic Affairs
(b) A copy is returned to the applicant after final action by the Governing Board.
1. Name____Roberts_____Timothy____C______________________________
   Last       First         Initial

2. Present Assignment ______Music Faculty__________________________________________

3. Number of Years of Full-Time Consecutive Service at Ohlone College__9

4. Time period requested for this proposed leave. (Give inclusive dates):
   ____Fall, 2014 semester: Aug 1 – Dec 15________________________________________

5. Please check which of the following methods you will use to meet the criteria for a sabbatical. Note that “E” is a combination of two or more of the first four.

   [ ]  A. Advanced Academic Study: In your statement in Item 7, include a detailed description of the course of study or research project to be undertaken. A letter of acceptance from the institution to be attended or a letter of acceptance from the individual who will direct the study needs to be forwarded to the committee prior to the commencement of the sabbatical.

   [ X]  B. Independent Research or Study: In your statement in Item 7, include a detailed resume of the study or project to be undertaken.

   [ ]  C. Travel: In your statement in Item 7, include a comprehensive itinerary of your travel plans.

   [ ]  D. Employment: In your statement in Item 7, include a complete description of the duties to be performed during the period of employment. Give the inclusive dates of the period of employment. Attach a letter from the employer which confirms the employment and states the salary to be earned.

   [ ]  E. A combination of the above activities: In your statement in Item 7, explain carefully how the activities are related and the special results that can be expected. Describe in detail the combination plan in which you are interested.

   [ ]  F. Other.

6. On a separate page, write an abstract of this proposal—not to exceed 200 words. This abstract will be presented to the Board of Trustees if this application is recommended for approval.

7. Narrative Description of the Proposed Program—not to exceed five pages.
   Provide comprehensive information about the type of program you selected in part 5. Include detailed information showing how the proposed program will aid or improve the execution of your assigned professional duties and the specific benefits to be accrued to the division/department, district, and students. Explain why a sabbatical leave, rather than other approaches, is required to accomplish the stated purpose. Disclose all information relative to any compensation you will receive during the leave period, other than expense reimbursement, whether from employment, grant, fellowship or any other source which is an integral or related part of the leave program.
To Be Completed by Division Dean before the application is submitted:

[ ] I support this application [ ] I do not support this application

Comments: These projects will benefit students.

Signature of Division Dean

I submit this application with the understanding that I shall be bound by the policies and regulations of the Ohlone Community College District and the Laws of California relating to the granting of Sabbatical Leaves of absence.

Date 2/15/12

Signature of Applicant

#-------------------------------------------#  
FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY

[ ] Recommended [ ] Not Recommended

_________________________________________, VPAA  
_________________________________________, CHAIR

To those applicants whose proposals are not recommended:

[ ] Due to the intense competition this year, your proposal was not approved. Please consider re-applying in a future year.

[ ] If you wish to resubmit this proposal in a future year, it will require revision in order to show that it meets the following criteria as listed on page one:

[ ] A  [ ] B

#-------------------------------------------#  

[ ] Recommended [ ] Not Recommended

Comments: ________________________________________________
[ ] Approved        [ ] Not Approved

Action taken by Governing Board
Date

-3-
For my sabbatical application, I propose a 3-part, independent project.

I propose to write a new online and face-to-face Musicianship curriculum. As stated in the Music Department's 2012/2013 Program Review as well as in the 2013 course assessment for MUS 111 Musicianship (a 4-semester, required course for both our A.A. degree and CSU's transfer degree), we in the Department are dissatisfied with the sightreading and ear training abilities of our music majors. The style of our curriculum, the limited amount of contact hours required, and the sub-par preparation level of our students don't result in the sort of improvement we'd like to see.

We've tried to fix this in the past. In 2009 I produced 3 albums of rhythm, melody and harmony drills for my students and posted them at iTunes-U. Some students made use of these, but since their use wasn't required, tracked or graded, there was no way to assess the value of this tool. We licensed a software product called Practica Musica that could be used by the students both in our lab and at home via the Internet. It was easy to track hours and completions, but web connections were difficult and unreliable, and the site license fee was expensive. For the past few years we've used an online Musicianship curriculum from Coast Publishing, but this curriculum delivery system, Moodle, has become really expensive for the students and error-prone with modern operating systems. Finally, although there are plenty of helpful and inexpensive apps available, not all of our students own a smartphone, and it's difficult to document mobile participation.

Assuming that we at Ohlone are committed to sticking with a single content delivery system, I'll design it to run in Blackboard. This should make the content consistent in look and feel with our other core courses (especially music theory), and make the cost of curriculum much lower for our students. This semester I've created a test pool of interval samples and administered some interactive quizzes to both 2nd and 4th-semester students using this content. Results have been positive enough to encourage me to pursue this idea across the subject matter of all four semesters of course outlines.

Collection of Guitar Ensemble Arrangements
Ohlone's Guitar Ensemble performs each year at Graduation, Student of the Year Awards and other college functions. The rock and roll style and approach of this ensemble is unique among other guitar ensembles and "guitorchestras" in California and around the world. Our group performs modern rock songs in a traditional one-on-a-part chamber music setting on electric guitars and basses, rather than the traditional 19th-Century classical repertoire performed on acoustic guitars.

The uniqueness of the sound of this group requires that we write our own arrangements of the tunes we play. And because most of our source material is not in the public domain, we'd normally be required to obtain licenses for derivative arrangements of this copyrighted material were we to try to distribute it. But since we're not selling CDs of this material, it's sufficient that performances of these pop
songs be covered by our yearly blanket ASCAP/BMI licenses. The major print publishers (Hal Leonard and Alfred Music) don't have much interest in distributing these types of arrangements, due to their limited appeal in the marketplace. But it's these offbeat, wacko arrangements that make our ensemble unique.

I'd like to create a new batch of 10 guitar ensemble arrangements. And even though I've arranged dozens of guitar ensemble tunes for the students at Ohlone, I've never done a studio-quality, careful recording of any of them – just quickie demo versions as pre-rehearsal preparation for the ensemble members. Again, this album would not be for public distribution unless mechanical and derivative copyright licenses were purchased. But it would be a great opportunity to coordinate and involve the student musicians of OGE with the Studio Recording class and Pro Tools classes in a professional-level project.

**Write and record a new jazz fusion album**

Poets and historians write books; composers and musicians create albums. My meager iTunes discography right now consists of an acoustic album, a Christmas album, and a live pop album. I'd like to fill out that stylistic sampling and improve my credibility factor with my students with a more aggressive and serious collection. I'd like to compose and record some new tunes featuring my guitar playing in a band setting. I'd like to use some of our more advanced musicians as sidemen and engineers on this project, but since the Music Department will be in swing space during this time, it's unclear whether or not we could use the school's recording studio. Hiring outside musicians would, of course, increase the cost. But I'm willing to fund this out of my own pocket, if necessary. Going forward, our Jazz/Rock Combo classes could use these original tunes as concert repertoire.