

TO: Mr. Rick Miranda, Acting Vice-President of Academic Affairs  
FROM: Frank Gaik, Professor of English  
DATE: 8 December 2016  
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

### I. REQUEST FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

I am requesting sabbatical leave for the academic year 2017-2018 at 100 percent compensation. I have been employed at the college since 1989. My previous sabbaticals were compensated at 70 percent (Learning Disabilities in Writers, 1995-96; Bible Translation and Adult Literacy, 2004-05).

### II. PURPOSE OF LEAVE

The purpose of my leave is to retrain myself to teach linguistics, composition, and literature, and to provide resources for my department, by an intense study of the newest research in linguistics focusing on four cultural-linguistic groups: Hispanic/Latino; African-American; Native American/Alaskan, and Hawai'in/Pacific Islander. The research will be used to modify course outlines, design lesson plans, and to provide a list of relevant resources for myself and for colleagues who teach the following courses: English 106 (Introduction to Linguistics), English 20 and 52 (developmental composition), English 100, 102, 103, and 110 (advanced composition), English 223 (Chicano/a Literature), English 225 (African-American Literature), and English 230AB (American Literature).

### III. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

In the last decade, the study of linguistics has experienced a major shift in paradigm. From 1957 until recently, the dominant model for the theory of language acquisition has come from the school of Noam Chomsky, called Transformational Grammar. In that model, the acquisition of language has been hypothesized as a biological phenomenon. The emphasis has been on finding those formal elements of natural speech that are shared by all language users, regardless of gender, race, and class. In its purest form, linguistics has merged with cognitive science and brain research to study the innate modular systems of the brain. However, in the last decade, this model has been challenged by an anthropological and socially-interactive approach. Precisely, gender, race, and class inflect what had been considered biologically universal. The primary scholar in this new direction has been Daniel Everett, who has written of his experience among the Amazon-basin Piraha people. His studies have challenged the fundamental notion in Chomskyan linguistics that language is primarily biological, and his approach has motivated new research in the ways that language is a product of a unique location, culture, and history. Robin Lakoff, for example, has demonstrated that male and female members of a common culture, race, and class, nevertheless vary from one another, particularly in syntactical gestures such as tag questions: using an equal number of tag questions, men use them to claim acquiescence ("Isn't that right?") whereas use women them to invite open consideration ("Makes sense, doesn't it?"). As a result, a new appreciation for the study of natural language in the context of gender, social class, ethnic background, and institutional encounter has produced a significant body of research.

Such research is particularly relevant to the teaching of English to the diverse student body at Cerritos College.

The first objective will be a revision of the course outline for English 106, Introduction to Linguistics. The course is required for several majors across campus and has recently been revitalized after a long hiatus. The course outline will be written in light of the current state of the field, using the most recent textbooks for introductory classes, and the course outlines at other colleges, universities, and graduate schools of linguistics at UCLA, Georgetown, MIT, and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Lesson plans will be developed that compensate for the missing elements in the older textbooks. First, there is a need to revise lessons in light of new research on the linguistics of gender. Second, there is a need to revise lessons in light of new research on American Sign Language. Sign language had been traditionally excluded from linguistics textbooks because it is neither oral-based nor universal (American Sign Language and British Sign Language are mutually incomprehensible); however, new studies in ASL have focused on syntax, recursion, dialect, and prosody. Third, there is a need for a renewed emphasis on mixed languages, multilingualism, pidgin, and creole—the last two most salient to contact languages in the Pacific Islands, but evident whenever different languages confer and contend. Materials and lesson plans will be available in the department archive for instructors in other linguistics courses.

The second objective will be a revision of lesson plans for developmental and advanced composition, which incorporate new findings in language acquisition, including global literature (or ethnic studies). New research has demonstrated that literary fiction enhances a student's intercultural competency and empathy and transfer readiness (Arnett; Chatlanto). Such skills are central to success in higher education and employment. The focus here will be the relationship between the study of literature and the development of college-level writing. Faculty in the English Department, particularly adjuncts, are looking for ways to enhance the use of literature in the composition classroom. Faculty in English will receive reading lists with contributions from emerging authors, particularly authors from African-American, Latinx, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders. Faculty workshops in linguistics and cultural competence will be developed, in partial fulfillment of the campus Student Equity Plan. Key resources on gender and composition will be compiled for the department archive; a department workshop on writing for students who are deaf or hard of hearing will be drafted, sources including the "Writers Workshop" at the Gallaudet University Web Site and in consultation with Professor Edward Kelly, American Sign Languages, Modern Languages Department. A bibliography of materials on story telling and socialization for courses in linguistics, children's literature, and mythology will be prepared. Additional and ongoing resources will be available campus-wide.

The third objective will be a revision of lesson plans and course outlines for courses that I have taught and may be expected to teach any semester, based on a linguistics approach. Chicano/a Literature and African-American literature are burgeoning areas of study. Within and among these groups, the intersectionality of gender with all other categories is salient. The number of emerging writers who identify from these backgrounds is increasing every day. Writers who have not yet been anthologized in textbooks are publishing in a variety of new journals, especially online. Furthermore, these emerging writers are developing styles that challenge traditional genres, combining elements of performance, popular culture, and political relevance. In particular, questions of identity are moving to the forefront, and emerging writers are challenging the traditional standards of English, incorporating dialect, slang, bilingualism, and

other elements of natural speech. These literary developments are founded on explicit theories of language, and linguistics can add a vocabulary to aid student understanding. Universities are demanding students competent in new modes.

The fourth objective will be revision of lesson and plans and course outlines for the surveys of American Literature for English majors. The syllabus for American literature must introduce students to traditional authors while demonstrating the forward movement of the canon to incorporate emerging voices. Anthologies from major publishers typically are in a constant state of revision yet may be supplemented by relevant and recent literary productions. Faculty will need to supplement their curriculum to include contributions by more recent authors. In particular, there has been a renaissance of literature from writers who identify with Pacific Island culture and issues; their topics resonate with other campus programs and initiatives in oceanography, climate change, Pacific treaty considerations, and athletics, as well as student equity. Essential to many of these stylistic innovations is a melding of English and traditional languages and meanings, participating in Global English or *Globish* (Crum).

#### IV. PREPARATION

My graduate work includes an MFA degree in creative writing and a doctorate in Rhetoric, Linguistics, and Literature. This education prepared me to evaluate quality sources and sense the direction of change in a field.

My publications and recent conference papers have included studies of anthropological linguistics (Gaik 1992), Latino/a and Chicano/a memoir and autobiography (Gaik April 2016), and Pacific Islander culture (Gaik July 2016).

My teaching load has contributed to my preparing--having taught English 106 (2016), English 223 (2008), English 225 (1993), English 230A (2014), and, further, composition classes that were dedicated to Chicano/a autobiography, African-American studies (Umoja) (2016), and Japanese migration to Hawai'i (including *Picture Bride* and *A Buddha in the Attic* by Julie Otsuka).

A Student Equity grant for which I am a project co-leader is titled "Global Literature Interns for Student Equity." The project brings together graduate students from California State University with mentor professors from the English department. The goal of the project is to increase students' intercultural competence through the study of global literature as a way of preparing them for successful transfer to the university as juniors. My graduate student intern for 2016-2017 AY is a nativ of Hawai'i and fluent in pidgin languages of the islands. I have designed the training for the interns.

My current syllabus for linguistics includes work on Spanish verb tenses (Baquedano-Lopez); cross-talk among Korean store owners and African-American customers (Bailey); socialization narratives among Pacific Islanders (Duranti, Ochs). In addition, the required textbooks in intercultural communication were Janet Jackson's *Language and Intercultural Competence* and Mindy Blaise's *Playing It Straight: Uncovering Gender Discourses in the Early Childhood Classroom*.

My experience with campus activities has included classroom-based events for African-American History Month (Black Lives Matter Update and Breakfast) and Hispanic Heritage and Latino Awareness Month (Hear My Story, Know My World: A Celebration of Literature, Culture

and Courage), and campus lectures on Japanese Sushi and Sustainable Fishing for the Integrative Food Theme Film, and for Earth Week Events.

In preparation for the sabbatical study, I have written letters of inquiry to professors of linguistics at UCLA, Georgetown, and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I have been a participant in the Cultural Quotient Seminar directed by Angela Hoppe-Nagao and attended a Cultural Quotient Workshop at the Global Studies Conference at UCLA in July 2016 (Villagran).

## V. PLANNING ITINERARY

August 15-September 14

To research the debate between Noam Chomsky and Daniel Leonard Everett on language origins, universality, and acquisition. In contrast to dominant theories of language, which focus on ideal forms and abstract transformations, Everett's ethnography provides a counter-example. The primary scholarly journals that have recorded this debate are *Language* and *The American Anthropologist*. In addition to reading Everett (2008) and Everett (2012), the online sources from significant graduate schools of linguistics will be reviewed. The lesson plans for English 106 on universals, language acquisition, ethnography of speaking, historical linguistics, and sociolinguistics will be modified and updated accordingly, and revisions to the course outline will be drafted.

September 15-October 14

To research new studies on gender and language. Sources will include Grande, Anzaldúa, Coates, Eckert, McConnell-Ginet, Lakoff, Mendoza-Denton, Ochs and Schiefflen, and Tannen, among others. The unit for language and gender for English 106 will be modified. Of particular interest is the dynamics of gender in all acts of speech and communities of discourse or language. Key sources on gender and composition studies will be compiled for the department archive.

October 15-November 14

To research the linguistics of American Sign Language and other sign languages in light of new emphasis on phonology, morphology, syntax, and artistic performance. Sources will include Brentari, Emmorey, Meir, O'Grady et al., Sandler, and Wolf, among others. In light of the fact that around one-third of the students who take English 106 are in the translation/interpretation program, two units on sign language will be designed and lesson plans completed. Key sources and issues for a workshop on the development of writing for students who are deaf or hard of hearing will be drafted ("Writer's Workshop" Gallaudet University Web Site). Issues of race, class, and gender relevant to ASL instruction will be studied.

November 15-December 14

To research the linguistics of contact languages, which include *lingua franca*, pidgin languages, superstrate and substrate encounters, creoles, patois, and naturalization. Contact languages are products of the encounters and political economy of European language and indigenous cultures. The contact languages of Hawai'i, Samoa, and Alaska will be emphasized. Sources include work in anthropological linguistics (Mead, Duranti, Ochs, Scollon, and O'Shannessy).

Particularly relevant gender issues include the language of commodification (trafficking) and feminization of the colonized. Elinor Och's work on bedtime stories from mother to daughter, for example, shows how coded resistance to patriarchy and colonization takes place through narrative. Courses in linguistics, children's literature, and mythology incorporate issues of story telling and socialization. A bibliography of materials will be prepared.

January 15-February 14

To research how the new linguistic paradigm of language acquisition and usage influences the teaching of composition. The traditional biological model of language acquisition fails to distinguish difference, whereas the new anthropological paradigm places an increased emphasis on language in context and encounters between members of different language communities. Studies of miscommunication and cross-talk between students and professors will be reviewed. Integration of linguistics/literary engagement into the composition classroom fosters responsive pedagogy. New studies in language acquisition inform models of student development. Moreover, awareness of gendered expectations can better guide students as they function in discourse communities. Lesson plans ranging from writing memoir to acquiring discursive argument practices will be developed. The materials and guidelines for a workshop on how linguistics research can influence the teaching of basic and advanced composition will be drafted. Sources will include publications in the field of composition and literature from the National Council of the Teachers of English and the Modern Language Association, among others.

February 15-March 14

To research the relationship between linguistics research and the teaching of African-American literature in English 225 and in composition and literature courses. The emphasis here will be on emerging voices in African-American memoir, fiction, poetry, and public performance. Topics include issues of language acquisition and institutional encounters (Bailey, Brown, Fishman, Gilman, Greene, Hymes, Labov, Mitchell-Kernan, Morgan, Rickford, Sidnell, Shilling-Estes, Tannen, and Wolfram, among others. Of particular interest is the development of public rhetoric and musical performance that has grown from the Black Lives Matter Movement (Kelley). The three women who founded #blacklivesmatter recognized the immediate importance of gender, sexual orientation, and language in any movement for social justice (Garza). A list of references of contemporary writers will be assembled for the department archive, and the materials useful to a workshop on African-American literature and discourse will be drafted.

March 15-April 14

To research the relationship between linguistics research and the teaching of Chicanx and Latinx literature in English 223 and in composition and literature courses. The emphasis here will be on developments in the memoir or autobiography, particularly on the works of Victor Villasenor, Gloria Anzaldua, and Reyna Grande, who have focused their attention on issues of gender and sexual identity, as well as the politics of bilingualism. Reyna Grande, for example, writes how children within a family can be divided into "Mexican kids" and "American kids," based on birth country and linguistic patterns. A particular focus of this period is on the dynamic relationship of past-tense verbs in Spanish and English, which can illuminate elements of the speech and writing of students with Spanish language heritage. A list of works and lesson plans will be developed

for the department archive, and the materials for a workshop on the dynamics of Spanish and English will be developed (Baquedano-Lopez).

April 15-May 14

To research the increasing diversification of the canon of American literature, from its beginnings to contemporary times. A review of the current anthologies of American literature will be done, with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of Pacific Islander and Native American writers. A particular focus will be on the poetry of Pacific Islanders, which have renewed interest, including recently dedicated departments, journals, and conferences. Sources include Colleps, Kihleng, McMullin, Perez, Revilla, Scanlan, and Taitano, among others. Cultural linguistics and narratology will enhance the teaching of these survey courses as well as the service in composition classes to students developing their writing. A list of authors will be provided for inclusion as course outlines are revised.

## VI. SERVICE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

### A. Outcomes for students in English 106

Introduction to Linguistics is required for students of several majors: interpretation and translation, language and letters, sociology, geography, and global studies. It is a required course for bilingual educators. Students who take the class will be informed of the new paradigm of the essential questions of language: its origins and its modes of acquisition. In addition, the new lesson plans will focus on gender, ASL, and contact languages. As Mindy Blaise has demonstrated, in her landmark study *Playing It Straight: Uncovering Gender Discourses in the Early Childhood Classroom*, gender expectations are inculcated during conversations with children at the earliest ages. Students in child development and education will be better prepared to avoid unconscious indoctrination into the heterosexual matrix and will be sensitive to avoid gender bias. Students in translation and interpretation, who make up a sizable group in the class, and will be educated about the fundamentals forms of American Sign Language and other sign languages, leading to a greater facility as interpreters. Students will gain an appreciation of the complexity of sign language. Students who share multilingual backgrounds will be particularly interested in lesson plans on contact languages, providing a new understanding and respect for the dynamics of language-mixing and language performance. The linguistics class will be designed to enhance student's intercultural competence (Jackson).

### B. Outcomes for students in developmental (20, 52, 72) and advanced (100, 102, 103, 110) composition

Students in writing classes are experiencing the secondary acquisition of a new language and discourse, namely the standard, edited English of the professional classes. Research on the dynamics of language acquisition, language integration, and language resistance and subversion will illuminate aspects of our students' classroom conversation and formal papers. Research on gender—uses, expectations, bias, development, signaling, and identity formation—has particular relevance in this context, particularly in such contested areas as male generic terminology and trigger warnings. The use of memoir and literature from writers with a variety of cultural backgrounds will validate and inspire students. The college syllabus is a site of institutional authority, and students benefit from reading authors who share their backgrounds, heritage, and contemporary struggles. In addition, knowledge of the particular linguistic features that mark a

transition from informal to formal discourse will inform and enlighten the measurements of student learning outcomes. Finally, readings of non-fiction and fiction that introduce students to the experiences of people from other cultural backgrounds will enhance their cultural competency and build confidence for their transfer journey to universities, where they will negotiate an increasing diversity of languages, cultures, abilities, and gender identifications (Bury).

#### C. Outcomes for students in English 223 Chicano/a Literature

Authors of Chicano and Chicana literature have been increasingly validated by readers around the world in recent years. One major step in this direction is the publication of the *Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* in 2010, edited by Ilan Stavans. In addition, emerging authors are being published in established journals and literary awards and contests are focusing on Latinx writers. Much of the best new work is in a hybrid form of memoir and autobiography that incorporates elements of magical realism, symbolism, and spiritual struggle. More important is the renewed dialogue on issues of gender and sexuality. Unique to our time in history, issues of cross-border consciousness and the dynamics of complicated migration have risen to the forefront, particularly in political discourse. Students who can recognize that they are part of writing this history of literature and share a responsible for language skills capable of engaging the political discourse will be better prepared for their university education and the modern workplace.

#### D. Outcomes for students in English 225 African-American Literature

Scholars of African-American literature have revolutionized the reading lists of anthologies and syllabuses in the past half-century. In recent years, however, a new dynamic has emerged that challenges existing and traditional paradigms. Influenced by the Black Lives Matter movement, authors and performers have been producing new forms of autobiography and self-expression, and the inclusion of issues of sexual identity have been emphasized (“Herstory”). Students in this class have the responsibility to understand today’s rhetorical situation with previous moments in American history. As Professor Robin Kelley of UCLA has stated, the development of consciousness of African-American students must be focused on the intellectual work and the familiarity with revolutionary discourses that engage the community, an ethnography of speaking truth to power. Students in this class will be ready to discuss these new developments in terms of both traditions and ruptures in tradition (Oja).

#### E. Outcomes for the faculty in the Department of English

Faculty in English are expected to keep current in courses across the curriculum. In addition to the strictures of the job announcement, faculty have elected to rotate all courses among the department. Any course can be taught only three times before rotation is expected or available. With such policy, each faculty member is responsible for teaching across the curriculum, from composition and surveys in literature for the major, to specialized courses in global literature and ethnic studies. The foundations for this flexibility and resilience are two-fold: (1) the archiving of key resources, assignments, lesson plans, and sample syllabuses retained by the department chair, and (2) the ongoing formal and informal workshops and retraining meetings regularly held by department members, some for flex-credit. My sabbatical will make the following contributions to this ongoing professional development in English:

- (a) The course outline for English 106 will be revised in light of recent developments in the field, which will include a survey of existing textbooks, sample lesson plans, and online references to linguistic examples that meet the ADA requirements. The revision process will include an open invitation for members of the department. All materials on the teaching of gender, ASL, and contact languages will be available in the department archives. A workshop for flex-credit will be available to the department on the topic of “What the New Paradigm in Linguistics Means for Teachers of Composition.”
- (b) The course outline for English 223 will be revised, according to the curriculum committee schedule, in light of the publication and appearance of emerging voices in Latinx literature. A list of new authors, writing assignments, lesson plans, and approaches to autobiography will be available for the department archive. The revision process of the course outline will include an open invitation to members of the department. A workshop for flex-credit will be offered to the department on the topic of “From Rain of Gold to Reyna Grande: New Directions in Mexican and Chicano Autobiography.”
- (c) The course outline for English 225 will be revised, according to the curriculum deadline, in light of the publication and appearance of emerging voices in African-American literature. A list of new authors, writing assignments, lesson plans, and approaches to the rhetoric of Black Lives Matter will be available for the department archive. The revision process of the course outline will include an open invitation to members of the department. A workshop for flex-credit will be available to the department on the topic of “What the Black Lives Matter Movement Means for the Teaching of Public Rhetoric and Activism.”
- (d) The course outlines for my own composition sections will be revised in light of new linguistics research on the efficacy of teaching global literature for intercultural competence. The teaching of literature is already fundamental to teaching composition. The new emphasis as a result of this sabbatical will be the evidence that reading literary fiction enhances intercultural competence and empathy (Bury). In conjunction with the Global Literature Interns for Student Equity project in the department--which now engages eight mentor faculty and eight graduate students--the results of the sabbatical study can inform the orientation and training of the graduate student interns, as well. A workshop for flex-credit will be available to the department on the topic of “The Study of Global Literature for Intercultural Competence.”
- (e) A department workshop on the development of writing for students who are deaf or hard of hearing will be drafted with consultation from Professor Edward Kelly, American Sign Languages, Modern Languages Department.
- (f) Key resources on gender and composition studies will be compiled for the department archive.
- (g) A bibliography of materials on story telling and socialization will be prepared for courses in linguistics, children’s literature, mythology, and colonial American literature will be prepared.

#### F. Outcomes for the campus and community

This sabbatical will make contributions to the goals of the campus mission in the following areas:

- (a) Increased intercultural competency strengthens students' preparation for transfer to the university. At the Conference on College Composition and Communication in April 2016, Gilbert Contreras, past Dean of Student Activities, reported on a study he co-authored, "Raising the Bar on Hispanic Serving Institutions" in the *Journal of Hispanic Issues in Higher Education* in 2015. The study examined the enrollment and matriculation decisions of Hispanic students in California. One discovery in the data from the Chancellor's Office was particularly relevant. It was found that Hispanic students, especially females, overwhelmingly choose their local two-year college and local universities, even if they are high-performing students from high-performing districts. Such a choice may decrease their ability to complete the bachelor's degree in six years. Students at Cerritos College traditionally consider CSULB as a target destination. However, with the implementation of the Long Beach Promise, more and more of these transfer slots at CSULB are filled with students who have attended Long Beach high schools and LBCC. If our students are to fulfill their goals and dreams, they must be willing to journey and travel outside of the area. Studies have shown that intercultural competence provides the confidence and the skill set to accomplish this.
- (b) The materials shared with the department from this sabbatical will meet two expectations of the 2014 Student Equity Plan: (1) "Develop resilience and retention strategies" and (2) "Research cultural barriers in the classroom" (14). Several studies in my bibliography deal with "cross-talk" and mis-communications between students and professors of different cultural background.
- (c) The research from this sabbatical will contribute to "new faculty mentor/orientation" programs designed by the Center for Teaching Excellence in fulfillment of Student Equity goals.
- (d) The sabbatical contributes to the Cerritos College Mission "To prepare students to be productive participants in the global community" and "To celebrate diversity in people, philosophies, cultures, beliefs, programs, and learning environments."
- (e) The sabbatical promotes the type of recognition of emerging voices in literature that can inspire a continuing series of visits from writers, perhaps in conjunction with the library and the division of Liberal Arts. Guest writers, such as Victor Villasenor, the late Michelle Serros, Sara Borjas, and Reyna Grande have attracted hundreds of students and members of the community to visit the campus. Inspired by hearing these visiting authors, students commit to a life of powerful, relevant writing about their lives, ideas, and situations. The sabbatical will enhance my knowledge of contemporary authors and emerging voices.



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