

Sabbatical Report, Spring 2025

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My original sabbatical application involved the development of a qualitative research study to examine personal stories regarding training in and experiences surrounding scholarly publishing of college faculty who were first-generation college students, and I made substantial progress with that project, as noted below. Also, I completed other work during my 4-month sabbatical period that will (per Article 27.1 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement) contribute to my research, scholarship, and creative activity as well as improve my effectiveness as a librarian (our equivalent to instructional improvement) and professional currency.

Social Science Research Course

I completed a 10-week course, “Research Will Save Us,” offered by the University of North Texas, taught by its law librarianship program director, and funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. It provided a hands-on dive in social science research planning, design, organization, execution, and reporting, focused on the library and information sciences discipline. The course involved a commitment of 5-7 hours per week and included readings, video lectures, worksheets, activities, and journaling exercises that took participants through the research process from conception to dissemination. The course was quite useful in helping me think through and make actionable progress on my research project, such as putting boundaries on my literature review, making decisions about technology use, and developing an initial data management plan.

Additionally, the content and materials have helped me consider how to more effectively provide information and support to Sonoma State researchers, part of my role as a librarian. All materials are available for re-use and adaptation under [CC-BY](#) license per the terms of the federal grant that funded this course, so I will be able to share them with my colleagues as we teach research skills and use them within our curriculum and resources.

CSU-Wide Library Project on Palliative Care

During my sabbatical, I became involved in a project created by a master’s student at San José State University to launch an effort across CSU libraries to promote Global Hospice and Palliative Care Day in October 2025 and raise awareness among nursing students of this career path. The impetus behind the project involves 2018 California legislation mandating access to palliative care as a Medicare benefit as well as an existing dearth of trained nurses in this speciality, particularly those who are bilingual,

Black, or persons of color. An online presentation to CSU nursing students by a palliative care nursing expert is planned for October, to be promoted across CSU libraries and departments of nursing. Historically, coordination of outreach efforts across the libraries has not happened often (although in recent years there has been more inter-campus communication between library workers with similar responsibilities), so this effort does mark a change in practice, particularly when it comes to subject-matter rather than functional collaboration. SSU library participation is particularly important because our Nursing department has been named a Campus Partner to the CSU Shiley Haynes Institute for Palliative Care.

The SJSU student, a nursing librarian at a Southern California CSU, and I will be presenting a panel discussion about this project in June 2025 at the CSU Shiley Haynes Institute for Palliative Care National Symposium at CSU San Marcos. He worked with the institute over the past months to research palliative care nursing education and identify a speaker for the October event during Global Hospice and Palliative Care Day. During the next four months, we will develop marketing materials to be shared systemwide and a survey instrument to be provided to attendees after that event that focuses on students' perspectives of such events in building their knowledge about palliative care nursing. I expect that we will write an article on those survey results and the entire effort in the context of library partnerships with disciplines, particularly as applied to curricular mandates.

First-Generation/Working-Class Faculty Communications Research

During the course of my sabbatical, I made significant progress on this research project, but the subject focus has changed somewhat. I began with a literature review researching the experiences of faculty and doctoral students from working-class backgrounds or who were first-generation college students. In my reading and annotation (of at least 3 books and at least 25 articles), a recurring theme drew my interest: Working-class and first-generation faculty often related that their communication style broadly (outside of formal scholarship) often set them apart or was unwelcome in academic workplaces. My research also raised the issue that first-gen/working-class faculty often had doctoral experiences that were very different from those of their peers: Because of family commitments, paid work, distance from campus, and other reasons, they often missed out on the mentoring experiences that are key to socialization into the academy. These conflicts do not just affect an individual's sense of belonging in the academy but can impact one's educational choices and professional trajectory. (Of course, the matter remains of how or whether to fix these systems, but that is outside the scope of my project.)

Based on this expansion of my research topic, I conducted additional literature searching along this avenue of inquiry and tried to address these matters within my research questions about academic communication. I have solicited the input of faculty in SSU's Department of Communications and Media Studies on interview protocols and best practices, as well as their thoughts on the syntax and order of my questions.

I am currently editing the questions and plan to find SSU faculty with whom I can beta test the questions and process. Once that happens, I will complete the Institutional Review Board application and submit, with my ultimate goal of conducting interviews throughout the fall semester and writing up results by the end of Spring 2026.