

Long Beach City College
SABBATICAL LEAVE PROPOSAL

Name: Carlos Ramos **Date:** October 1, 2012

Academic Year: 2013 – 2014 **Fall Semester:** **Spring Semester:** X **Full Year:**

1. Purpose of sabbatical leave

I am applying for a one-semester sabbatical leave for Spring 2014. The purpose of my sabbatical leave is three-fold:

- a. To conduct six case studies of successful Long Beach City College students in order to better understand the experiences of Latino and Southeast Asian-American students as they navigate through the community college system. This will include a thorough literature review of recent and relevant research on the educational attainment of underrepresented students - focusing on the community college level - in the fields of sociology, education and counseling.
- b. I will author an academic article based on the results and findings of my case studies and submit the article for publication at the end of my sabbatical.
- c. I will also share the results of my study with the Long Beach City College community and collaborate with faculty, administrators, staff, and student groups to develop and implement innovative practices to increase transfer and completion rates, including through the LBCC Promise Pathways initiative.

2. Details of proposed plan

The first component of my sabbatical leave will focus on conducting an extensive literature review on the topic of educational attainment, focusing primarily on the experiences of Latino and Southeast Asian-American students. Educational research has shown that while Asian American students, overall, are attending and completing 4-year degree programs at higher rates than any other ethnic group, some Southeast Asian sub-groups, such as Cambodian-Americans, are completing college at approximately the same rate as Mexican-Americans, which is low relative to the overall population college completion rate. This project will contribute a much needed qualitative comparative study by focusing on the experiences of Mexican-American students as well as the experiences of Southeast Asian-American students, namely Cambodian, Thai, Vietnamese, and Hmong. Although educational rates vary across Asian-American subgroups, and in light of the fact that the large metropolitan city of Long Beach has the highest number of Cambodian people outside of Asia, there has been very little research

conducted on the experiences of these subgroups in the community college context. The focus on Mexican-American students is important because of the large percentage of Latino students (over two-thirds of Latino students of whom are of Mexican origin) in the education pipeline, which is projected to grow considerably into the future. Latino students are also disproportionately reliant on the community college system to attain four-year college degrees, which lends to the importance and immediacy of this project.

Through my work as a member of the Missing 87 project (a self-study of LBCC transfer students conducted jointly with the USC Center for Urban Education), a graduate research assistant for the CHOICES UCLA study, and in writing my master's thesis on the educational attainment of Latino students, I have become very familiar with relevant research on post-secondary education. I will, however, advance my knowledge in contemporary educational research considerably with the completion of this sabbatical project. The following is a list (although not an exhaustive one) of articles and books that I will read to inform my research questions, methodology and interview data analysis:

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Facts Not Fiction: Setting the Record Straight. (1998). *National Commission on Asian-American and Pacific Islander Research in Education Report*. College Board. New York University.

Bankston, C. & Hidalgo, D. (2006). Southeast Asia. In M. C. Waters and R. Ueda (Eds.), *New Americans: A guide to immigration since 1965*. Harvard University Press

Bensimon, Estela and Alicia Dowd. (2009). Dimensions of the Transfer Choice Gap: Experiences of Latina and Latino Students Who Navigated Transfer Pathways. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79 (4), 632-658.

Campa, Blanca. (2010) Critical Resilience, Schooling Processes, and the Academic Success of Mexican Americans in a Community College. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32 (3), 429-455.

Cejda, B.D. et al (2008) The Role of Social Capital in the Educational Decisions of Hispanic students attending Hispanic-serving community colleges. *Enrollment Management Journal*, 2 (1), 32-64.

Edman, Jeanne and Brad Brazil. (2008) "Perceptions of campus climate, academic efficacy and academic success among community college students: an ethnic comparison". *Social Psychology of Education*, 12 (3), 371-383.

Kao, Grace and Jennifer Thompson. (2003) Racial and Ethnic Stratification in Educational Achievement and Attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 417-442.

Lee, Stacey. (2006) Additional Complexities: Social Class, Ethnicity, Generation, and Gender in Asian American Student Experiences. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 9 (1), 17-28.

Lee, Stacey and K. Kumashiro. (2005) A Report on the Status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Education: Beyond the “Model Minority” Stereotype. *National Education Association of the United States*.

Lew, J., Chang, J., & Wang, W. (2005). The overlooked minority: Asian Pacific American students at community colleges. *Community College Review*, 33(2), 64-84.

Li, Guofang and Lihshing Wang. (2008). *Model Minority Myth Revisited: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Demystifying the Asian-American Educational Experiences*. Information Age Publishing, North Carolina.

Ngo, Bic. (2006) Learning from the Margins: The Education of Southeast and South Asian Americans in context. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 9 (1), 51-65.

Ngo, Bic and Stacey Lee. (2007) Complicating the Image of Model Minority Success: A Review of Southeast Asian American Education. *Review of Educational Research*, 77 (4), 415-453.

Pearl, Arthur. (1998) Systemic and Institutional Factors in Chicano School Failure in Chicano School Failure and Success in *Chicano School Failure and Success*. Falmer Press, PA.

Rumbaut, Ruben. (2006) Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans in Min, Pyong. *Asian-Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, Pine Forge Press, 262-291.

Stanton-Salazar, Ricardo. (2001) *Manufacturing Hope and Despair: The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth*. Teacher’s College Press, New York

Suzuki, Bob. (2002) Revisiting the Model Minority Stereotype: Implications for Student Affairs Practice and Higher Education. *New Directions for Student Services*, 97, 21-32.

Vigil, Diego and Gilbert Conchas (2012) *Streetsmart and Schoolsmart: Urban Poverty and the Education of Adolescent Boys*. Teachers College Press, New York

Wagoner, Rick and Anthony Lin (2010) Southeast Asian American Students who Transfer to Four-Year Institutions. *AAPI Nexus Journal*. 8 (2).

Woerner, Christiane. (2009) One Size Does Not Fit All: The Marginalization of Southeast Asians in the United States. (Not yet published)

Yang, Kaying. (2004) Southeast Asian American Children: Not the “Model Minority”. *Future of Children*, 14 (2), 127-133.

Zhou, Min. (1998). *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United State*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York.

Zhou, Min and Yang Sao Xiong. (2005) The Multifaceted American Experience of the children of Asian immigrants: Lessons for segmented assimilation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28 (6), 1119-1152.

The second component of my sabbatical will be the completion of the case studies. I will select and conduct in-depth interviews of six LBCC students who have successfully transferred or have been accepted to competitive UC or private 4-year universities within the last year. Three students will be second generation (e.g. the children of immigrants) Mexican-American students and the other three will be second generation Southeast Asian-American students. They will also be first-generation college students. In developing a conceptual framework and interview protocol, I will draw from educational attainment research that focuses on the experiences of students as they navigate through educational institutions. Stanton-Salazar (1998) developed the institutional agents framework to study the experiences of Mexican-American high school students, which can be applied to the community college context. For example, in their 2009 article titled “Dimensions of the Transfer Choice Gap” (published in the *Harvard Educational Review*), Dowd and Bensimon utilized this same framework to study the educational experiences of five Long Beach City College students in the Missing 87 project. In addition to focusing on the relationships between students and institutional agents and their experiences with specific academic programs, my case studies will also include in-depth questions related to socio-cultural factors that have been found to influence the post-secondary educational experiences of ethnic youth, mainly: family dynamics, immigration status (i.e. undocumented, refugee status, etc.), racial formations and stereotypes (i.e. the model minority myth), social class, community dynamics (i.e. street socialization), gender, language (i.e. bilingualism, ESL, etc.), identity formation, and ethnic culture. Although the proposed sample size of six students may seem limited, the depth and wide breadth of the interview questions makes this approach feasible, and in accordance with other published qualitative case studies in educational research.

In developing and conducting this research project, I will consult with several experts in the field of educational attainment. First, I will seek advice from Alicia Dowd of the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California. In addition to Professor Dowd, I will also consult with Ricardo Stanton-Salazar of the University of Southern California, who has written about the experiences of Mexican-American high school students and the influence of institutional agents and kin networks on their college preparation. In addition, I will also confer with scholars that I've worked with in different capacities at the University of California, Los Angeles and Long Beach City College, such as Dr. Min Zhou, Professor of Sociology at UCLA, who has conducted both quantitative and qualitative research on the educational attainment of Vietnamese students; Dr. Karen Quintiliani, a Professor of Anthropology at California State University, Long Beach and an expert on the Cambodian community in Long Beach; Dr. Christiane Woerner, who has studied and written about Southeast Asian-American students and educational attainment; and Dr. James Diego Vigil, who has studied the educational attainment

of Mexican-Americans and Vietnamese-Americans, focusing on the intergenerational and cultural factors that influence student success.

I have the requisite academic background, training and skills necessary to successfully complete this project. I successfully completed a two-quarter graduate level course in qualitative research methods at UCLA, which included training in interview-based methodology and analysis. As a graduate research assistant, I conducted interviews for the UCLA CHOICES study, which focused on college-going cultures in predominantly minority high schools in Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Oakland. And I will draw heavily from the widely-used methodology books *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies* by Robert Weiss and *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* by Bruce Berg to prepare and conduct the in-depth interviews and analyze my data.

In the third component of my project, I will author an academic article and submit it for publication to journals in the fields of sociology as well as higher education, including *Social Forces*, *Sociology of Education*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Latino Studies*, *Hispanic Journal of Hispanic Behavioral Sciences*, and *Race, Ethnicity and Education*

The final component of my sabbatical will include sharing the results of my study with the LBCC community through presentations and the distribution of my article, summary report, and annotated bibliography. In an effort to apply the findings of my study and potentially increase student transfer and completion rates, I will also collaborate with staff, faculty, administration, and student groups to devise and implement programs and practices that will seek to increase student success, especially for our underrepresented students. As a faculty member at LBCC over the last 10 years, I have been actively involved in several efforts to improve student success and transfer rates, such as teaching in learning communities, advising the Coalition for Latino Advancement student group, serving as a faculty representative on the Transfer Academy committee, as a member of the faculty research team for the Missing 87 project, and contributed to recent efforts to apply for a Title V grant. This experience will be instrumental in the recommendation of practices based on my research study. In addition, in 2010 I was selected to participate in the United States Department of Agriculture de la Garza Education Fellows program in Washington, D.C. Through this fellowship, I made several contacts within the USDA, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and Excelencia in Education and I was made aware of the many grant opportunities and resources available to Hispanic-Serving Institutions, which will also inform my effort to apply the results of my study at LBCC.

3. Timeline

The first half of the Spring 2014 semester will be primarily dedicated to reading and summarizing identified books and articles related to the educational attainment of Latinos and Southeast Asian-American students, especially at the community college and university levels. With the assistance of counseling faculty, I will also seek and identify 6 participants, Mexican-

American and Southeast Asian-American students who have successfully transferred or have been accepted to a competitive U.C. or private 4-year university. I will also consult and meet with experts in the field of educational attainment and, together with my literature review, will develop an interview protocol in preparation for in-depth interviews of the six students.

In the second half of the Spring 2014 semester, I will schedule and conduct a series of in-depth interviews with the students, addressing the topics of educational expectations, choice of majors, institutional agents and programs, mentors, coursework choices and transfer plans, family dynamics, language, culture and identity, and community-based factors. I will also begin to transcribe the interviews and begin analyzing the data. At this stage of the study, in accordance with qualitative, interview-based methodological practices, I will begin to organize my paper into important themes that emerge from the interview data.

In the Summer 2014, I will complete the writing phase of my research project. Upon completion of the article, it will be submitted for publication.

4. Contribution to professional development and relation to my assignment

This sabbatical project will broaden my knowledge of contemporary theory and research in the areas of educational attainment, race and ethnic relations, and Latino studies. This will build upon my graduate level training in the content areas of social stratification and race and ethnic relations as well as my master's thesis, which was a quantitative analysis of the educational expectations and educational outcomes (including college attendance and completion) of Latinos using the National Education Longitudinal Study from 1988 through 1996. This project will also allow me to update my curricula and readings assignments and also incorporate more current research into my courses here at LBCC, especially Sociology of Latinos and Race and Ethnic Relations.

5. Benefit to the college and students

The college and students will benefit in many ways from this sabbatical project. By gaining knowledge in current sociological research on the educational attainment of Latinos and Asian-Americans and including this into my course curricula, my students will have the benefit of learning contemporary, state-of-the-discipline theory and research, similar to the content taught at competitive four-year research universities. In addition, the final stage of my project will include collaborative efforts with other faculty, staff, and administrators to develop and implement innovative strategies to increase the transfer and completion rates of underrepresented students, including creative ways to implement the findings of this study into the Promise Pathways. The results of this study will shed light on the unique challenges faced by our Latino students and our diverse Asian-American student population, and will hopefully lead to proactive measures by the college to address these challenges, with the ultimate goal of increasing student success. Lastly, the publication of this article will reflect well on Long Beach City College as an educational institution.

6. Tangible products

- a. The tangible product will be the completion of an academic article based on the in-depth interviews of six LBCC students and submitted for publication to peer-reviewed academic journals in the fields of sociology and higher education.
- b. I will produce a summary report, which will include a précis of my study, a list of the unique challenges faced by our diverse Asian-American and Latino student populations, and a set of recommendations for our college.
- c. I will also submit an annotated bibliography, which will include a brief descriptive and evaluative paragraph for each cited article, report, and book.

7. Sharing the outcomes of my sabbatical with the LBCC community

I will share the outcomes of my sabbatical and results of my study with the LBCC community in various ways. First, the summary report will be presented to the LBCC Board of Supervisors and I will request to lead a faculty development workshop focusing on the challenges faced by our Latino and Southeast Asian-American students. Second, I will meet with the Promise Pathways co-chairs to discuss my research and possible ways to incorporate its relevant findings. Third, in Spring 2015, I will submit a proposal to present the results of my study at the Annual Long Beach Community Studies conference, which is open to the public and co-sponsored with the Long Beach Historical Society. And lastly, I will present my findings to interested student groups at LBCC, such as the Coalition for Latino Advancement and the Cambodian-American Student Association.

8. Additional Sources of Employment earnings

None anticipated