Sabbatical Report, Memoir, Heidi LaMoreaux, Fall Semester 2015

I wish to express my gratitude for the opportunity to experience a sabbatical during fall semester 2015. During this time I was able to apply for and was awarded a four week writing residency at Playa (http://playasummerlake.org/index.html) in Oregon during October and November 2015. This would not have been possible without this period away from teaching. I spent many productive hours in Oregon writing my memoir and deepening my introspection.

During my time at Playa I updated my LifeCore diagram (for information on LifeCores see www.innergeographies.com) to help me to envision the sequence of events of my life more clearly. The structure for the memoir also emerged. As it stands now the memoir will be structured around a personal history formation model I adapted from Hans Jenny’s soil science “Clorpt” model (LaMoreaux, 2013) and will likely include the following chapters: “Climate” which examines large socioeconomic, political and religious factors in my life; “Organisms” which explores my connections with non-family persons and creatures; “Relief” which looks at my connections to place; “Parent Material” which delves into connections to family and ancestry, “Time” which follows major chronological events, and “Factors of Change” which examines how my relationship with my wife changed the structure of my life. The truly interdisciplinary format and content of this memoir will likely push boundaries of traditional publication by combining personal, scientific, and artistic elements of my life through a combination of artwork, prose, poetry, and scientific examination.

The specific outcomes of the sabbatical are as follows:

1. Completion of approximately 150 carefully drafted pages, and an additional 100 pages of completed artwork and unpolished exploratory writing.
2. Presentation of a lecture to the students in LIBS 102 In Search of Self during spring 2016 which focused on memoir as a genre, writing tips, and my experiences and challenges with the process. This is extremely relevant for LIBS 102 as the main writing project for students in the class is creating a 20 page autobiography.
3. Inclusion of new exercises and information regarding memoir creation in both LIBS 102 In Search of Self and LIBS 320D Inner Geographies curricula during Spring 2016.
4. Continuation of my writing process through a new connection with poet, writer, lesbian activist, and memoirist Judy Grahn, who is working closely with me to examine areas that still need to be addressed and prepare the manuscript for publication.

Thank you again for the time to work on this manuscript. I appreciate deeply the support of Sonoma State University in terms of time, money and encouragement.

Sincerely, Heidi LaMoreaux

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