Re: Sabbatical Report (Fall 2012 and Fall 2013)

Dear President Armiñana,

This letter reports the professional activities that I engaged in and accomplished during my sabbatical leave. The year-long leave was spread out between Fall 2012 and Fall 2013. The leave allowed me a break from active instructional duties and afforded me concentration of time and the dedication of mind to branch out from my original expertise in postcolonial reading of 18th-century British literature to develop new research directions.

The following comprises my sabbatical work:

The first part of the year-long sabbatical (Fall 2012).

1) For the bulk of the time, I conducted research and read in my primary field, 18th-century British literature. I researched extensively on primary texts and scholarly material on the general topic of “the social body and private feelings in the global 18th century.” I also read extensively on affect theory.
   a. August through October 2012: I conducted research at Harvard-Yenching Library, collecting and consulting archival materials for a comparative perspective on 18th-century China’s urban development and rural land transformations.
   b. November through December 2012: I researched the historical context of writings by 17th and 18th-century Qing Chinese authors Pu Songling, Cao Xueqin and Shen Fu, with a particular emphasis on literary references to overseas trade, urban experiences, and emergent spatial imagination and emotional patterns. While the reading activities were extremely gratifying, I found myself having to redirect my research back to British literature due to not having found enough archival material on land reform and urbanization to support my research hypothesis on patterns of land privatization. Hence, I shifted my research focus away from material culture to history of emotions.
   c. My research in 18th-century land issues in China inspired me to conduct further archival research of Taiwanese newspapers on the Green revolution, the organic food movement, and invasive apple snails.

These reading and research activities greatly energized my scholarly side. I identified two main areas of interest and narrowed down my research scope: The figuring of the social body and domestic affections in the progressive maternal legacy of Mary Wollstonecraft.

2) I returned to teach in Spring 2012 and built a graduate course, ENGL581 *Space and Sentiment*, based on the work of my first part of my year-long sabbatical.
The second part of the year-long sabbatical (Fall 2013).

1) I utilized the archival research conducted in Fall 12 regarding the Green revolution in Taiwan to complete a journal article theorizing the narrative of the apple snail during the era of global green revolution. I found myself needing more research on the organic food movement to sufficiently cover the scope of the planned article. I submitted the article to ASIANetwork Exchange: A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts.

2) I drafted an article on Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley regarding the importance of domestic affection in visions of revolutionary society. I submitted the article for a conference paper.

3) I further built upon the sabbatical research to design and plan two more new courses, ENGL500 Thinking Back Through Our Mothers and ENGL214 Sustainability and Literature.

In sum, I am extremely grateful for the sabbatical leave as a professional development opportunity. The leave rejuvenated my research and afforded me the concentrated time to conduct very beneficial professional development. I was able to publish one article and draft another based on brand new research. My reading and research also allowed me to further enhance my subfield expertise in modern Chinese and Taiwanese literature, and connect it with an understanding of global ecological history encompassing the enclosure movement in Britain, green revolution and the organic food movement. I have no doubt that these developments –testified by the three new courses designed – will certainly benefit SSU students and the university at large.

Sincerely,

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