A Report of my Professional Accomplishments during my Fall 2014 Sabbatical

During my fall sabbatical I was a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for South Asia Studies at UC Berkeley, where I completed my most recent monograph on contemporary trends in popular Hindi cinema. Entitled *Twenty-First Century Bollywood*, my book traces the emerging shifts in both the content and form of popular Hindi cinema, also known as Bollywood, and examines these tendencies in relation to the changing dynamics of Indian culture. My book historically situates these emerging trends in relation to previous norms, and develops new, innovative paradigms for conceptualizing Bollywood, the most prolific film industry in the world, in the twenty-first century.

The particular shifts in contemporary Bollywood cinema that my book examines include the changing nature of the song and dance sequence, the evolving representations of male and female sexuality, and the increasing presence of whiteness as a dominant trope in Bollywood. My book also focuses on the increasing presence of Bollywood in higher education in the West, as well as how this cinema's growing presence in such an academic context reflects the changing ways in which this cinema is consumed by Western audiences.

In the process of completing my book, I also designed a new GE course to be offered at Sonoma State University upon my return in the spring 2015 semester. Entitled Bollywood and Globalization, this course was directly linked to my book's research, examining some of the major social and economic changes that have occurred in India since the period of liberalization in the 1990s, and assessing the ensuing representations of these shifts in contemporary Bollywood and Bollywood-inspired films. After devising the appropriate curriculum and syllabus for this new course, I met with all of the appropriate committees during the fall of 2014, including the Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee, the General Education subcommittee, and the EPC committee, and developed the relevant course goals and objectives for this new course offering, which was subsequently approved as a permanent new course in the C1 area of the GE pattern.

In addition to completing my new book and devising a new GE course, I also gave a series of lectures at UC Berkeley that drew on my new research on Bollywood. These included two guest lectures in film courses at Berkeley, as well as a lecture at the Institute for South Asia Studies on emerging forms of female sexuality in contemporary Hindi cinema. These lectures were well attended and allowed me to share my research with students and the larger academic community as well as incorporate the useful feedback I received into my book project.

Upon returning to SSU in the spring of 2015, I taught the new GE course that I had successfully designed during my fall sabbatical. This course, LIBS 209: Bollywood and Globalization, had an enrollment of 150 students and was the first large-level course offering of its kind at SSU. I directly utilized the research I had completed during my sabbatical in teaching this course, and
found the weekly discussions with students to be very rewarding. Applying an interdisciplinary approach, we investigated the numerous contemporary international trends with which Bollywood has become associated, including the advent of globalization, neoliberalism, transnational forms of media production, as well as the cross-fertilization of global popular cultures in the twenty-first century. In the process, students were introduced to contemporary international perspectives and were able to use Bollywood as a vehicle and a lens that they, in turn, both examined and used to examine.

Evan as I successfully implemented this new large-level course in the spring of 2015, I finalized my monograph for publication and the book was published in May 2015, as part of Routledge's Contemporary South Asia series. I am grateful to Sonoma State University for providing me with a sabbatical leave during the fall of 2014, which allowed me to complete my book and design this new course, particularly as these new forms of knowledge were, in turn, directly shared with my students upon my return to teaching in the spring of 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Ajay Gehlawat, Ph.D.