

## Sabbatical Leave Report – Fall 2015

Submitted by: Susan Tummers Stocum, Mathematics Department

In accordance with Article 13, Section 10, of the Agreement between El Camino Community College District and El Camino College Federation of Teachers, Local 1388, this report, along with official transcripts, are being submitted as a culmination to the sabbatical leave of absence that I was granted for the Fall 2015 semester.

I completed 11 units of graduate level coursework toward my Educational Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership at William Howard Taft University during my sabbatical. Official transcripts are attached. The courses completed include:

EDU 509 Societal Diversity (4 units)

EDU 508 Principles of Curriculum Development (4 units)

EDU 514 Educational Psychology (3 units)

EDU 509, Societal Diversity gave a broad overview of the impact of diversity in the classroom and ways to provide a fair and equitable education for all learners. The historical, theoretical, and ideological framework behind multicultural education were studied as well as methods that can be used by teachers to better meet the needs of diverse learners in the classroom. Landmark legislation and judicial decisions in areas of race, religion, language, gender, disability, and social class were studied as a means to understanding the current laws that are in place affecting multicultural education.

The focus of EDU 508, Principles of Curriculum Development, was an in-depth look at the curriculum planning processes in different educational environments. Characteristics of different curriculum design as well as advantages and disadvantages associated with each for meeting the needs of student populations and individual learners within an increasingly multicultural society were investigated. Revisions of existing curriculum as well as the development of new curriculum were studied using a variety of techniques to ensure the successful implementation of curriculum.

Lastly, the focus of EDU 514, Educational Psychology, was to demonstrate the different kinds of knowledge that professional teachers possess, and how they use their classroom processes to match the student strengths in creating an innovative learning environment for all students. Valid and differentiating assessment techniques were studied as a means to judge behavioral and cognitive theory in how students learn and understand concepts. Motivation and learning were addressed from both a mastery-focused as well as a performance-focused viewpoint along with considering different theoretical explanations for learner motivation.

The coursework that I completed will benefit not only myself in terms of professional growth, but also my students, in the sense that as I grow professionally, my students will be the beneficiaries of this growth. In particular, in my Societal Diversity course, the strategies for reducing prejudice in the classroom, which includes improving social contact, increasing cognitive sophistication, improving self-confidence and self-acceptance, and increasing empathy for and understanding of others will prove to be extremely helpful, given the diverse student body that exists at El Camino College. Within my Educational Psychology course, the exploration of the components and

decisions involved in designing assessments, as well as the evaluation of the applications of the principles of cognitive learning theory have enhanced my abilities both within the classroom and in the formation of multiple types of assessments.

These three courses, as well as my entire focus of study, have increased my abilities as a professional educator. The application of best practices, current concepts, theories, and research about effective teaching and learning will improve my own teaching. Studying and using multiple strategies in efforts to help students of various backgrounds learn my subject matter will translate into my own growth as a professional. Lastly, I have been a teacher for 26 years and it has been more than 20 years since I have been in school myself. Returning to school has allowed my to have empathy and understanding for the many pressures that exist for the working student. Given that the majority of El Camino College students both work and go to school, I have been reminded of the numerous obligations that students face in their attempt at gaining a college education. I have adjusted classroom techniques and reconsidered certain assignments based upon my own work as a student. Whereas I still have approximately one year of coursework and one year for writing my dissertation, it is clear that my own professional growth will continue as I pursue the completion of my degree.