

PROPOSAL TITLE : A Field Study of Asian Art in California Museums

ABSTRACT:

Once you have finished answering the questions within the following application, please provide an abstract below summarizing the description of your sabbatical leave proposal in a paragraph of between 100-150 words. This abstract will become part of the Board Docket.

Please include the following information as part of the abstract:

- **Need for the Professional Growth** - describe the purpose of the sabbatical leave.
- **Sabbatical Leave Activities** - describe what you plan to do.
- **Anticipated Outcomes** - describe the primary outcome; instructor and classroom teaching outcomes; professional/faculty relationship outcome; student outcomes.
- **Means of Measurement** - describe what evidence you will submit to demonstrate achievement of your outcomes.
- **Expected benefit to the students, department, college, district, and/or community**

Excellent teaching of art history is predicated on the first-hand study of artworks and an ability to convey enthusiastically a personal knowledge of these primary sources. In this sabbatical, study trips to Asian art museum-collections strengthen subject knowledge and field visits to Asian American history museums enrich the instructor's awareness of immigrant experiences. Research activities invigorate the instruction of general education courses, which have combined enrollments of 400 to 500 students annually. Additionally, the sabbatical provides time to continue research on a Chinese artifact in a local museum collection and affords the opportunity to attend an annual Asian Studies conference. The instructor will post study images to an Instagram account with more than 2,500 followers and make a presentation of research on a local museum's collection at an Asian Studies conference. Images, video clips, exhibit catalogs, and research notes will be gathered and integrated into course content on Asian art.

PROPOSAL:

As you prepare this proposal, it is also strongly recommended that you consult with the Department Chair/Coordinator and Dean prior to submittal to address any issues or to provide additional information or clarification regarding the proposal.

Please answer each question carefully and completely (do not say "please see above") in order to provide the Sabbatical Leave Committee with as much information as possible for their review and scoring. Provide background information and/or references to supporting documentation where appropriate.

Need for Sabbatical

1. How does your proposed activity meet the need for professional and personal growth?

The discipline of Art History is predicated on the study of actual objects and environments (monuments, ritual sites, architecture). In our classrooms and textbooks, digital images are necessary aids but limited facsimiles. Excellent teaching requires the first-hand study of artworks and architectural monuments along with the ability to convey with enthusiasm and authenticity a personal knowledge of these primary sources.

Art historians study artworks and their makers, but we also study the contemporary contexts, namely museums and their exhibits, through which we encounter these artworks. Field study provides opportunities for critical interrogation of these contexts and the role of the museum in shaping public understanding.

My proposed activity provides me the time and opportunity to deepen my understanding of Asian art through field study, research, and conference participation. I value being actively engaged in my discipline. It is important to me that my students are learning from an academic role model who spends time in travel, museum visits, research, and conference participation. My sabbatical proposal is an extension of these values and habits. I anticipate that these activities will be personally and professionally gratifying.

2. How does your proposed activity benefit (please address at least three of the following): **a. the students?**

My sabbatical mirrors the student learning objectives listed in all art history classes. Among these SLOs is first-hand research; that is, studying actual objects in a museum setting or cultural site. Students derive benefit from professors that practice what they teach. Through my sabbatical, I will model for them the excitement of first-hand study, travel, and life-long learning. The importance of this cannot be overstated. Every semester, I encounter students who have never been to an art museum or have never imagined themselves as world travelers. My descriptions inspire them, and they write to me about the museums and

sites they plan to visit one day. Students also write to me after visiting museums, and they inspire me, too!

My students will also benefit because field study helps us to remain current in our discipline and bring new resources and fresh perspectives to course content. My museum experience will help prepare them as prospective visitors, especially to any one of several Southern California museums that students can visit on a day trip. My focus on Asian-American history and the immigrant experiences will help foster new approaches in the ways we discuss Asian art removed from its original context.

b. the institution?

Faculty members who stay professionally engaged and current in their discipline uphold a standard of excellence that our district values. This project benefits my effectiveness as a teacher; therefore, it benefits the institution.

My proposed activity serves our district mission of, "*providing outstanding undergraduate education for students seeking certificates, associate degrees, and university transfer.*" It supports instruction of general education courses that are a part of several transfer degrees and included in a newly proposed certificate for Asian Studies. As a tenured lecturer, I teach 400 to 500 students a year. These students benefit from studying with me, an instructor whose preparation is grounded in a global understanding of arts and culture.

In addition, my sabbatical is interactive in nature. Through travel and research, I will meet with colleagues, attend programs and lectures, and gain familiarity with other institutions. The sabbatical has the potential to inspire future collaborations with other educational institutions.

c. the community?

Both our college community and the community at-large benefit from curriculums that promote a deeper understanding of global cultures. During the pandemic of 2020-2021, the country witnessed a rise in hate crimes and attacks on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). On our campuses, colleagues requested allyship of the faculty community, asking that it support AAPI programs. In San Diego County, Asian residents comprise the third largest ethnic group, and Chinese is the third most common foreign language [Data USA, 2019 census data]. Because this sabbatical benefits the instruction of Asian art, it benefits our students and the community at-large. We, as a citizenry, benefit from understanding the cultures of our neighbors and ourselves.

d. the discipline/contribution to scholarship

An important benefit of the sabbatical is that it provides us the time to be curious and to reengage with our discipline. I am former participant of the East-West Center's Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP), housed on the campus of University of Hawai'i, Manoa. Its mission, in part, is to help non-subject experts incorporate Asian studies into their undergraduate curriculums. The annual conference is held every March in a different U.S. city. In 2014, I presented at their Houston conference, and in 2022, I will attend the conference in San Diego.

The ASDP annual conference is one that I wish I could attend every year, however with my teaching schedule it is not possible to travel at this time, during the semester. Although the conference organizers will not announce the location of the 2023 conference until next Spring, if selected for this sabbatical, I plan to go! The opportunity to attend this conference, which is always held in March, is one of the reasons I have chosen to apply for a Spring, and not Fall, sabbatical.

3. Describe the relevancy of your activity to your current/new assignment and the improvement of student learning.

This sabbatical supports course-level SLOs, general education SLOs, and our Associate's transfer degree. All art history SLOs include first-hand research of actual objects and monuments; analysis of style, cultural and historical context, and materials and techniques; and knowledge and use of specialized terminology. General education SLOs stress awareness and appreciation of art and cultural production. On my sabbatical, I will be doing exactly these things.

The course, *Art 146 Asian Art* is among the major requirements for the Art History transfer degree and will be included in the newly proposed certificate in Asian Studies and the Art History certificate. Asian art modules are included in our popular GE course, *Art 100 Art Appreciation*, required in the Nursing and Child Development degrees. Additionally, our *Art 145 Contemporary Art* curriculum emphasizes themes of identity and ethnicity, Asian and Asian-American among them.

Description of Overall Activity

4. Please provide a brief description and purpose of the proposed sabbatical leave activity.

The purpose of my sabbatical is to strengthen my understanding of Asian art by studying works of art in American museum collections, by visiting Asian American cultural heritage museums, and by attending the annual conference of the Asian Studies Development Program. Through travel and

primary research, I will collect didactic resources and personal accounts to enrich course curriculums, making my lectures even more relevant to today's students. I will engage in museum research and share my findings with colleagues in Art History and Asian Studies disciplines.

5. Please provide a clearly defined set of objectives and the course of action to achieve those objectives that are consistent with the purpose and nature of the proposed leave.

My sabbatical, *A Field Study of Asian Art in California Museums* has three objectives:

1. Deepen my knowledge of Asian Art with field study of permanent collections in museums beyond the San Diego region.

These are:

- a. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, especially to focus on the Avery Brundage Collection of Chinese art; Korean painting and ceramics; Southeast Asia 1300-1900, The Himalayas and the Tibetan Buddhist World, and the scheduled special exhibit of Takashi Murakami
- b. Pavilion for Japanese Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, scheduled for reopening after renovations in 2022
- c. The Broad, Los Angeles, especially Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Mirror Rooms
- d. Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, especially the collection of South and Southeast Asian art
- e. The Huntington Library, Art Museums, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, especially the Japanese Garden and Ceremonial Tea House, Bonsai and Zen Court, and Chinese Gardens inspired by gardens of Suzhou

2. Improve my understanding of Asian-American history and immigrant experiences through museum visits beyond the San Diego region.

These are:

- a. Chinese Historical Society of America, San Francisco, founded in 1963, located in Chinatown, provides exhibits, collections-research, and tours
- b. Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles, founded in 1985 and the first museum in the U.S. dedicated to Japanese American history
- c. Korean American National Museum, Los Angeles, founded in 1991 and undergoing a new museum design, scheduled for opening in Fall 2022
- d. USC Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, dedicated to promoting intercultural understanding of Asia and the Pacific islands

3. Provide space and time in my schedule to conduct and share research at the Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP) annual conference. These steps include:
 - a. Continue with my research on a Chinese artifact in the Heritage of the Americas Museum
 - b. Prepare my research for presentation at the ASDP conference
 - c. Attend and participate in the ASDP conference

6. Please address the feasibility of the activity by discussing:
 - a. a proposed timeline that is appropriate to the activity, and

My sabbatical is divided into three segments, allowing me time to prepare for each trip and to reflect on my experiences post-trip.

I. February and March: Asian Studies Development Program Conference

In October of 2022, the theme for the 2023 ASDP conference will be announced, and participants can submit proposals for posters or papers. The location of the conference will have been announced by summer 2022, so I will have had time to anticipate travel plans. I will use February and March to finalize my presentation and confirm my travel plans. After the conference, I will take time to organize my notes and reflect on my conference experiences, which will likely include museum visits in the host city.

II. April: San Francisco Museum Trip

In late April, I will travel to the Bay Area to visit the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco and the Chinese Historical Society of America.

Both institutions have vast collections and provide collections-research opportunities, educator resources, and special exhibits. I will use early April to conduct website research of current exhibits and read museum catalogs to prepare for my travel and to make the most of my field research.

II. May: Los Angeles and Pasadena Museum Trip

In May, I will travel to Los Angeles and Pasadena.

Los Angeles travel will include visits to the newly opened Pavilion for Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Korean American National Museum, the Japanese American National Museum, and The Broad.

Pasadena travel will include visits to the University of Southern California Pacific Asia Museum, The Norton Simon Museum, and The

Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, which is located nearby in San Marino.

b. the availability of appropriate resources

I. Transportation and Lodging

The ASDP conference location will be announced several months before the conference, which will allow me time to secure travel arrangements. The conference is scheduled during an off-peak travel season. As I am a frequent traveler, I have many thousands of airline miles and Hilton Honors points with American Express. I will know by mid-2022 where the conference will be held, and this will give me several months to plan and budget for this trip.

My travel in California will be by car, and I plan to stay with family in the Bay Area and in Air BB and hotels in Los Angeles. Air fare is inexpensive and public transportation in the Bay Area is excellent so that is also an option. A retired colleague who traveled with me during my last sabbatical would like to travel with me again, which would lower travel costs. However, I have designed this sabbatical so that it is affordable and feasible to complete without a travel companion. As I enjoy travelling on my own, I have many options available to me.

II. Technology

I have home office technology to support my sabbatical objectives, including an iMac computer, an iPad, and iPhone, with cloud storage. When travelling, the iPhone takes quality images and video, and the iPad has the capacity to handle documents and emails.

III. Museum Memberships and Admission Fees

I have a Friends Level membership at the San Diego Museum of Art that allows reciprocal admission to more than 600 museums in North America. Some museums require advanced tickets and have no entry fees.

IV. Time Management

The project is divided into three segments and three regions. I have identified specific museums, and for the art museums, specific aspects of their collections on which to focus. There are many more institutions in San Diego, Los Angeles, and Orange County, and in the Bay Area that one could include. But I have been purposely selective in concentrating on these specific few. My track record of completing multifaceted projects, successfully and on time, gives me confidence that I can and will successfully manage my sabbatical plan.

Outcomes

7. describe the expected outcomes of your activity.

My expected outcomes will fulfill my three sabbatical objectives:

1. By deepening my knowledge of Asian Art with in-person field study of renowned permanent collections, I will reinvigorate lectures on Chinese landscape painting, Korean Ceramics, Japanese Tea Ceremony, contemporary art of Yayoi Kusama and Takashi Murakami, among others.
2. By improving my understanding of Asian-American history and immigrant experiences through museum visits, I will have more awareness of Asian American student perspectives and the opportunity to develop more meaningful connections in my curriculums.
3. By creating time and space to prepare my research, I will be able to attend and share my work at an Asian Studies conference and to contribute to our understanding of a Chinese artifact in a local museum collection.

8. What evidence will you submit to demonstrate achievement of your outcomes?

There are several types of evidence that will demonstrate my achievements:

- Posts to my educational Instagram account focused on art history, art appreciation, creativity, and museum collections.
- Museum publications, including pamphlets, exhibition catalogs, maps, post cards and other research materials from my trips.
- ASDP Conference brochure and the file of my research presentation (poster, paper, and/or PowerPoint) submitted at the conference.
- Course lectures, activities, and assignments enriched by my first-hand research conducted on my sabbatical.

Updated: 4/15/2021