

**A Study of Michigan Architecture
Sabbatical Proposal**

**Scott Myers
November 2013**

Requested Date for Proposed Sabbatical Leave:

I am requesting a sabbatical leave for the Winter semester of 2015 .

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of my sabbatical is to study the history and architecture of significant buildings in Michigan and to use the information and other resources I accumulate for future classes at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. I have always had a desire to delve further into this subject but have never had the time. A sabbatical would give me that opportunity.

I have been a faculty member in the Humanities Department at Kalamazoo Valley Community College since August of 2002. This is my first request for a sabbatical leave.

I have taught the following classes at KVCC:

- HUM 101 - Modern Culture and the Arts
- HUM 203 - A Study of Love
- PHI 209 - Comparative Religion
- HUM 120 - Honors Seminar - Writing about Cities
- ART 221 - Art History II

Architectural history has been a subject of fascination for me since I was an undergraduate (really since I was a child). I have pursued that interest during travels in France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey, as well as locations all over the U.S. Between trips, I have accumulated a personal library of books on architecture of all styles and eras.

At every opportunity, I have toured Michigan's architectural treasures, and now I would like to expand my knowledge of them by traveling the state, taking pictures, and doing research.

Objectives and Narrative Description:

A study of the architectural history of Michigan could start with the time before Michigan ever became a state. Buildings from the early 19th century can be found in various Michigan locations, including the Detroit area and Mackinaw City. But buildings of architectural significance can be found statewide. I plan to visit locations in every part of the state and to study public and private buildings, religious and residential structures.

Three preliminary objectives are:

- To visit buildings "off the beaten path" in parts of the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula.
- To examine residential structures in southwest Michigan.
- To study significant structures in the Detroit area.

My study will include:

- Extensive photography and video of interiors and exteriors.
- Personal interviews with owners and/or preservation officials.
- Archival research on the structure and its origins.

Michigan architects of particular interest as I contemplate this study include:

- Gordon W. Lloyd

- Elijah E. Myers (no relation)
- Albert Khan
- Frank Lloyd Wright

Specific buildings on my preliminary itinerary:

- Sandstone architecture in Marquette and other locations along Lake Superior in the Upper Peninsula. In Marquette, significant structures built with this material include Old City Hall, St. Peter's Cathedral, the Marquette County Courthouse, and Marquette State Prison.
- Mackinac Island's Grand Hotel and residential structures.
- Traverse City State Hospital: Designed by Gordon W. Lloyd, this iconic structure was vacant for decades, but is now being restored for residential and commercial use.
- Marshall, MI: The well-preserved homes in this town not far from Kalamazoo will provide a wealth of material on turn-of-the-20th-century residential architecture.
- Detroit: I studied Detroit architecture in graduate school and would like to expand on what I learned. In particular, I plan to study buildings that have been restored and/or refurbished in recent years, such as the Book-Cadillac Hotel.
- Kalamazoo: What I like about our city's architecture is its variety. Every important style of the last 100 years is represented within a short distance of downtown.
- Ludington, MI: This working-class resort town has great examples of Victorian residential architecture, as well as public buildings representing prevailing styles of the turn of the 20th century.
- The Michigan State Capitol: Already included in my survey of American architecture in HUM 101, I would like to expand my knowledge of this structure and its architect, Elijah E. Myers.
- Frank Lloyd Wright designed homes for groups of clients in Kalamazoo and Galesburg. There are also Wright homes in Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, and near Lansing and Detroit. In fact, there are Wright-related structures all over the state.
- Albert Khan is an architect I studied in graduate school, but about whom my knowledge remains sketchy. I plan to investigate his varied output in the Detroit area.

Sabbatical Benefits:

The personal benefits of a sabbatical are one attraction for me. Having the time to expand my knowledge in an area that has always been of interest is a key motivator for this proposal. Architecture is a form of art I emphasize in my HUM 101 class, and I would like to extend my coverage of great buildings within our state. I think a sabbatical would be an opportunity to rejuvenate my mind and expand my repertoire of material for all my classes, and perhaps, for new ones.

One new class I may develop is a survey of the architecture of Michigan. I think the Humanities department needs an infusion of new options for students, and this could be one of them. I envision a class that transfers as general education credit - like HUM 101 or HUM 203 - and expands the options for our increasingly diverse student body.

Expected Dollar Value of Grants, Fellowships, and Other Income:

I will not be applying for any grants or fellowships for this sabbatical. I will pay for my own expenses such as travel and transportation, lodging and miscellaneous items. Materials I develop during the sabbatical will be used for in-class presentation and printed handouts and/or a course pack used at KVCC. I do not expect to earn any extra income based on my work during this sabbatical.