

## Sabbatical Proposal

Name: Keith Kroll, Department of English

### 1. Requested Date for Sabbatical Leave:

Fall Semester 2016 (August 31<sup>st</sup> – December 19th)

### 2. Statement of Purpose:

Working title: "The Commercialization of the Community College"

The purpose of my sabbatical leave is to complete a scholarly book examining the commercialization of the community college in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The book will be an expansion of several published essays I have written on the topic and several new essays (chapters).

Background:

Community colleges matter. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 95 percent of community colleges are open admission; they enroll 42% of first-time freshmen and 45% of all undergraduates, including 59% of Native American students, 56% of Hispanic students, and 48% of Black Students. When compared to four-year institutions, they enroll larger percentages of nontraditional, low-income, and minority students. Thirty-six percent of community college students are the first generation in their families to attend college. ("Fast Facts From Our Fact Sheet"). Community college tuition costs remain "approximately 50% lower" than four-year institutions ("The Top 10 Benefits"). Uniquely American, it is not an exaggeration to call community colleges the most democratic institutions in higher education.

Yet, community colleges have been all but forgotten in the plethora of books and essays written in the first decade of the twenty-first century describing the commercialization of higher education and the concomitant devaluing of the liberal arts. For example, community college students were not part of the cohort described in *Academically Adrift*, a much-publicized book critical of *undergraduate education* in the United States (Jaschik). In *Our Underachieving Colleges*, another study concerned with undergraduate education, its author, Derek Bok, wrote in a footnote that "[c]ommunity colleges do seem different enough from four-year colleges that they will not be treated in this book" (10). Community colleges were absent from Bok's earlier examination of the commercialization of higher education, *Universities in the Marketplace*. Another prominent book on the commercialization higher education, Jennifer Washburn's *University, Inc.*, offers only a passing reference to community colleges. In the stream of books arguing for the importance of the liberal arts in higher education in the face of growing commercialization, for example, Taylor's *Crisis on Campus*, Delbanco's *College*; Menand's *The Marketplace of Ideas*; Nussbaum's *Not For Profit*; and Kronman's *Education's End*, community colleges are rarely, if ever, discussed.

In short, there have been surprisingly few scholarly books written about the community college—and even fewer written by community college faculty—and there is a need for a current critique of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century community college.

### 3. Specific Objectives

#### 1. Writing four new essays:

a. Write five new essays/chapters on the following topics: (1) recount the history of the community college with particular focus on the Truman Commission Report; (2) establish a theoretical foundation for the book through a discussion of neoliberalism; (3) examine the American Association of Community Colleges' role in the commercialization of the community college through a comparison of two reports: *Building Communities* and *Reclaiming the Dream*; (4) examine the growing trend of “performance-based” funding and its impact on the community college; (5) offer an alternative model for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century community college.

b. The specific activity in meeting this objective is the act of daily writing. During the academic year, the time available for writing is limited due to teaching responsibilities. The sabbatical will provide the time to focus completely on writing. Rather than two to three hours on a Friday, the sabbatical provides the time to write each day, all day.

c. It is imperative that writing teachers write: writing the essays for the book provides the opportunity to practice the craft of writing, to be a writer—activities essential to being a writing teacher.

The book will contribute a new critique of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century community college and therefore contribute new knowledge to the profession. As such, the book promotes the college's mission of fostering intellectual inquiry and encouraging the free exchange of ideas.

#### 2. Rewriting and greatly expanding four published essays:

a. A second major part of the sabbatical will involve rewriting and greatly expanding four previously written essays on the commercialization of the community college. These include the following essays: (1) “Let Them Eat Workforce Training”; (2) “The End of the Community College English Profession”; (3) “Teaching in the Commercialized Community College”; and (4) “The Commercialization of the Community College.”

b. The specific activity in meeting this objective is the act of daily writing. During the academic year, the time available for writing is limited due to teaching responsibilities. The sabbatical will provide the time to focus completely on writing. Rather than two to three hours on a Friday, the sabbatical provides the time to write each day, all day.

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3. Research:

a. Writing the essays/chapters will involve doing (some) research in order to discover the most current information on the subject matter for the essay/chapter.

b. Most of this research can be conducted using the internet and/or KVCC library and inter-library loan.

c. As with the act of writing, it is imperative that teacher-scholars engage in the very academic and intellectual work that they ask of their students: conducting academic and scholarly research is one such activity.

4. Expected Dollar Value of any Grants....

At this point, no grants, fellowships, advances, and other anticipated income are expected during the sabbatical leave.

Several publishers have expressed an interest in the book proposal and in reading a final manuscript. It is my goal to have the manuscript published, and I am confident it will be published at some point. (As to any future income/royalties from publication, it is impossible to determine at this point. No contract has been signed.)

5. Courses Taught Previous Three Academic Years and Anticipated Future Courses:

- English 098: Fundamentals of Writing
- English 098/110: AMP
- English 110: College Writing 1
- English 111: College Writing 2
  - Dystopian literature
  - Post-Apocalyptic literature
  - American Environmental Writing
- English 160: College Research and Writing
- English 214: Literary Criticism
- English 219: Short Story
- TRS 105: College Success Strategies
- Anticipated:
  - English 111: College Writing 2
    - Graphic Novels
  - TRS 283: First Year Experience

Submitted on 1 December 2015

Sabbatical Proposal Discussed with and Endorsed by Billy Reynolds, Dean of Liberal Arts.

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Submitted by,

Keith Kroll  
Department of English

Attached: Previous Sabbatical Reports  
(See note from Sandy Bohnet re: first sabbatical report)