

Post-sabbatical report

Natalie Miles

June 28, 2020

I. Summary of sabbatical project

- a. Preparation and planning for sabbatical: In preparation for the project, I reached out to Brenda Wersheim to collaborate with her to be able to attend the autism group on campus. I also connected with Tre Sanlin TLC/DSS to ask about collaborating throughout the project to work with course design to serve the ASD population through resources. I worked closely with Dr. Hernandez-Chapar to provide a physical space to collaborate and share. She was instrumental in onboarding. Using my IFDF funds from the 2018/2019 year, I purchased 26 books to vet out during the project.
- b. Project products and/or accomplishments: The primary product is a presentation that I will use during the workshops I provide to colleagues. I have also established a collaborative network with the Vancouver Public School District. This on-going collaboration has the potential to grow into something amazing to bridge student on the spectrum from the K12 system to higher education.
- c. Research: During winter, I had the task of gaining knowledge about the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), to be able to consult with colleagues and provide workshops through the Teaching and Learning Center. My primary mode of research came in the way of reading texts about different areas of the spectrum. I chose to concentrate on the history of autism, autism and gender, and best practices for teaching students on the spectrum. The secondary mode of research was

shadowing a professional in the field of autism who works directly with students and teachers.

d. Self-enrichment: During this time, I had the opportunity to continue improving my Spanish skills. In addition to continuing to learn Spanish, I allowed myself to process and work through the passing of my team-teacher, Lora Whitfield. This time has helped me to grieve the loss of an amazing friend and colleague. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity.

II. Chronicle of sabbatical activities

a. Week of January 6-10: The focus for this week was to look at autism through a historical lens. I read the following texts.

The Autistic Brain Thinking Across the Spectrum, Temple Grandin, Richard

Panek

Different...Not Less, Temple Grandin PhD.

b. Week of January 13-17: This week I shadowed Danielle Bauman, an intervention specialist/resource support teacher at ITECh Preparatory. She works with grades 6-12. I met with her to outline the purpose of my project and my hope to for collaborating with her. I shadowed her to specific classrooms where there were identified students on the spectrum. We observed the interactions of the classroom teacher, the physical environment of the classroom, and the interactions between the students. After each class visit, she would ask me specifically what I had observed about the environment and how I thought that might have contributed to student behavior. This type of activity was very useful. I shadowed her for two afternoons. I also had a follow-up meeting with her to

discuss not only what I observed in the two sessions, but what she felt as specific teacher behavior that contributed to student behavior and learning.

- c. Week of January 20-24: The focus this week was to look at autism and gender. I was interested in how autism presented through gender and if there was a difference in diagnosis and/or bias. The text I read this week was I Am Aspie Girl - The Unique Characteristics, Traits, and Gifts of Females on the Autistic Spectrum, Tania A. Marshall
- d. Week of January 27-31: The focus of this week was to look at support and transition of students on the spectrum. I read the following texts.
Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Roger Pierangelo and George Giuliani
Teaching and Behavior Support for Children and Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder-A Practitioner's Guide, James K. Luiselli
- e. Week of February 3-7: Continued focus on support and transition. I read the following texts.
Developing College Skills in Students with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, Sarita Freeman
Supporting College and University Students with Invisible Disabilities, Christy Oslund
Students with Asperger Syndrome: A Guide for College Personnel, Lorraine E. Wolf, Ph.D., Jane Thierfeld Brown, Ed.D., G.Ruth Kukiela Bork, M.Ed.
- f. Week of February 10-14: This week I met with Shayna Collins, Clark faculty counselor. Collins is the current facilitator of the student ASD group. During this

meeting, I outlined my project and my desire to collaborate with her to glean the student perspective of Clark students. Although this meeting was a positive step in creating the network, the group did not run during winter. This is an area that has been a barrier. I began the project in the preparation phase by collaborating with Brenda Weirsheim, who created the outcomes and framework for the group. When my project began, she was no longer employed at Clark. By the time my project began, the group was on the 3rd facilitator and with Collins as the 4th facilitator by the time I could set up a meeting, it has been difficult to get the student voice I had originally wanted.

- g. Week of February 17-21: The focus for this week was to look at what the projected future of ASD might be. I read Neuro Tribes – The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity, Steve Silberman.
- h. Week of February 24-28: I set the framework for the presentation I would use for the faculty workshop by beginning with the outcomes. I created an overall framework to start inserting the information I had received during the research stage.
- i. Week of March 2-6: I met with Dr. Hernandez-Chapar to give an update of progress and barriers I was encountering. We set up dates/times to provide workshops for faculty spring 2020. We also discussed next steps in the sabbatical process.
- j. Week of March 9-13: The focus for this was to refresh myself with Universal Design for Learning. I read UDL Now! A Teacher's Guide to Applying Universal Design for Learning in Today's Classrooms, Katie Novak.

- k. Week of March 16-20: Finished presentations and communicated with Dr. Hernandez-Chapar to cancel the presentations that were scheduled for spring due to Covid-19.
 - l. Post – sabbatical activities: I met with Dr. Sachi Horback in April for the post-sabbatical interview. I plan to provide an overview for the Board of Trustees in person, as the campus opens, and I will coordinate with the new person in charge of the TLC to schedule dates/times for faculty workshops, as Dr. Hernandez-Chapar no longer works at Clark.
- III. Restate sabbatical leave objectives (as stated in original application) and elaborate on whether you met each objective. The primary focus of my project was to become a coach and support to faculty by providing workshops and individual coaching and guidance in working with our students on the autism spectrum. Due to Covid-19, this portion of my project has yet to be implemented. I plan on providing this when we return to campus in a face-to-face modality.
- IV. Describe how this sabbatical activity benefits the students at Clark College: Clark students will benefit in several ways. By working with faculty to provide relevant knowledge and strategies to implement in their courses, students will reap the rewards of increased accessibility. The project will also aid in retention, as students will feel valued and part of their learning journey at Clark.
- V. Describe how your project will add value to the college and your instructional division or department: The project provides value to the college by creating and

sustaining an accessible and inclusive environment by utilizing principles of universal design and social justice, so students can achieve equitable outcomes.

The project can provide a resource to all faculty across campus, not just my division or department.

VI. List any institutions or other organizations which were affiliated with the project:

I was fortunate to collaborate with the Vancouver Public School District. As part of that collaboration, I was able to shadow a high school teacher at ITECh Preparatory. I was also able to have a conversation with a special education teacher from Skyview HS who was eager to continue the dialog in the future to help her students transfer.