

## **Sabbatical Leave Proposal**

By Angelica "Angie" Alamillo Rodriguez  
Moorpark College Faculty Member

**Date of Submission:** October 30, 2024

**Proposal date:** Spring 2026

**Discipline:** Counseling - EOPS

**Years of Service:** 12 years

**Part-Time:** April 2012

**Full-Time:** July 2016

**Previous Sabbaticals:** None

### **Introduction**

My career as an educator includes over 16 years of experience as a counselor/instructor at California Community Colleges. I have been fortunate to be an employee of Moorpark College since 2012 and gained a full-time tenured faculty position as an EOPS Counselor in 2016. As a first-generation, low-income community college student, my advocacy for equity, diversity, and inclusion is deeply rooted in my identity, shaping my relationships with students, faculty, and administration.

My work experience with California Community Colleges inspired me to discover the barriers that prevent Latinx students from achieving success rates that close equity gaps. Participating in the Moorpark College HSI Advocacy group Colegas and recently the Moorpark College Transformation Team Community of Practice with Gina Garcia has reinforced my commitment to serving marginalized students while reinforcing the need for further research. For community colleges across California, the question of why equity gaps persist continues to be monumental. My commitment to higher education and social justice paved the way for me to pursue a doctorate at CSU Fresno, where I study the factors that impact Latinx students I serve daily in my role as a counselor.

### **Purpose**

This sabbatical proposal aims to research, explore, analyze, and document best practices at Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) in California Community Colleges that effectively serve low-income Latinx students. This research examines the persistence and experiences of Latinx students at California Community Colleges who are disproportionately impacted by economic and educational factors.

I plan to use this sabbatical to conduct interviews, focus groups, and/or case studies, as well as collect data to identify the barriers affecting California Community Colleges, including the Ventura County Community College District. This period will allow me to

conduct thorough research and analysis, perform interviews, gather data, and document my findings and recommendations. The intention is to hold professional development presentations and workshops for Moorpark College staff and faculty. All of this work is aligned with my role at Moorpark College and my dissertation research at the Kremen School of Education and Human Development at California State University, Fresno.

### **Value to Students**

This research will benefit students who are disproportionately impacted by inequitable systemic policies, practices, and services within California Community Colleges. It will give students a voice to express their lived experiences and perspectives regarding barriers that have impacted their persistence and completion of their goals. The findings will serve as a guide for future recommendations to Moorpark College and the other two campuses to implement systemic changes. The recommendations and findings will add to the scholarship and provide the college system with practical recommendations for best practices to serve Latinx students.

### **Value to VCCCD**

A framework will be developed to equip campus leaders and employees with evidence-based recommendations for empowering Latinx students disproportionately impacted by socio-economic factors. This research and contribution will also align with California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 goals and outcomes, specifically the benchmark that addresses improving outcomes for students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities (Vision 2030: A Roadmap for California Community Colleges, 2023). The empirical evidence will inform VCCCD and other community colleges with specific equitable practices specific to the Latinx population.

### **Value to Moorpark College**

This proposal directly aligns with Moorpark College's Mission, Values, and Vision, focusing on the college's statements regarding social justice and equity. Furthermore, the research will align with the Moorpark College Student Equity Plan (SEA) goal of increasing persistence, transfer rates, and degree completion rates for Hispanic/Latinx students. According to the California Community College Chancellor's office, Moorpark College is a Hispanic Serving Institution that, in the academic year of 2023-2024, served over 13,000 students, and over 40% were Hispanic.

This research also presents the opportunity to share the findings with faculty and staff during flex days to provide professional development. Interactive workshops and presentations will share the documentation related to this research.

The persistence, completion, and success rate for Hispanics continue to fall behind in these areas in comparison to other ethnic groups. Below, you will find Moorpark College students' persistence and completion rates. By gaining a deeper understanding of the equity gaps on campus, faculty, staff, and administrators will be able to develop strategies to foster campus improvement for Latinx students.

**Figure 1.**

Fall to spring persistence rate—gaps

	Fall 2019 to Spring 2020	Fall 2020 to Spring 2021	Fall 2021 to Spring 2022	Fall 2022 to Spring 2023	Fall 2023 to Spring 2024
Black or African American	62.5%	64.2%	57.1%	57.8%	54.1%
Hispanic	66.4%	63.5%	58.7%	62.7%	61.3%
White	70.7%	68.1%	65.6%	67.7%	68.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>62.4%</b>	<b>65.3%</b>	<b>64.6%</b>

Source: IE Argos data pull

**Figure 2.**

Degrees and Certificates per 100 students—Gap got worse for Hispanic

Awards per 100 Headcount	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
White	28.9	26.5	29.8	29.7	30.7
Hispanic	23.0	22.2	24.2	23.4	23.0
Black	16.9	19.1	16.0	20.9	19.6

Source: [https://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/Program\\_Awards.aspx](https://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/Program_Awards.aspx) and [https://datamart.cccco.edu/Students/Student\\_Headcount\\_Term\\_Annual.aspx](https://datamart.cccco.edu/Students/Student_Headcount_Term_Annual.aspx)

**Methodology:** To determine the impact of best practices on the persistence completion rates of Latinx students, qualitative data will be collected and analyzed from interviews with Low-Income students who attend California Community Colleges in the Southern Region of California, including Ventura County Community College District. A theory of intersectionality and evidence-based research regarding HSIs, including Dr. Gina Garcia's work on Transforming HSIs for Equity and Inclusion, will also be used.

## **Timeline for Sabbatical project:**

### **Weeks 1-5**

1. Collaborate with the Institutional Effectiveness Research division to collect quantitative data and initiate and review a pilot study.
2. Submit IRB to participating campus/es.
3. Identify the target population and collect student email addresses from participating California Community College, including Moorpark College.
4. Qualtrics questionnaires from colleges with informed consent questions to be completed by participants.
5. Qualtrics questionnaires will be collected from students who agreed to participate.

### **Weeks 6-10**

1. Conduct 6-15 individual interviews (at 45-60 minutes each) to ask research questions on persistence, barriers, cultural factors, system barriers, effort, and sense of belonging.
2. Each interview was reviewed for common themes and coded from questionnaires and interviews collected.
3. Transcribe qualitative results of interviews
4. Create a coding system of themes and patterns in interviews
5. Categorize identifying themes and begin the analysis process.

### **Weeks 11-18**

1. Write a summary of the findings and recommendations.
2. Write implications for the research study.
3. Write recommendations for California Community Colleges, including Moorpark College.
4. Write recommendations for further research.
5. Create a presentation on best practices and findings to be shared campus-wide as part of the professional development opportunities.

## **Approval by Colleagues and Constituents**

I have discussed the proposal of my sabbatical intentions with staff, colleagues, and supervisors. They have been very supportive and understanding regarding the time involved in this research effort. The department's coverage has been discussed, and the office will have enough coverage. (See the Letter of Recommendation below)



MOORPARK COLLEGE

7075 Campus Road  
Moorpark, CA 93021  
[www.moorparkcollege.edu](http://www.moorparkcollege.edu)  
805 378 1400

October 25, 2024

Dear Sabbatical Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Angie's sabbatical proposal, which aims to research and document best practices at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) within California Community Colleges to better serve low-income Latinx students. Angie's proposal to examine persistence, experiences, and the challenges faced by Latinx students addresses crucial needs within our educational community, and her dedication to this work will significantly benefit Moorpark College and its commitment to equity and inclusivity.

The proposed research is well-aligned with Angie's role at Moorpark College and demonstrates her proactive approach to fostering a learning environment that meets the unique needs of disproportionately impacted Latinx students. Through planned interviews, focus groups, case studies, and extensive data collection, Angie's research will identify and document the barriers impacting Latinx students. Her focus on Ventura County Community College District further underscores her commitment to supporting our local student population.

Angie's proposal holds the potential to significantly enhance the understanding of effective strategies that support persistence and educational success among Latinx students. The insights she gains and the recommendations she develops will support our institution's goals and guide the broader community college system in California toward more inclusive and impactful practices.

Angie's research will make a meaningful difference, and I fully support her sabbatical proposal. Her commitment to student success and equity is unwavering, and I am excited to see the positive changes her findings will inspire.

Thank you for considering this request for Angie's sabbatical approval.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Marnie Meléndez*

Dean of Student Learning

Moorpark College

## References

Sosa, G. (2022). Using Disproportionate Impact Methods to Identify Equity Gaps. *The RP Group*.

*Transforming Hispanic-Serving Institutions for Equity and Justice – HFS Books*. (2023).

<https://www.hfsbooks.com/books/transforming-hispanic-serving-institutions-for-equity-and-justice-garcia/>

*Vision 2030: A Roadmap for California Community Colleges* (p. 17). (2023).

<https://www.cccco.edu/>