Sabbatical Leave Report

A. Applicant

Name: Jennifer Royal

Department: English

Type of Leave: Project

Leave Dates: Fall 2017 and Spring 2018

B. Purpose of Leave

The purpose of my sabbatical leave was to write an interactive college composition e-book which emphasizes active, student-centered learning via engaging game-based learning and assessment objects. I have completed an e-book which I am currently using as a primary text in English 1A and English 5 classes.

C. Leave Objectives

1. I selected applications — Scrivener, Adobe InDesign, and Adobe Captivate — for the e-book content creation, design, and construction, and I completed training courses in each of these applications.
2. I wrote content for 15 chapters, a grammar lab with 28 lessons, and a "research skills" section with 16 lessons (625 pages). Curriculum for this e-book emphasizes active, student-centered learning, and is based on models and approaches such as Just in Time, Habits of Mind, and Reading Apprenticeship.
3. I collected, created, and incorporated images, video, and animations into course content to enhance student learning and provide multiple methods for student engagement.
4. I learned how to create games and assessment tools using InDesign and Captivate. I created storyboards for learning and assessment objects employing game theory in the design (drag and drop, branching scenarios, interactive environments).

D. Narrative

Research findings since the 1980's show that students' immersion in learning, as well as their learning outcomes, can be improved with digital learning games. And in the last five years or so, the tools for creating digital games have improved dramatically and are

now readily available to educational game designers. My goal for this sabbatical leave was to take advantage of these advances to design an interactive academic writing e-book that uses game-based exercises and other learning activities in the hopes that this interactivity and "hard fun" will improve students' engagement in learning and their ability to reach learning outcomes.

Objective C1. I spent the Fall of 2017 completing college-level course work and training courses in the applications I planned to use on my e-book project. I completed the following courses:

[Analytics for the Classroom Teacher](#) EDU1x, Curtin University. In this course, I studied teaching and learning analytics to improve lesson design and delivery.

[Instructional Design and Technology: Learning Theories](#). In this course, I explored the evolution of learning theories from traditional behavior-based understandings of how we learn to emerging theories of how social engagement can support the learning process.

[Instructional Design: Digital Media, New Tools and Technology](#). This course allowed me to build knowledge about design, development, and integration of digital media to enhance students' learning experiences. I also investigated how media, emerging and mobile tools, and online applications impact technology-mediated learning environments.

I also developed a database of ideas for e-learning design by conducting a study of interactive, educational e-books (e.g., interactive e-storybooks created for children, professional training e-books, and college-level course e-books).

I completed training through Lynda.com and other training sites in Adobe InDesign, a desktop publishing and typesetting software application; Adobe Captivate, an authoring tool for e-learning content; and other authoring and e-learning content tools such as iBooks author, Scrivener, canva, Kotobee, BookWidgets, and many more, in order to understand the options for publication available to me. In addition, I continued my studies of educational game design to improve my design skills. At the end of this study, I chose to create content for the ebook using Scrivener and iBooks. I am using this version of the book this fall.

Objective C2. I created an organizational plan for the e-book content, including special features, objectives and activities for each chapter, and regular multimedia and digital game features. These features encourage a high level of engagement with the curriculum.

From January, 2018, to the end of my sabbatical, I wrote curriculum for the e-book. During this time period, I also collected images, created animations and videos, and designed learning games, as these components are interconnected.

I have a complete, useable version of the e-book with 15 complete chapters, a grammar handbook, and a research handbook.

Objective C3. I created a large database of public domain and CC BY 2.0 images for the e-book from public domain and creative commons sites. I also created my own images, animations, and videos to enhance the course content. I have incorporated many images into the e-book.

Objective C4. I have designed a few digital learning games after completing courses on game design and tutorials in e-learning tools. Games challenge students with knowledge recall, but also lateral-thinking, pattern recognition, and creative problem solving. Games involve activities such as drag & drop, solving puzzles, exploring branching scenarios, answering questions and monitoring progress with success meter, engaging with scripted characters and interactive environments, etc.

In addition, I have created page templates in InDesign to transform static pages into interactive content. For example, chapter introductions and sections headings include images, headers, and sub-headers that float into place, disappear on click or on load to emphasize content.

Objective C5. I have completed a version of my e-book which I am using with my students as a primary text this fall. I have identified publishers such as W.W. Norton about publication.

E. Evaluation Summary

1. How will this sabbatical leave enhance my work performance at the college?

> My knowledge of and ability to use current educational technology and student-centered pedagogical strategies has improved over this sabbatical. My ability to create effective lesson plans and assignments has also improved. I am able to improve the content of the SRJC Online Writing Lab and am currently working on a new version of this lab for use by SRJC students and instructors.

2. How will this sabbatical leave benefit students in my discipline?

> I am using this textbook in my English 1A classes this fall, and I can see a marked improvement in students' writing skills compared to student work in previous sections of English 1A. The lessons are improving students' engagement with the curriculum. Moreover, both of my online classes are showing slightly better retention at 8 weeks.

3. How will this sabbatical leave benefit my department?

I have already shared ideas with colleagues for possible applications of e-learning tools that I discovered on my sabbatical. I will share my expertise further by offering a workshop for English Department faculty (and/or PDA session) on creating learning "games" and/or writing an e-book. In addition, English Department faculty will have access to all of the learning games I create during the sabbatical to use as they see fit with their own curriculum.

4. How will this sabbatical leave project address the SRJC Strategic Plan and/or your department's educational plan?

My project contributes to the English Department's and the District's goal of incorporating best practices and innovations to build an exemplary online program, and fosters learning by "implementing instructional practices that increase the learning and success of our diverse students."

F. Abstract for Board Proposal Summary

During her sabbatical leave, English Instructor Jennifer Royal reviewed and evaluated e-learning and game-design software where the focus is on increasing student motivation through engaging, student-centered, experience-based learning. Then, Jennifer designed and built an interactive, student-centered college composition e-book. She is currently using a preliminary version of this e-book in her English 1A and English 5 classes this fall. All of the learning "games" for this e-book will be made available to SRJC students and faculty in the English Department's Online Writing Lab. This project contributes to the English Department's and the District's goal of incorporating best practices and innovations to build an exemplary online program, and fostering learning by "implementing instructional practices that increase the learning and success of our diverse students."

G. Appendices

- course completion certificates
- copy of ebook in .pdf format
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