LOMA HOPKINS

1. **Proposed Title:**
   **Best Practices for Recruiting and Serving Students Who are “Wounded Warriors”**

   Background: The term “Wounded Warriors” is currently being used to describe military personnel who have been injured in Iraq or Afghanistan. One of the challenges in serving the needs of this population is that many of their injuries are invisible, such as brain injuries or post traumatic stress disorder and/or the men and women themselves do not consider themselves “disabled” even though their conditions significantly change their pre-service levels of functioning. They tend not to identify with and self-refer to disabled student services on college campuses, even though they need those support services to succeed in college. Some of them do not even consider college as an option at all. (These statements are based on information presented at the 2007 annual conference of the California Association on Postsecondary Education and Disability)

   My role as a counselor in disabled student services is directly connected to serving all students with disabilities. The numbers of “Wounded Warriors” will be increasing at Saddleback College, according to current government projections. I believe that I and the college need to be better prepared to address the needs of this growing population.

2. **Goals and/or Purpose:**

   A. To understand more about how I, the Special Services Department, Student Services, and Saddleback College in general, can best serve “Wounded Warrior” students, many of whom have sustained injuries resulting in permanent disabilities of varying degrees of significance.

   B. To identify best practices at other colleges or universities that can be recommended for possible implementation at Saddleback College.

3. **Describe the specific objectives you wish to achieve that will support the goals and purpose of your sabbatical.**

   A. Identify and understand the distinguishing qualities/conditions that characterize this population.

   B. Develop an understanding of the counseling and disability related needs of this population.

   C. Develop an understanding of what programmatic features and facilities are considered best practices for higher education for this “wounded warrior” population.

   D. Compose recommendations for possible implementation at Saddleback College.
4. Describe in detail the types of activities you propose to include and/or undertake during your project. Include, at least, a monthly timeline of activities.

AUGUST:

1. Review literature and websites related to serving “wounded warriors” in the college environment. By the time of my sabbatical, the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) will have published in a special edition of the AHEAD Journal the results of a survey that is being conducted regarding American colleges’ and universities’ programs and services for “Wounded Warriors.” The System Office for California Community Colleges has a portion of their website devoted to this population, titled “Troops to College.” These are examples of the literature and websites I plan to study.

2. Summarize key points found in these print resources.

SEPTEMBER:

1. Identify colleges or universities acknowledged by others as having “best practices” for serving this population.

2. Identify from the list above, those that I am most interested in visiting as possible models to consider for Saddleback College.

3. Make contact with individuals affiliated with the colleges and universities identified.

OCTOBER:

1. Visit and observe exemplary programs at other institutions of higher education.

2. Interview key individuals (staff and students) at these programs.

NOVEMBER:

1. Compose draft of report on my observations and interviews, including recommendations for implementation at Saddleback College.

DECEMBER:

1. Finalize reports and recommendations.

2. Develop a PowerPoint presentation to use in disseminating my observations and recommendations.

5. Describe how these activities relate to your goals and objectives.
The above activities will help me

A. identify and understand the distinguishing qualities/conditions that characterize ‘Wounded Warriors,’”

B. develop an understanding of their counseling and disability related needs,

C. understand what programmatic features and facilities are considered best practices for higher education for this “wounded warrior” population, and

D. compose recommendations for possible implementation at Saddleback College.

6. Describe the measurable outcomes of your project, such as curriculum, materials, scientific specimens, manuscripts, audio-visuals, etc.

Measurable outcomes will include:

A. a written report documenting my literature review and observations/interviews,

B. recommendations for Saddleback College, Student Services, and DSPS regarding service to “Wounded Warriors” and

C. a PowerPoint presentation to share with my Saddleback College colleagues.

7. Describe the projected impact your project will have on teaching and learning.

My expectation is that this project will:

A. Make me more sensitive to the needs and concerns of “Wounded Warriors” as I conduct my daily counseling duties

B. Have an impact on the way Saddleback College organizes for and adjusts to recruiting and serving them as students.

8. Describe how you intend to apply the results of your sabbatical to your professional assignment and development plan.

My professional assignment is to counsel and approve disability related accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as to communicate with other faculty and staff so as to ensure appropriate services and accommodations for students with disabilities. Since the majority of the population of Wounded Warriors is said to return with permanent disabilities, I will be able to apply the results of this sabbatical in
my daily counseling functions, as well as in department, division and college wide committee meetings.

9. **Describe your plan for dissemination of the results of your sabbatical proposal to your students, colleagues, college, District and/or community.**

I will give a formal presentation of my findings to the faculty at Saddleback College during in-service week the semester after the conclusion of my sabbatical. I will also make a formal presentation at a Counseling Division meeting, with additional follow up with the college Outreach Specialist, Part time Veterans Counselor, and Special Services staff.