

Collin County Community College District
APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE



Instructions

Please complete this application by responding to **all** items. Attach requested documentation (in the order requested) and secure the appropriate signatures prior to submitting the application to the chair of the Sabbatical Leave Committee. Please submit the original and 10 copies.

Name Lupita Murillo Tinnen CWID 110727183

Title Professor of Photography Division Fine Arts

Have you ever been granted a sabbatical? **No** If yes: Date: _____

Please provide a brief description of your *previous* sabbatical project:

Sabbatical Leave Period Being Requested

Dates: Beginning Date Aug. 2014 Ending Date Dec. 2014

Length: [] One semester [] Two semesters [] Other _____

Applicant's Agreement

ABSTRACT

In fall 2009, I began pursuing a PhD in Aesthetic Studies from the University of Texas at Dallas because I felt that a doctorate degree would greatly improve the way I think, teach, and create. Since art is to the highest degree about ideas and not merely aesthetics, I wanted to be in an environment where I could learn to combine both the intellectual and creative process. I received a scholarship from the college for spring 2010 and have been fortunate to have since continued my education with the aid of the scholarship. This past summer I completed my field exams and I am ready to start research on my dissertation. If granted sabbatical leave, I propose to use the time for working on my photographs and beginning my dissertation research. At UTD, I am given the option to work on a creative dissertation, which consists of an exhibition for the visual component and three to four chapters that place the creative work in a cultural, historical, and artistic context for the written component. A sabbatical leave would grant me the opportunity to undertake both the creative and written components of my dissertation on a scale that is too large to accomplish without time off from teaching. As a documentary photographer, I am interested in researching the changing role of the contemporary documentarian. Throughout the history of documentary photography, immigrants have been a central topic and one that helped establish the documentary genre. Despite documentary's long history, photographers are still active in the genre, perhaps even more so than in the past. Their images continue to evoke empathy by appealing to the viewer's emotions. It is almost impossible to completely dismiss the veracity of the photograph even though digital manipulation is commonplace. I will argue that photography continues to be used as a tool for bringing awareness to contemporary social issues from all over the world despite the billions of images that are shared daily. A study in the history of US-Latin American relations, history of documentary photography through the lens of immigration and a history of documentary film as a vehicle for raising social awareness will provide the historical and cultural groundwork for my photographic project. More specifically, my creative project will be on immigrant labor and the physical effects on the body.

Lupita Murillo Tinnen

Proposal for Sabbatical Leave

Throughout my photographic career, the subject of my work has been the Mexican immigrant and undocumented community. This subject is particularly special to me because my parents are Mexican immigrants. The focus of my most recent body of work was on undocumented college students. I used my photography in an effort to raise awareness for the DREAM Act, a bipartisan proposal, which would create a pathway to citizenship for thousands of young students who were brought to the United States as infants and young children and through no fault of their own, are undocumented.

Photography has a long history of being used as a tool for advocacy. For my creative dissertation, I plan to shift my focus from undocumented students to the labor force. I would like to expand my concept in order to place it within a larger context. I will produce a series of images that comment on social views of physical labor and the social status linked to different occupations, especially among immigrants. In addition, I am interested in exploring issues of race and gender when it comes to the types of jobs people traditionally perform. Despite the progress made toward obtaining equality in the workplace, there continues to be great disparity. Furthermore, when the economy is down, it's easier to blame immigrants than to try to understand the larger underlying issues. My series of images will be a commentary on labor in the United States and will be related to the wages paid to employees in unskilled positions. Included will be images as a visual text of labor. I imagine workers whose jobs are physically challenging to the body. These will be jobs that are common among immigrants especially those with little education or undocumented status. Race

and gender generally play a role in determining job levels and immigrants are among those who often work the hardest jobs, yet are at the bottom of the worker caste system.

I am interested in the continued use of documentary photography as a tool for social change and the impact of digital on the documentary genre. I will not be using straight documentary photographs but rather composites and collages made with the aid of the computer. My goal is to draw attention to the complexity of the issues and challenge preconceived ideas surrounding them rather than the traditional method of serving as witness to an event. As part of my research, I propose to visit the Harry Ransom Center in Austin to look through the recently acquired Magnum Collection. I will be searching for unique images that have not previously been written about to support my writing and provide a context for my own works. The three chapters of my dissertation will address the challenges to documentary photography in a digital world, the history of the social documentary photograph through the lens of immigration and labor, and representations of labor in film and photography. Finally, an appendix will be devoted to the artistic process of the creative work.

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