

Professional Leave Report Cover Sheet

Name: Elizabeth Hays

Department: Media, Communication, & Journalism

College: Arts & Humanities

Leave taken: ☒ Sabbatical ☐ Difference in Pay ☐ Professional Leave without Pay

Time Period: ☒ Fall 2023

☐ Spring

☐ Academic Year

☐ Other

Your report will be sent to your Dean for your PAF and to the Library Archives.

**Sabbatical Report for Betsy A. Hays, APR, Fellow PRSA
Professor in Mass Communication and Journalism**

Semester for sabbatical: Fall 2023

Sabbatical Topic: Creation, Distribution and Promotion of Oral History Podcast Series:
Our Origin Story: The History of the Advertising and Public Relations Industries in the
Central Valley

Modifications and Reasons for Modifications

My project ended up having a few modifications from my original proposal. First, I changed the name of the podcast to “Central Valley Stories: Advertising and Public Relations.”

Secondly, I decided to distribute the podcast during the Spring 2024 semester so the students in my MCJ 157: Public Relations and Advertising Agency Course could gain experience promoting the podcast in real time.

And, I decided to create 13 episodes (instead of the original plan of 12) so I would have a “baker’s dozen.”

Outcomes

I am extremely pleased with the outcomes of my sabbatical:

- I created and distributed a 13-episode oral history podcast series.
- Each episode featured an interview by me of a different advertising/public relations industry leader, and the edited episodes ended up being 30-60 minutes in length.
 - o Scott Gediman – February 16
PIO/Park Ranger for Yosemite National Park
 - o Roberta Asahina – February 23
MCJ-Advertising professor emeritus (taught for 35+ years)
 - o John Zelezny – March 2
Retired healthcare leadership and communications professional (Community Medical Centers), former MCJ chair and public relations/media law professor
 - o Jan Edwards – March 8
Advertising Sales and Marketing Leader and Educator
 - o Bruce Batti – March 15
Advertising Hall of Famer/Jeffrey Scott Agency
 - o Jill Wagner – March 22
Crisis Communicator & Writer Extraordinaire
 - o Jane Olvera Majors – March 29
JP Marketing Founder and President
 - o Mark Astone – April 5
Founder and CEO of Catalyst Marketing

- Judy Ganulin – April 12
Central California PRSA Co-Founder and Owner, Judy Ganulin
Public Relations
 - Blair Looney – April 19
40+ Year Advertising Leader and Hall of Famer
 - Liz Hudson – April 26
Agriculture and Water PR Pro
 - Jose Elgorriaga – May 3
Spanish-language advertising sales trailblazer
 - Leslie Botos – May 10
Seasoned PR pro from transportation to energy to blood services
to advocacy
- The episodes were distributed on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and You Tube, as well as via CMAC (Community Media Access Collaborative), and will continue to be available in perpetuity.
 - I held a podcast launch reception on February 8 at the Fresno State Library for the interviewees, MCJ students and faculty, College of Arts and Humanities Dean, and Julie Logan, the General Manager of KFSR 90.7 FM and my audio supporter/consultant for this project.
 - A team of five students in my MCJ 157: Public Relations and Advertising Agency Course helped promote the podcast series by creating a beautiful logo, social media graphics and captions, graphics for the YouTube versions of the podcast, a promotional video and an article for the College of Arts and Humanities blog. They also coordinated with the MCJ social media team to post the promotional materials, and I shared everything MCJ posted on my personal social media accounts to increase the reach of the episodes.
 - The project has been very well received by the industry leaders who I interviewed, as well as students, faculty and community members who have listened to the podcast.
 - Future plans for the project include more promotion of the series as a unit, and continuing to include it in my curriculum.

Fall 2023 Sabbatical Proposal
Prof. Betsy Hays, APR, Fellow PRSA

Creation, Distribution and Promotion of Oral History Podcast Series:

Our Origin Story: The History of the Advertising and Public Relations Industries in the Central Valley

Section 1. The Proposal

An important module in one of our core courses for all MCJ majors and our foundational course for the advertising and public relations option (MCJ 40: Introduction to Advertising and Public Relations) is the history of the disciplines. And while looking at and learning this history through a national/global lens is important, I have become increasingly aware that what has been lacking is the “local angle” in this discussion.

As such, my proposed project is the research, creation, distribution and promotion of a 12 episode podcast series tentatively titled: *Our Origin Story: The History of the Advertising and Public Relations Industries in the Central Valley*.

This podcast series will consist of interviews with seasoned advertising and public relations practitioners who have been instrumental in the development of these professions locally. This list will be finalized upon the launch of the project and will incorporate the changing landscape and continuing emergence of women and ethnically diverse practitioners. Preliminary ideas include selecting from the following:

- Jan Olvera, Owner of JP Marketing (Advertising & Public Relations Services)
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/janeofjp/>
- Mark Astone, CEO at Catalyst (Advertising & Public Relations Services)
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mark-astone-88374/>
- Jan Edwards, long-time advertising professional and former MCJ AD/PR lecturer
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jan-edwards-3098732a/>
- Dr. Roberta Asahina, MCJ-Advertising professor emeritus (taught for 35+ years)
- Judy Ganulin, public relations professional and co-founder of the Central California Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America
- Liz Hudson, retired agricultural public relations practitioner
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/liz-hudson-8512218/>
- Jose Elgorriaga, Director of Sales for Univision Fresno
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jose-elgorriaga-a44ba890/>
- Vern Crow, semi-retired practitioner and former local firm owner
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/vern-crow-8849073a/>
- Don Curlee, semi-retired practitioner and former local firm owner
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/don-curlee-52053516/>
- Blair Looney, former local firm owner
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/blair-looney-b6172117/>
- Eric Johnson, Executive Director, External Affairs, AT&T
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/eric-r-johnson-366a0024/>
- Debra Nalchajian-Cohen, Agency Principal of Cohen Communications
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/debra-nalchajian-cohen-1b1009a/>
- John Zelezny, retired healthcare leadership and communications professional (Community Medical Centers), former MCJ public relations faculty member
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnzelezny/>
- Bruce Batti, President of Jeffrey/Scott Agency
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bruce-batti-755a26/>
- John Ostlund, former President of Jeffrey/Scott Agency

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-ostlund-8637328/>

- Mike Thielen, President at Catalyst and former Owner of Thielen & Associates
- Art Reker, longtime advertising practitioner and former firm owner

There is a certain urgency to this project, as many of the legends listed above are well into retirement, and I want to be able to capture their perspectives before their incredibly valuable firsthand knowledge is lost.

I have secured the support of Julie Logan, General Manager of KFSR 90.7 FM and the Fresno State Webcast. Julie has generously agreed to support the technical side of the podcast production. I will be using the audio recording facilities on campus to record and edit the podcasts.

In order to have this project provide valuable learning experience for students as well, in the semester after my sabbatical when I am back teaching, I'll provide the students in my MCJ 157: Public Relations and Advertising Agency course with the opportunity to plan and implement a reception to celebrate the project and its inclusion into the Fresno State Library Special Collections. (Request for inclusion is part of the project timeline - see below). This reception will be in conjunction with the American Advertising Federation - Fresno Chapter and the Central California Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

My preliminary work for the project has included taking a podcasting class this past summer through our MCJ partner CMAC (Community Media Access Collaborative). I will also be connecting with my MCJ faculty colleagues who have expertise in this area – Prof. Faith Sidlow who teaches our MCJ 125: Radio Reporting and Podcasting course, Prof. Jes Therkelsen who teaching our MCJ 112: Audio Production course, Prof. Candace Egan and Dr. Kelley McCoy who are working on the Portuguese Oral History Project, and former MCJ professor Dr. Gary Rice who spearheaded a student effort to record hundreds of veteran oral histories which are currently housed in the Fresno State Library. Given the work that Dr. Rice has done, as well as the work Prof. Egan and Dr. McCoy are doing, this project will continue MCJ's legacy in this area.

In addition, I'll be researching and exploring theory and best practices regarding oral histories and podcasting techniques, including conversations with current podcasters and digging into the oral history literature, including:

- Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, 2nd ed.
- Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd ed.
- The flagship American journal on Oral History, *The Oral History Review*

Based on my work thus far, a semester-long sabbatical is sufficient to create, distribute and promote this podcast series. A preliminary timeline follows:

- Spring 2023 Semester:
 - Reach out to Fresno State Library regarding potentially housing the podcast series in Special Collections
- August:
 - Finish research regarding best practices
 - Finalize list of practitioners to interview
 - Confirm and schedule interviews
 - Finalize question set
- September/October:
 - Conduct interviews
 - Continue to build skills in audio editing
 - Create podcast promotional items, including photos and bios of interviewees, cover art and graphics to advertise
- October/November:

- o Edit interviews and finalize podcasts
- o Begin distributing and promoting podcasts weekly on all podcast platforms via Anchor.fm:
 - Apple Podcasts
 - Spotify
 - Google Podcasts
 - I Heart Radio
 - And others
- December:
 - o Finish distributing and promoting rest of podcasts
- Spring 2024 Semester
 - o Create reception to celebrate inclusion of podcast series in Fresno State Library's Special Collections (pending confirmation).
 - Event will be coordinated as part of the curriculum in my MCJ 157: Public Relations and Advertising Agency class and in partnership with the Central California Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and the American Advertising Federation - Fresno Chapter

Section 2. Benefits as a Faculty Member

This proposed sabbatical will give me an opportunity to create an archivable treasure, provide important historical information about the advertising and public relations industries in the Central Valley, and share this information in a way that will allow its exposure to a broad audience. I will also be able to explore and enhance my skills set in an area that is of great interest to me creatively and is an important communication tool for practitioners in all of the MCJ disciplines. This sabbatical will give me time to dig deep into this project and build something really valuable for our community and for our students.

The strengthened relationships with those that I will interview for this project will not only provide me with new information and insight, it will also pave the way for future collaborative opportunities.

From an academic and curricular standpoint, this project will provide me, the MCJ department and the advertising and public relations option with valuable historical information that will be folded into our curriculum and studied further by our students.

Ideally, this will be the start of an ongoing oral history project that can grow over time.

Section 3. Benefits to the University

Many of the benefits to my department, my students and the university are covered in the sections above. This material will be immediately folded into our advertising and public relations curriculum to deepen our knowledge and teaching of industry history. The content developed by this project, in addition to the skills and expertise developed, will benefit all MCJ students.

As mentioned, it is my hope that in addition to being housed in the various podcast platform archives, this project can be housed in the Special Collections of the Fresno State Library as part of its local history archives.

My students will also benefit from the hands-on learning opportunities associated with this project regarding podcasting promotion and special event planning.

In addition, the advertising and public relations legends interviewed for the podcasts will experience closer ties to both the MCJ Department and the University, potentially paving the way for increased engagement, donations and/or collaboration.