

Toni Marie Burkhalter

Sabbatical Proposal Cover Sheet

Service to Parkland: Full-Time, Tenure-Track Faculty Member at Parkland since Fall 2004
Part-time instructor at Parkland since Fall 2001

Previous sabbatical leaves: None

Requested workload: One full semester

It is my understanding that by accepting a sabbatical leave from Parkland College I make a commitment to work for a one year term immediately following the completion of the sabbatical. It is also my understanding that I will be documenting my sabbatical activities to report back to the college and the board of trustees upon my return.

Candidate's signature: _____
Toni Marie Burkhalter date

Department Chair's signature: _____
Kathy Bruce date

SABBATICAL LEAVE PROPOSAL 1-PAGE OVERVIEW

Candidate: Toni Marie Burkhalter

Department: Natural Sciences

Date: November 11th, 2013

Description of Current Job Responsibilities:

- Coordinate and/or teach: BIO 120, KIN 164, KIN 181, KIN 183, KIN 186 and KIN 288.
- Member of the Natural Sciences Professional Development Committee.
- Member of the Natural Sciences Online Education Conference Committee.
- Member of Parkland's Wellness Committee.

Semester intended for Sabbatical Leave: Fall 2014

Proposal Summary: Wellness is commonly defined as the "absence of disease." However, wellness actually consists of six separate dimensions, each a vital component to the health of an individual. The dimension of wellness that most closely relates to my passions and position at Parkland College is physical wellness. The goal of the anticipated sabbatical is to investigate and experience the three dimensions of physical wellness: medical system, nutrition and fitness. The proposed sabbatical will allow me to experience personal/professional rejuvenation and improved physical wellness.

"The physical dimension [of wellness] recognizes the need for regular physical activity. Optimal wellness is met through the combination of exercise and eating habits. As you travel the wellness path, you will strive to spend time building physical strength, flexibility and endurance while also taking safety precautions so you may travel your path successfully, including medical self-care and appropriate use of a medical system. (1)"



PREPARE FOR PHYSICAL WELLNESS

- **Set the scene** – work with Heartland Spas professionals to facilitate prioritizing healthy physical wellness goals



MEDICAL SYSTEM

- **Family medical history** – learn about my family medical history as well as health care at various stages of life



NUTRITION

- **Research life in a healthy city** – travel to Portland or another city known for nutrition and physical wellness



FITNESS

- **Explore recreational fitness facilities** – participate in intramural and physical education activities

Length of Time Necessary to Accomplish the Objectives: One full semester

Requested Support: I am requesting \$1,000 to offset the cost of a trip to Portland Oregon.

SECTION 1 - RATIONALE

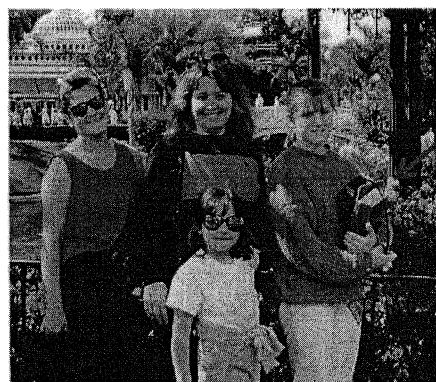
Why would the proposed activities be rejuvenating?

According to the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) instrument I completed during the Parkland leadership weekend, I am an extrovert. I believe the MBTI description, "I like getting my energy from active involvement in events and having a lot of different activities. I'm excited when I'm around people and I like to energize other people. I like moving into action and making things happen (2)", fits my personality. Engaging the community, researching topics I am passionate about and participating in athletic activities energize me. Time away at a spa would allow me to set aside all of my other responsibilities and focus on my personal wellbeing. The proposed activities following the preparation stage would further enable me to regain my impetus.

Why spend my sabbatical activities focusing on the subjects I teach?

This proposal is not focused on the subjects I teach, rather, it is focused on what I am passionate about: the sciences, wellness, learning from those around me, and sharing with others. I have the privilege of teaching what I love.

Spending a holiday diving into the sciences is nothing new to me. My sophomore year of high school, my mother wanted to take the family to Disney World on vacation. I was not as excited as I should have been because I was looking forward to a stimulating lesson in Biology class that I realized I would miss. I agreed to go with a smile if I was allowed to take my bulky biology book so I could read it while waiting in line for rides. My mother reluctantly agreed. While we were at Disney World, she photographed me in front of Cinderella's Castle holding my book. To this day, she lovingly teases me about my passion for learning.



Biology book at Disney World

Why do I need time during my contract days to 'investigate' and 'rejuvenate'?

As a mother of two children, I am busy juggling my students and family during the academic year. In the summer, I am the primary care giver to my children and teach online part-time. Unfortunately, in my adult life I have not had the opportunity to take extended time away from my work and parental obligations to engage in wellness activities and research while my children are occupied during the academic year.

Why take a sabbatical at this stage in my career?

I believe a sabbatical should be used as described in the policies and procedures manual for a time of "personal and professional growth and renewal." Currently, I am at a stage personally and professionally where I need time to focus on rejuvenation. I have been told by seasoned teachers that the first ten years of instruction are the most difficult, and I want to step into the next decade of teaching with a newfound vitality.

Section 1a

Contribution to professional growth

Wellness is commonly defined as the “absence of disease.” However, wellness actually consists of six separate dimensions, each a vital component to the health of an individual. The goal of the anticipated sabbatical is to investigate and experience multiple aspects of physical wellness. The proposed sabbatical activities will allow me to experience personal/professional rejuvenation and improved physical wellness.

Experiential learning in the wellness industries would allow for momentous professional development. Although I regularly exercise and have been asked to speak at a spa, I have not explored the different types of wellness facilities available in the United States from a patron or business perspective. My student client base includes nutrition majors, nursing students, kinesiology majors, personal trainers, wellness coaches, exercise enthusiasts, and future recreational fitness facility owners. I would like to have a basic understanding of successful business models in the industry as well as understand the characteristics of models that have not thrived. This information would be both engaging and helpful to share with my diverse student clientele.

Section 1b

Central to professional responsibilities

I have many responsibilities at Parkland that a wellness sabbatical would develop. The tables below highlight select professional responsibilities that would be enhanced by the proposed sabbatical.

COURSES I COORDINATE, DEVELOP CURRICULUM FOR, INSTRUCT, & MENTOR PT FACULTY

BIO 120	The Fundamentals of Nutrition
KIN 164	Sport and Exercise Psychology
KIN 181	The Fundamentals of Health
KIN 183	First Aid and CPR
KIN 186	Human Movement (Biomechanics)
KIN 288	Exercise Physiology

SELECT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

I enjoy community outreach and I am an active participant in the Parkland Speaker's Bureau. Below is a list of lectures or workshops that I have completed as well as their target audience.

Wellness a Daily Choice	Women 35-80yrs
Delicious Meals for One	Retirees, widows and widowers
Feeding your Finicky Eaters	Mothers of young children
Exercise your way to a Younger and Healthier You	Professionals 35-70yrs
Exercising on a Budget	Professionals 35-70yrs
Science at the Market	Children 3-12yrs
Mahomet Science Day	Children 5-12yrs
Surrounded by Science – PCETV show	PCETV audience

Section 1c

Acquiring additional knowledge, conducting research, publishing, and developing creative work

If granted the proposed sabbatical, I would use it as a time of exploration and creation. A break from the typical occupational duties would allow me the time needed for critical introspection and evaluation of where I need to grow as an individual in my physical wellness journey. On the following pages, I have outlined a plan to enhance my physical wellness through experiential learning, researching wellness topics, and creating a comprehensive blog to document and share my sabbatical experience.

SECTION 2 - ACTIVITIES

Sections 2a, 2b & 2c

Below I listed my specific goal, the proposed activities, and an explanation outlining how those activities will help achieve my goal.

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NUTRITION

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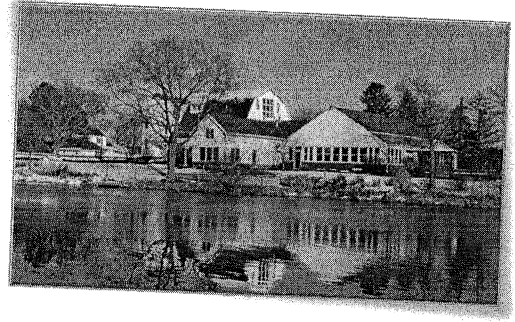


FITNESS

- **Explore recreational fitness facilities** – participate in intramural and physical education activities
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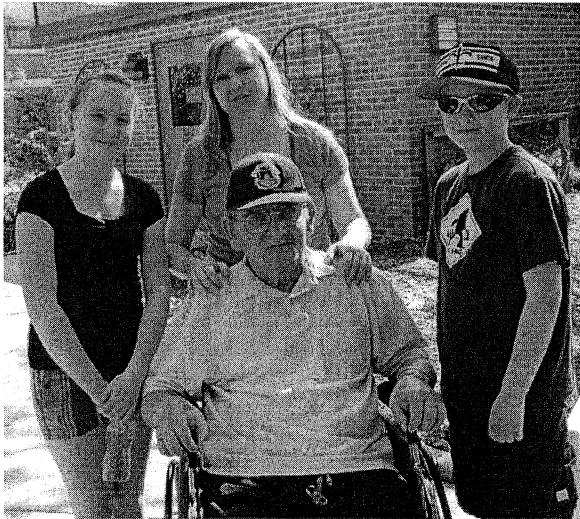
PREPARE

I plan to begin my sabbatical by taking 2+ weeks to set the scene for physical wellness. Heartland Spas is a health and wellness spa that employs a holistic approach to physical wellness (3). In the past, I have been invited there as a guest speaker in exchange taking some time for relaxation on premise. Based on our positive working relationship, they have agreed to provide me housing, a peaceful location for my preliminary research, and the use of their facilities. The spa has limited internet access and phone reception, does not allow any junk food or alcohol on the premises, and none of the guest rooms have a TV. They serve low calorie delicious meals prepared using local produce (example menu: http://www.heartlandspa.com/cuisine_menu.html). Thus, it is an ideal location to research the wellness industry, reflect on my personal physical wellness goals, and rejuvenate my spirit.

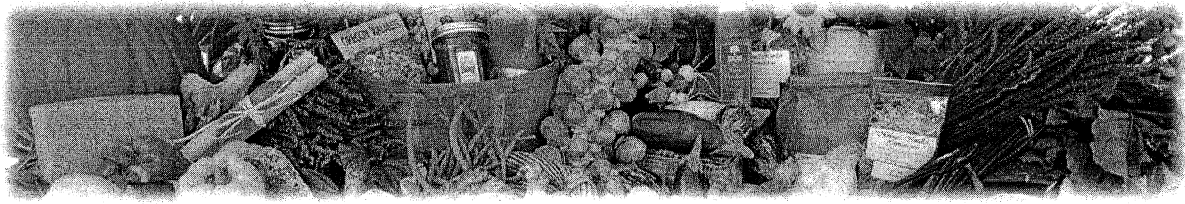


MEDICAL SYSTEM

Throughout the sabbatical, I hope to create deeper connections with my family while learning about health care in different stages of life. My father is only 70 years old but has been physically disabled since his 50's due largely to his life choices. He is currently suffering from dementia, Parkinson's, emphysema and advanced cardiovascular disease. Watching the causal relationship between behavior and health was the impetus for my career path and one of the driving factors in my choice to apply for a sabbatical. I would love to spend time reflecting with him and getting to know my "new father" but my typical schedule only allows me to stay for a short time. If granted sabbatical, I plan to stay with my



mother for 2+ weeks while visiting my father daily in his nursing home. Additionally, one of my sisters was recently diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). If granted sabbatical, I would take day trips to visit with my sister and her family in Bloomington to help them and enjoy their company. During the sabbatical, I will learn about my family history of disease and provide myself much needed time to process the reality of family members with long-term illnesses. Personally, I will better understand diseases, like Parkinson's, dementia, and MS, which I may be genetically predisposed to develop. Professionally, I can learn from medical personnel at his nursing facility and incorporate complex medical example from my family's life into the curriculum.

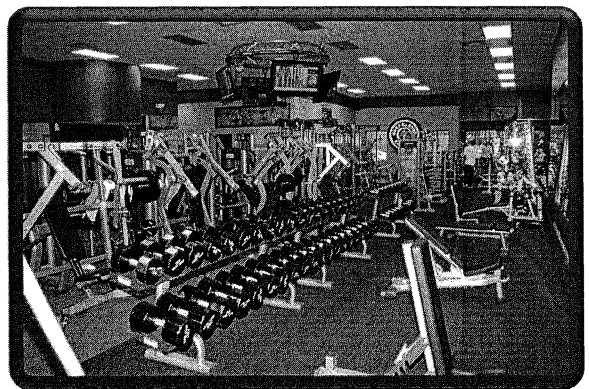


NUTRITION

According to sources such as the Huffington Post and Prevention Magazine, Portland, Oregon is known for being one of the healthiest cities in the US. In addition to its heart healthy and cheerful lifestyle, Portland also offers easy access to affordable produce (5, 6). I have two Aunts and a close friend that live in Portland. For years they have encouraged me to visit and learn about their culture. In addition to the flavorful and healthy fare, they cite the value of a slower pace of life atypical of urban centers in the Midwest. I have never taken the time to experience the laid back and healthy existence that is embraced by many locals in Portland. Farmer's markets and a bike friendly community encourage individuals to focus on all components of physical wellness. If granted sabbatical, I will travel to Portland for 2+ weeks and live with some 'locals', experiencing a community that encourages healthy nutritional choices in a relaxed atmosphere. It would be an amazing and educationally unique experience to bike around Portland taking photos and creating memories I can share with others upon my return.

FITNESS

Tae-Bo, Yoga, Pilates, Crossfit, Insanity; there are as many varieties of exercise regimes as there kinds of ice-cream. This multi-billion dollar industry also supports many different 'flavors' of exercise facilities in which to practice them. Each of these types of facilities seeks to accommodate different clienteles and help people achieve their fitness goals in different ways. As I seek to gain my own personal fitness objectives throughout my sabbatical leave, I intend to visit multiple types of these facilities in the local area and take advantage of their exercise offerings. At each, I will learn how their mission statements and business plans equip them to reach their desired customers, and how the fitness equipment and regimes they offer match accordingly. Some likely examples of the fitness facilities I will be investigating are: Parkland fitness center, Planet Fitness, Curves and The Mettler Center. I will be able to make powerful connections in the area while I examine how each of these facility types and fitness regimes help me improve my personal level of physical fitness while stepping (or running or lifting) towards a healthier me. 😊



SECTION 3 - JUSTIFICATION

Section 3a - Value of my goal

The goal of the proposed sabbatical is to investigate, experience, and discover the three components of physical wellness (medical, nutrition, and fitness). In doing so, I will be refreshed as an individual and be better prepared to share what true physical wellness is to others in the community and classroom.

Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have.

~Winston Churchill

Section 3b & c - Achievability of my goal and appropriateness of timeline

I believe my goal is achievable and appropriate given the timeline. The activities are refreshing to me personally and feed my spirit. My enjoyment of a highly interactive and purposeful life makes my goals thoughtful and realistic. Although I have several goals within physical wellness, I have allowed a significant amount of time for reflection and critical self-introspection. The proposed activities, in conjunction with the 'down time', will allow me to adequately develop and realize my objectives both personally and professionally during the one semester sabbatical.

Section 3d – Recapture of spirit/impetus

As seen in my Disney photo, I am rejuvenated while learning through participating in life. I am an extrovert that gains enthusiasm and energy from being around other people, questioning the world around me and learning from others. If granted sabbatical, I would be able to capture an improved spirit for life and teaching.

To every man there comes in his lifetime that special moment when he is figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered a chance to do a very special thing, unique to him and fitted to his talents.

~Winston Churchill

REFERENCES

- (1) The Six Dimensions of Wellness. Adapted from The Six Dimensions of Wellness by Bill Hettler (1976). Retrieved October 1, 2012 from www.nationalwellness.org/
- (2) The Myers & Briggs Foundation: Extraversion or Introversion. Adapted from Looking at Type: The Fundamentals by Charles R. Martin (1997). Retrieved October 1, 2012 from <http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/extraversion-or-introversion.asp>
- (3) Weiner, M. The skinny on weight loss spas. Retrieved October 1, 2012 from [http://travel.usnews.com/gallery/The Skinny on Weight Loss Vacations/Heartland Spa 721/](http://travel.usnews.com/gallery/The_Skinny_on_Weight_Loss_Vacations/Heartland_Spa_721/)
- (4) Portland Farmer's Market: bringing the best of the country to the heart of the city. Retrieved September 29, 2013 from <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/>
- (5) Which Cities have the Healthiest Eaters? (Posted 06/07/2012). Retrieved September 29, 2013 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/07/cities-healthy-eating_n_1575449.html
- (6) Mahoney, S & Coenen S. 25 Happiest, Healthiest Cities in America: Discover America's 25 best hometowns – and what you can learn from them. Adapted from Prevention Magazine. Retrieved September 29, 2013 from <http://www.prevention.com/mind-body/emotional-health/25-happiest-healthiest-cities-america>
- (7) Fitness Joq: Golds Gym Rancho Santa Margarita. Retrieved November 10, 2013 from <http://www.fitnessjoq.com/golds-gym-rancho-santa-margarita/>