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**Sabbatical Proposal for Julie Hershenberg, J.D.  
Professor of Political Science  
Sabbatical Leave Period: August 2024 - December 2024**

## **Abstract**

This project has a two-fold purpose: 1) To help students engage with the founding documents in an effort to understand the constitutional role of the Executive Branch and identify the expansion of those roles; 2) To provide Collin students with primary sources and high quality Open-Educational Resources to help minimize the cost of attending my government courses.

My project involves creating a new Honors Political Science course which will focus on the constitutional roles of the Executive Branch and how previous administrations have expanded those roles. The pedagogy for the course will involve teaching students close-reading strategies and document-based questions to help them develop critical analytical skills. The class will work with case studies of select presidents and culminate into a final presentation in which students will identify constitutional roles their assigned president expanded and the executive actions which helped define his administration.

My plan involves first visiting the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, PA and working closely with the Center's Director of Education to assist me in creating the course. I was named as a Constitutional Fellow for the 2023-2024 school year. The Constitutional Fellows pilot program is a year-long academic commitment with the Center to engage in professional development, focus group feedback, activity design, collaboration between the Center's education team and fellow cohort members. In June 2024, I will participate in multi-day trainings in Philadelphia. Additionally, I will have access to the Center's newly created curriculum titled, "Constitution 101." I have been actively searching for a high-quality open-educational resource for all my government courses and am hoping this curriculum will prove to be suitable for our students. If so, I will no longer require expensive textbooks for my courses in an effort to help minimize our students' costs for educational resources.

If the sabbatical is approved for Fall 2024, I plan to travel to select National Archives Presidential Libraries to both research and collect physical and digital primary source material for the course. I will work closely with the libraries' education directors to assist me in developing engaging lessons using primary documents and media resources unique to each presidential library.

The outcomes for my project will involve; 1) The creation of a new course offering in the Honors Department for Federal Government 2305 for both face-to-face and online students; and 2) The implementation of high quality open-educational resources to assist students in developing critical thinking and analytical skills which are crucial to success in the college classroom.