

**SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
SABBATICAL REPORT FORM
2021 - 2022**

Submit your completed Sabbatical Report as an email attachment (*.doc file, only), within 60 days of your return to duty. Send your report to the Tony Huntley, Faculty Co-Chair at thuntley@saddleback.edu, and Dr. Cindy Vyskocil, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at cvyskocil@socccd.edu, with a copy to Debra Garcia at dgarcia114@socccd.edu.

The first page of this document is the first page of your report.

Submission of a final Sabbatical Report is a component of the sabbatical process. (See SOCCCD 2021-2024 Academic Employee Master Agreement, Article 26, Section K-1, "Upon completion of the sabbatical and within sixty (60) days of the faculty member's return to duty, a narrative report shall be submitted to the Sabbatical Committee for Review and acceptance (or non-acceptance)."

COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

NAME	Ken Lee
COLLEGE	Saddleback College
DIVISION/SCHOOL	ATAS / Horticulture and Landscape Design

PERIOD FOR WHICH YOUR SABBATICAL WAS GRANTED			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fall 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spring 2022
<input type="checkbox"/>			Academic Year 2021 - 2022

Date and location of required presentation	October 10, 2022, Mon, 8 am / Zoom Session
Description and location of materials produced for college/district use (if applicable)	

Narrative Report

Prologue:

It has been quite a journey with my first-time sabbatical. My trip to Japan for research was originally scheduled for Spring 2021. Unfortunately, however, travel was restricted due to Covid-19, and my trip was postponed. I had hoped to reschedule for Spring 2022, but another wave of Covid-19 caused the Japanese government to close down its border in January 2022. It remained locked down until the end of June 2022, which completely prohibited my visit to Japan for research.

It has been quite frustrating and disappointing not to be able to conduct my research as planned. Yet, I decided to make the best efforts without visiting Japan, relying primarily on the internet and my past visits to Japan. Even though I was not able to conduct my sabbatical research project as originally planned, I think I was able to establish and research the subject from my frequent previous visits to Japan and data collected from relevant web sites.

One Note: The word ***“Garden(ing)”*** as used herein, expresses both ***“Garden” and “Gardening”***.

Please attach a narrative that addresses each of the following:

1. Activities

a. Describe in detail the activities conducted during the sabbatical.

- 1) To assess the historical role and aspects of Japanese gardening in Japanese culture
 - Hypothesized positive impacts on daily lives and culture from gardening in Japan.
 - Researched historical aspects of gardening in religion and culture, and, the impact on wellness by embracing nature.
 - Identified and assessed positive roles of gardening on overall wellness from historical precedents.
- 2) To research (virtually), the wellness aspects of Japanese gardens in various locations
 - Visited local Japanese Gardens and observed how people perceived and interacted with garden space and elements.
 - Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden at Cal State Long Beach
 - California Scenario Garden at Costa Mesa
 - Fullerton Arboretum at Cal State Fullerton
 - San Diego Botanic Garden at Encinitas
 - Descanso Gardens at La Canada
 - Huntington Library at San Marino

- Collected data about Japanese gardens and wellness from past visits as well as web sites.
 - Assessed the importance of Shinto shrines and Buddhism temples and their positive influence on public wellness.
 - Identified the “*passing down*” of wisdom from generation to generation, emphasizing the importance of gardening by embracing nature.
 - Identified contributing activities from gardening to personal wellness.
 - Assessed the inter-relationship between gardens and gardening, recognizing “*Sense of place, ownership and belonging*”, which contributes to positive mental and physical wellness.
- 3) To develop recommendations for impacting wellness in the US through gardening (Wellness Gardening)
- Assessed and identified the current perception of gardening from the general public in the US.
 - Summarized positive gardening impacts on personal wellness in Japan.
 - Compared facts identified from Japanese gardening, positive impacts on mental and physical wellness, with hypothesis and assumptions at the beginning of the research.
 - Identified recommendations for practical implementation of gardening that may improve, both mentally and physically, personal wellness in the US.
 - Addressed “*Wellness Gardening*” with clearly identified definition, objectives and implementation scopes, to promote gardening as the primary activity for pursuing and enhancing personal wellness mentally as well as physically.

b. Explain how these activities achieved the goals stated in your application.

Through the research process, the hypothetical assumption, “***Gardening provides significant positive impacts on our daily lives both physically and mentally, which surely leads to personal wellness.***”, has been fully confirmed by my sabbatical findings.

The vision of Department of Horticulture and Landscape Design is pursuing sustainability and wellness through horticulture and landscape design. This effort is essential for our students’ future, both personally and professionally, to meet current and future needs of protecting a fragile environment, while maintaining personal wellness. With this vision and efforts, the Urban Farming and Wellness Gardening Certificates were created.

Tangible measurement of positive outcome from these activities may not be easy to be identified and implemented as “*well-being*” is fundamentally holistic and unmeasurable in many ways. However, all findings from this research have proved specific positive impact on several aspects in (*sustainable*) horticulture and landscape design:

IDENTIFICATION OF THERAPEUTIC AND WELLNESS GARDENS’ DIFFERENCE

The general perception of benefits from gardening is primarily associated with therapeutic aspects from it as a tool for Horticulture Therapy. In this case, a certified horticulture therapist works with patients who would benefit from garden activities of tending plants or focusing on sensory functions, such as, smelling, touching or simply viewing. The purpose of therapeutic gardens is for improving a patient’s symptoms of physical and/or mental illness. As a therapeutic garden provides specific functions or benefits for certain patients, its process is quite reactive for the symptoms of illness.

On the contrary, wellness gardening is definitely proactive towards overall health (both physical and mental) and personal well-being without specific symptoms to be addressed. This proactive approach is critical for pursuing a holistic sense of wellness with a broader spectrum of activities involved, including social, cultural and physical environmental change. One good example is community gardening where local community members grow vegetables and fruits in a centrally located garden, and, share the products. This simple activity contains multi-levels of wellness functions. For example, growing plants as a group provides a sense of belonging, which accomplishes social connection to each other. Or, sharing vegetables and fruits with other community members surely contributes to a high level of satisfaction with satisfaction and pride.

In summary, wellness gardening provides a much broader spectrum of physical and mental benefits as a primary function, in pursuit of one’s overall personal well-being as a preventive measure, before an illness symptom arises. This preventive and proactive activity, in turn, improves social, cultural, and, economic aspects in local communities, as more positivity comes out from the entire process.

WELLNESS GARDENING AS A PART OF DAILY LIFE ACTIVITIES IN JAPAN

Through the research, the hypothesis about the role of gardening in Japan’s life style has been confirmed without being questionable. Indeed, gardening in Japan has been a part of daily life activities for most Japanese, and, has been carried on since ancient times. This may be explained with the following historical and current factors:

- Religious influence from Shintoism and Buddhism

Unlike many countries, Japan has a unique shared environment of religions, especially between Shintoism and Buddhism which are the primary religions in Japan. Many elements of these two religions are inter-twined and support each other. Shintoism, an ancient religion in Japan, is based on the belief that all natural elements have Spirits (*Kami*). And, all *Kamis* are fully respected with the utmost care

by everyone. And, each village has its own Kami, which is believed to protect the village. In many cases, Kamis may reside in Mountain, River, Tree, Rock, Ocean, or any other natural elements that may be unique for a village. This respectful attitude towards the surrounding natural environment from the religions is a key element of sustainability, which, in turn, leads to an achievement of wellness.

- Strong bond among people in a village as a community

It is quite common in Japan that many people are born and die in the same village. This reflects a strong bond among people in a village as well as the importance of traditions being carried by generations. As most villages are self-sustained, including foods, gardening has become the primary activity in a village (besides fishing if a village is next to the ocean). Even though gardening may be cultivated on individually owned land, sharing the labor is a common practice. In turn, sharing the products is a normal village activity. This whole process creates a true “*Sense of Place (Genius Loci)*” that brings “*Sense of Belonging*”. This sense of belonging is the key aspect of wellness gardening, which promotes mental satisfaction and accomplishment.

- Long term perspectives on wellness and sustainability

It is natural in Japan to consider the long-term human impacts at the beginning of activities to identify the negative impacts and to provide solutions as a part of the process. For example, loggers cut trees based upon needs for the future generation. Or, fishermen voluntarily limit caught fishes by setting aside future necessities. This visionary action is common in every aspect on life styles in Japan. This attitude is possible from strong respect on traditions and communities, not considering the individual right or entitlement as the priority.

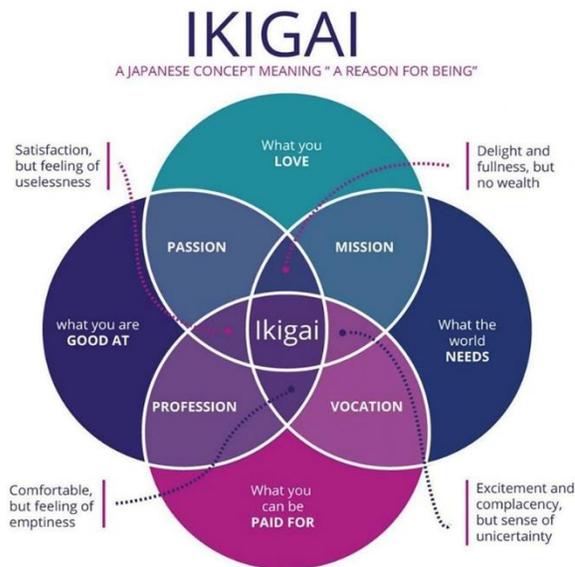
This long-term vision also allows people in Japan to slow down, instead of rushing it. And, garden(ing) is a perfect example of slowed down activity. Growing and tendering plants take time as plants cannot be rushed. Also, the promotion of a slower pace has a significant impact on the scale of garden(ing). Smaller scale garden(ing) allows many tasks to be done by manual labor, instead of automated machines.

- *Ikigai* (生き甲斐) – Reason for Being (Japanese belief on daily lives)

In many aspects, Japanese garden and well-being is a reflection of traditional Japanese belief about life. *Ikigai* is important for many Japanese by giving the purpose of their lives, which is an integral part of personal wellness. This attitude definitely carries into the perception of garden(ing) with a strong connection to a local community. Below are examples of *Ikigai*, and, how it is interpreted by many Japanese:

- *Ikigai* is the reason why to get up in the morning.

- *Ikigai* is the sum of small joys in everyday life, more fulfilling than any larger events.
- *Ikigai* is about what makes a difference in other people's lives.
- *Ikigai* is a reflection of well-being from devotion to activities one enjoys, also bringing a sense of fulfillment.
- *Ikigai* brings meaning and purpose to the life, contributing to the good of others.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WELLNESS GARDENING IN THE US

Historically, socially, culturally and religiously, the US and Japan may be at the opposite side of spectrums, simply categorized as Western vs. Eastern. In most of cases, this may be true, and, difficult to bridge the differences. However, there is a strong common ground in wellness gardening between the US and Japan: *Personal well-being*. Regardless the differences in historical, social, cultural and religious aspects, everyone wants to be healthy, both mentally and physically, and, to stay in that way. This fundamental desire can be easily led to wellness gardening, provided that surrounding environment encourages its role and use. Certain elements can be recommended and achieved successfully in the US:

- Defining a community with shared values
- Localization of food sources
- Minimizing the necessity of transportation
- Gardening as the primary community activity, both tending and sharing

- Local regulation encouraging community participation
- Involvement of local schools in gardening as a family activity, creating “*sense of ownership and belonging*”
- Establishing food sharing structures within the community, connecting with less fortunate community members, to avoid gentrification
- Increasing garden spaces, utilizing less desirable or undesirable locations, within a local community (promoting more green spaces for the overall health)
- Collaborating sustainable landscape design and sustainable horticulture to create a holistic approach for wellness

c. Provide a timeline or calendar showing when these activities were carried out.

Month 2022	Activity
<p style="text-align: center;">January</p>	<p>Hypothesis / Assumptions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identified and defined hypothesis / assumptions of positive impacts on personal wellness from garden(ing) in Japan. 2. Identified and summarized garden(ing) roles in historical, social, cultural and religious aspects in Japan. 3. Compiled hypothesis / assumptions identified for the positive impacts on well-being from garden(ing).
<p>February -April</p>	<p>Data Collection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researched and collected the historical examples of wellness garden(ing) in Japan. 2. Researched and collected specific functions or aspects of garden(ing), focusing on well-being. 3. Visited local Japanese Gardens and observed people’s perceptions and interactions with garden space and elements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden at Cal State Long Beach - California Scenario Garden at Costa Mesa - Fullerton Arboretum at Cal State Fullerton - San Diego Botanic Garden at Encinitas - Descanso Gardens at La Canada - Huntington Library at San Marino

	<p>4. Researched other countries about garden(ing) and well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United States - United Kingdom - British Columbia, Canada - Singapore - China (<i>Feng Shui</i>) <p>5. Compiled the data collected for the review.</p> <p>6. Organized the data for in-depth assessment.</p>
May - June	<p>Data Review / Assessment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyzed data collected and identified the key elements of well-being from garden(ing) in Japan. 2. Analyzed data collected and identified the key elements of well-being from garden(ing) in other countries, such as, UK, Canada, Singapore and China. 3. Assessed key elements identified in details of contributing factors from garden(ing) to well-being. 4. Confirmed assessed findings and organized for the final recommendations of practical logistics and implementations in the US.
July - October	<p>Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compared data between Japan (and other countries) and the US to identify similarities and differences in garden(ing) focusing on personal well-being. 2. Analyze assessed data for the final recommendations. 3. Prepared the recommendation with applicable tasks list and executable logistics.

d. Provide evidence of these activities

- i. attach transcripts, letters from collaborators, acknowledgements, news reports*
- ii. copies of papers written*
- iii. photographs of artwork, projects, etc.*
- iv. addresses for websites where work can be seen*

See Appendix for details.

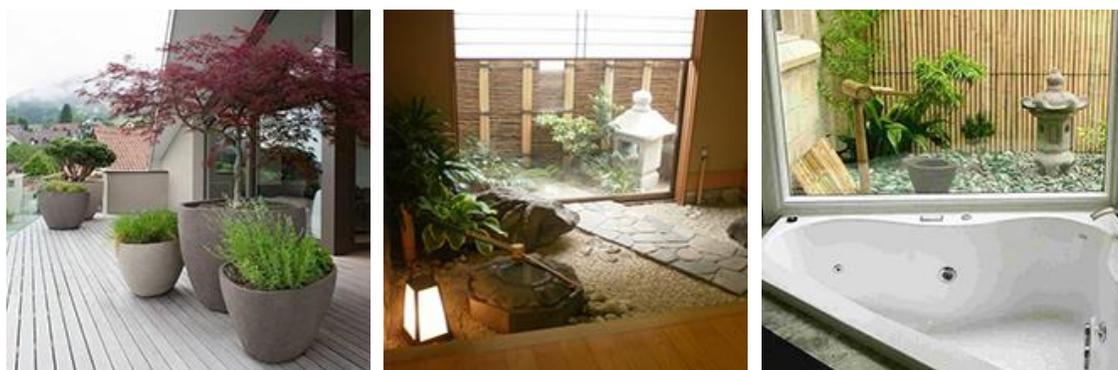
2. *Impact of these activities*

a. *On teaching and learning*

Even though my sabbatical did not go as planned, not being able to conduct the research in Japan, due to the Covid-19 border closure, the whole process of identifying unique aspects of garden(ing) and personal wellness in Japan with relevant web sites was quite clear and informative. The data collected and assessed were still valid with a high level of confirmation. Also, my frequent Japan trips in past had given me a clear understanding of the Japanese perspective on garden(ing) and well-being, which naturally leads to being sustainable. Focusing on personal wellness and being sustainable in Japan is quite natural with its historical, social, cultural and religious aspects, which is quite unique and rare for many countries, including the US.

This research has confirmed my belief and understanding of the important role of garden(ing) in Japan as the primary activity in daily lives for well-being. With advanced technology, our lives have been in a faster mode, and, this trend will continue without doubt. This means people will not have time to relax and compose, or, simply to take time for their lives. This fast moving forward daily life style without any meaningful break has been accelerating faster and faster. And, this trend has been exacerbating and increasing personal stress levels exponentially. In turn, personal physical and mental health has been more problematic.

In Japan, except a few mega-cities, such as Tokyo, the general public seems at a slower pace with their daily lives. This slower pace surely contributes to their health positively. With less expectations from work, many Japanese people find time to enjoy garden(ing) with any space available. As a matter of facts, garden(ing) in Japan is a part of daily routine for many people, instead of special occasions or hobbies. *Tsubo Niwa* (坪庭), roughly translated as *square-feet garden*, may be a good example demonstrating how garden(ing) is integrated into Japanese daily life.



Another good example for bringing a garden into daily living space in a Japanese house is *Engawa* (縁側), front porch or veranda, which usually faces toward a garden space. By simply opening *Shoji* (障子), sliding door with paper screen, it naturally brings a garden space into living quarter for home owners, sitting on *Engawa* and contemplating thoughts. This unique architectural element is a common way of exercising mental well-being with garden(ing) for many Japanese people.



The second unique aspect of garden(ing) in Japan is a sincere respect for nature from people. This respect is deeply imbedded into Japanese culture and history as a strong tradition. As treating a human as a part of nature, not, a center of it, the whole process and outcome of human actions pursue a protection of nature as the ultimate goal. This attitude has significant impact on preserving fragile nature by balancing promoting human activities and protecting the nature. For example, loggers in villages with mountains carefully select trees to cut down by considering future needs and protecting the village from unnecessary human development. This is 100% voluntary by the villagers with deep respect of their ancestors and the tradition.

One episode, from *Great Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami*, demonstrates Japanese respect for nature and tradition. A fisherman whose village was wiped out by Tsunami decided to rebuild his village to continue the tradition and respect of ancestors. It was his duty to carry on. The first action he did to revive the fishing tradition in his village was to go to the next village and to start planting trees in the mountain. In our common sense, his action may have not made sense, yet, it was. He strongly believed that abundant fish he and other fishermen in his village caught before the tsunami was the result of trees in next village's mountain, avoiding mud slides, filtering organic matters, slowing down water flow, and, carrying healthy nutrients for planktons in the ocean. As the result, there were plenty of fish to catch. As a fisherman, he understood the inter-dependent co-existence between trees and fish. His story reflects two important aspects in Japanese culture and tradition: 1) Respecting the entire cycle of nature, not, just fishing; 2) Slowing the process without rushing. Both are significant for pursuing a delicate balance between human use and preservation of nature.

Garden(ing) in Japan reflects the same understanding and acceptance of the humble relationship of humans with nature: Slow pace with respect. With that, it has become a primary activity for personal well-being both mentally and physically.

Regarding how this finding may impact teaching and learning, without any doubt, it confirms our program's vision and belief that sustainability should be and is the core value of horticulture and landscape design:

In horticulture, sustainability has been a new trend, getting away from being ornamental. In the past, aesthetics may have been the primary objective without considering natural surroundings. Growing pretty flowers was enough even though they are from far corners of the world. Using harsh chemicals was acceptable to keep plants thriving with artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Providing plenty of water was justified for growing non-native plants healthy. All these activities are in a stark opposition to gardening activities pursued in Japan: Non-native vs. native, synthetic chemical vs. organic, enterprise scale vs. personal one, fast outcome vs. slow one, mass quantity vs. small quality, etc. This list can go on and on. And, time has become critical to change our views and attitude towards nature as it is no longer optional for our own and future generation's survival.

By focusing on being sustainable in horticulture and landscape design, our program has fully aligned the current and future direction. And, learning from garden(ing) in Japan shows what we need to focus in our program: teaching our students to be more responsible for human actions, protecting fragile nature, being able to slow down intentionally for their well-being. Creating the Urban Farming and Wellness Gardening programs has proven to be the right direction in that respect. Our courses reflect our vision and belief in sustainability, being streamlined for future needs. Existing programs will be updated with necessary changes, and, new programs will be created to reflect current and future trends. And, eventually our students will benefit as they will be well prepared and ready for the ever-changing "real" world with positive contributions.

b. On the faculty member's professional development

I have been to Japan many times, yet, this research process has opened my eyes, being able to understand beyond what are seen on the surface. Through spending time to read articles, papers and books, and, to view videos and photos, I was able to recognize the deeper meaning of garden(ing) in Japan respectfully, understanding a bigger picture of garden(ing) and well-being, besides ins and outs of garden(ing) activities. Researching historical, social, cultural and religious aspects allowed me to be more appreciative on garden(ing) in Japan.

Garden(ing) demonstrates simple daily activities, such as, tending plants, enjoying the view or smell, or, strolling inside, may give an opportunity for slowing down, or, contemplating thoughts. Yet, it has taught much more than that: the positive perspective on life. Personally, this is a big step towards being able to enjoy and appreciate life. In turn, I am able to teach students with a positive perspective on life in general, and, to address the importance of being sustainable for personal wellness as well as healthy nature.

Being able to achieve personal growth with positivity is surely a plus from this research, and, it will definitely impact on how I teach my students: With appreciation and respect on life and well-being.

c. *Benefit of these activities to students and the district*

This research provides sure benefits for both students and the district in two levels.

Immediate benefits (low level) for students:

- Confirming and continuing the department's vision of the sustainability as the core element of course and certificate programming
- Streamlining course and program contents with sustainability and wellness for current and future trends in horticulture and landscape design
- Teaching and learning positive life aspects in addition to acquiring subject related knowledge
- Emphasizing the importance of garden(ing) as the primary tool for personal wellness
- Pursuing group activities through program activities, such as, garden(ing), to build "*sense of belonging*" (*community*)
- Collaborating with students of other programs via a common interest of garden(ing)
- Pursuing healthy life style by growing food and sharing it with others ("*Sense of Accomplishment*")
- Being able to slow down, away from the technology

Secondary benefits (high level) for the district:

- Promoting local community participation on garden(ing) activities
- Building college community with interaction among participants from different functions and roles
- Strong connection to a local community through program activities
- Educating a local community to maintain healthier life styles as well as more responsible to the surrounding environment and nature
- Building a bridge among students, faculty, staff, administrators, and, a local community, via shared appreciation of garden(ing)

3. Products of the sabbatical

- a. List all products of the sabbatical
- b. If appropriate, state the location and accessibility of these products

See Appendix for details.

4. Dissemination of results

- a. Demonstrate that you have followed the dissemination plan indicated in your proposal

All research findings are fully incorporated into three existing courses:

- i. HORT 138 Sustainable Landscape

The research findings are wonderful testimonial for the strong interaction between personal well-being and being sustainable. Through wellness garden(ing), the importance of understanding and pursuing sustainable landscape is fully recognized and emphasized. And, it will be great supplementary learning materials for students

- ii. HORT 145C Landscape Design – Wellness Garden

Actual examples of Japanese landscape design are presented to students as case studies, learning from “built” projects through assessments of “good, bad and ugly” outcomes

Learning from the “real” world examples is one of the most effective methods for improving creative process, and, the research outcome is an excellent addition to students’ learning environment.

- iii. HORT 238 Introduction to Wellness Gardening

This course may have the primary benefit from the research findings as it is about understanding the meaning of wellness gardening, and, discussing how to achieve it as a part of a daily life style. The research outcome has surely confirmed mental and physical benefits from, not only garden(ing) itself, but also, social, cultural and religious aspects. And, the recommendation from the research will be the great addition to course learning contents.

- iv. HORT 239 *Feng Shui* (風水) and Well-being

This course will benefit from the research findings as it may strengthen the theory of *Feng Shui* (風水), the traditional Chinese belief on design elements and spatial layouts to promote well-being,

by the historical, cultural and religious aspects of garden(ing) that contribute to positive personal wellness. This intangible benefit may be an additional contribution to sustainable landscape design.

Besides the direct positive impacts on our current courses, the researching findings provide solid ground for future courses and certificates, emphasizing sustainability and wellness. In addition to the Department's recent new certificate programs (Urban Farming and Wellness Gardening), new courses and certificates will be considered and created, which align with the Department's vision (and are confirmed by the research findings referenced herein). New and future courses will reflect current and future trends in horticulture and landscape design.

My sabbatical research findings also provide excellent opportunities to collaborate inter-department efforts, providing a broader spectrum of relevant knowledge for students, such as, Health Science, Culinary Arts, Human Services, or Gerontology. As noticed, all these programs pursue personal wellness as the ultimate goal. And, the research findings can be shared with other relevant programs to promote a stronger collaboration among them.

“Pursuing wellness and being sustainable” is the fundamental objective of the Horticulture and Landscape Design program, and, the research outcomes may be instrumental for students in many different pathways to recognize the essence of personal well-being and the importance of being sustainable. This will have a positive impact on people in many areas, including healthy body and mind, social cohesiveness, cultural respect, and, acceptance of religious differences.

Note: To share my sabbatical research findings with other faculty members in Department of (Sustainable) Horticulture and Landscape Design, the presentation is set on October 10, Monday, 8 am, via Zoom session.