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Respondent

37 Anonymous

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Application Information

1. Name: *

Sydnee Risk

2. GCC Title/Position: *

Instructinal Designer

3. Department: *

Library and Learning Resources

4. Campus: *

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7. Dean or Department Head's Name: *

Katie Datko

Project Proposal

8. Name of Project/Program: *

GCC Reel Impact: Documentary Film Series at Glendale Community College

9. Please select which category best describes your project: *

- Arts & Culture
- Athletics & Fitness
- Career & Work Training
- College Operations & Facilities
- Humanities/Social Sciences
- Science & Technology

10. Amount requested: *

12,000

11. What do you propose to do? *

We propose to host an in-person community documentary film screening series at Glendale Community College, open to the public and with intentional outreach to the surrounding community and to prospective students from local high schools. Both documentaries are produced by local, independent filmmakers — a distinction that grounds this event in the creative richness of the Los Angeles film community. Following each screening, a panel discussion with the filmmakers will give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the filmmaking journey, the stories behind the projects, and an open forum for questions and dialogue.

The two films are SPEAK! and Far East Deep South. SPEAK! follows five top-ranked high school oratory students spend a year crafting spellbinding spoken word performances with the dream of winning one of the world’s largest and most intense public speaking competitions. These deeply personal stories address themes of education, mental health, disability rights, LGBTQIA+ identity, and immigration through the lens of student voice and advocacy. Far East Deep South follows a Chinese American family’s emotional journey from California to Mississippi to uncover their roots, revealing the long-overlooked history of Chinese immigrants in the Jim Crow South and examining race, belonging, and the lasting effects of discriminatory policies like the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Following the film, a panel of film makers and participants will initiate dialogue with the audience about the film making process. — transforming each event from a passive viewing experience into an active, informative community-building conversation.

Our goal is to create an event where art is celebrated, community is brought together, social issues and ideas are explored through honest conversation, and diversity and inclusion are honored. If successful, this screening series would become an annual request, growing each year to feature additional locally produced documentary films that shine a light on Los Angeles’ thriving independent film industry and the city’s extraordinarily creative and diverse population — making GCC a recurring home for community-centered storytelling and cultural engagement.

12. Who will be involved in the project/program? *

I would act as the main logistician soliciting help from various faculty and staff for marketing support. To maximize reach and cross-disciplinary engagement, I have already solicited participation from Carla Ruiz, Megan Torrey-Payne, Samantha Garagliano, Tiffany Ingle, Katie Datko and other department chairs across multiple disciplines. These connections will be leveraged to promote GCC Reel Impact: Documentary Film Series at Glendale Community College to current GCC students through relevant courses, clubs and campus channels. In addition, I will work with Gary Karen Shamoyan and outreach for local high schools that will bring prospective students and their educators to campus.

13. What are the benefits of this project/program to the students, college, and the community? *

This screening series is an opportunity for GCC to publicly affirm and broadcast its identity as a progressive, culturally engaged institution that is deeply in tune with the creative pulse of Los Angeles. By hosting two locally produced independent documentaries — one celebrating the power of youth voice and the other recovering a hidden chapter of American history — GCC signals to the broader community that this is a campus where art matters, where diverse histories are honored, and where important conversations are not just welcomed but actively cultivated. The presence of local filmmakers as panelists further reinforces this identity, creating a visible bridge between GCC and LA's thriving independent film community.

This is also a powerful outreach and marketing opportunity. Every high school student, parent, educator, and community member who walks onto this campus for these screenings leaves with a lived impression of GCC as vibrant, welcoming, and relevant. That kind of organic, experience-based outreach is far more compelling than any brochure or advertisement.

For current GCC students, this series sends a clear message that their college is invested in stories that reflect their lives and histories. Students from immigrant families, students navigating questions of identity and belonging, and students passionate about social justice will find in both films a mirror that validates their experiences and a model of what thoughtful, purposeful storytelling can accomplish. I also plan on employing a student worker to help with event planning logistics giving real world experience to someone interested in marketing, event planning, music and film installations, etc.

For the high school students we hope to attract, the impact is equally significant. Many prospective students — particularly first-generation college-goers — may have never set foot on a college campus. Bringing them to GCC for an event that is engaging, culturally resonant, and built around the work of local filmmakers creates a powerful first impression. It communicates that GCC is a place that celebrates young people, takes their stories seriously, and is connected to the creative and cultural world they care about. The filmmaker panels in particular give high school students direct exposure to real creative careers, expanding their vision of what college and professional life can look like.

For the community, the screening series invites the broader Glendale and Los Angeles community onto GCC's campus for events that feel genuinely meaningful — not institutional, but human. SPEAK! celebrates young people who look and sound like the students in our region's high schools, showing what happens when youth are given the tools to articulate their truth on the biggest stages. Far East Deep South recovers a story that many in our community — particularly within LA's large and vibrant Asian American population — may never have encountered, honoring the interconnected histories of Chinese and Black Americans during one of the most painful chapters of American history.

Together, these films create space for the kind of cross-cultural dialogue that strengthens communities. The post-screening panels give audience members direct access to the filmmakers behind these stories, making the event interactive and alive rather than passive. For community members who may not regularly engage with GCC, this series is an open door — a reason to come to campus, to connect with neighbors, and to see the college as a cultural anchor in the community it serves.

14. How does this project/program support the College's Institutional Strategic Plan? *

View ISP at <https://www.glendale.edu/home/showpublisheddocument/68172>

The screening series directly supports all three of GCC's strategic priorities — Inclusion, Success, and Support.

Priority A: Inclusion

The most direct alignment is with Goal A.3, which calls for hosting 36+ annual campus community events averaging 100+ attendees each. Both screenings, paired with filmmaker panels and post-screening discussions, are precisely the kind of high-visibility, high-engagement community events that count toward that objective — and the proposal's vision to make this an annual series means the contribution compounds over time.

Goal A.1 targets enrollment growth among underrepresented groups — specifically Latino, Black, and APIDA students — by developing innovative ways to engage prospective students. Far East Deep South speaks with particular resonance to APIDA students and communities, while SPEAK! reflects the experiences of students across multiple underrepresented identities. Bringing local high school students onto campus for both screenings creates meaningful, relationship-based exposure to GCC.

Goal A.5 calls for strengthening intersegmental relationships with K-12 institutions. A collaborative screening series that draws high school students, teachers, and administrators to campus is a tangible, relationship-building step toward that goal, laying the groundwork for deeper partnerships around dual enrollment and articulation.

Goal A.7 calls for identifying and responding to changing student needs around mental health, cultural responsiveness, and community building. Both films open exactly these conversations — SPEAK! through the lens of youth mental health and identity, and Far East Deep South through the lens of racial history, discrimination, and the search for belonging.

Priority B: Success

Goal B.2 commits GCC to supporting faculty in implementing culturally responsive and equity-minded pedagogical approaches, and the cross-departmental faculty and chair involvement already solicited for this event is a direct expression of that goal. Engaging faculty around two films centered on student voice, racial identity, and advocacy deepens the equity-minded professional awareness the plan envisions.

The presence of local independent filmmakers as panelists also supports Goal B.7, which calls for exposing students to emerging and creative fields. Hearing directly from working documentary filmmakers connects students to real-world creative careers and expands their sense of what educational and professional pathways are available to them.

Priority C: Support

The multi-department collaboration behind this series reflects Goal C.2, which calls for expanding collaborative initiatives between Student Services and Instructional Services to enhance the student experience. By engaging faculty from various disciplines alongside community-facing programming, this series models the kind of cross-functional partnership the plan prioritizes.

More broadly, the entire series embodies GCC's stated vision of building community and a sense of belonging for all through innovative and meaningful learning experiences — and its ambition to grow into an annual celebration of LA's independent film industry positions GCC as a lasting cultural hub for the region.

15. Timeline for the project/program. *

If granted, the work for this project would begin Summer 2026 with basic logistics of setting the two screening dates. The goal is to screen SPEAK! in Fall 2026 when GCC is in session and local high schools are looking at prospective colleges. I would like to screen Far East Deep South in Winter 2027 most likely in February when Black History Month and Chinese New Year are celebrated.

16. How do you propose to use the funds requested? Please include specific budget information. *

Renting out the Main Stage Theater after 6pm wiht a four hour minimum (includes labor, microphones, projector) - \$2911.00 x 2 = \$5822.00
 SPEAK! \$500 screening fee \$500 / film maker panelist speaker x 2 = \$1,500
 Far East Deep South \$600 screening fee (includes streaming & faculty use) / \$500 film maker panelist speaker x 2 = \$1,600
 Popcorn Vendor 300 people \$1300
 Student Worker in event planning to help with logistics - \$1000
 Water, Soda, Ice for complimentary drinks - \$778

17. Please list any other sources of funding you have applied for and include dollar amounts if already awarded. *

None

18. How will the Foundation's support be recognized? *

I will personally make sure that all marketing material contains a by line that reads - 'Thank you for the support of the Glendale College Foundation. Some promotion items will state 'The Glendale College Foundation Presents, 'GCC Reel Impact: Documentary Film Series at Glendale Community College'. When introducing the Documentaries at the start of the screening, a big shout out and thank you to the Glendale College Foundation will be announced. Applause will ensue.

19. How do you plan to evaluate this project's success? *

The most immediate measure of success will be attendance numbers at each screening. In alignment with GCC's Strategic Plan Goal A.3 — which sets a benchmark of community events averaging 100+ attendees — we will track total attendance at each screening and panel discussion. We will also track the breakdown of attendees by affiliation: current GCC students, local high school students, faculty and staff, and general community members. This data will help us understand how broadly the series reached beyond the existing campus community and inform outreach strategies for future events.

The energy and depth of the post-screening panel discussions will also serve as a qualitative indicator of success — the degree to which audience members actively participate, ask questions, and engage with the filmmakers reflects the event's ability to spark genuine community dialogue.

Beyond attendance, we will assess the quality of engagement the events generate. A brief post-screening survey, accessible by QR code, will be distributed to all attendees and capture responses to questions such as: What best describes you; prospective student, enrolled GCC student, enrolled college student elsewhere, parent, staff, faculty or community member. Did you enjoy yourself? Is this your first time to Glendale Community College? Did you like the films? Did the filmmaker panel add value to your experience? Would you attend a future screening in this series? For high school attendees specifically, we will ask whether the event influenced their perception of or interest in GCC. I can work with Michael Davis on gathering the most appropriate data, but this is one way I would evaluate this project's success.

20. If your project/program is successful, how will it inform your practice moving forward? *

A successful first year of this screening series will do more than validate a single event — it will establish a replicable model for how GCC can show up as a cultural institution in the greater Glendale and surrounding communities.

The processes developed for this inaugural series — identifying local independent filmmakers, coordinating cross-departmental faculty outreach, and facilitating post-screening panels — will become the foundation of a standardized framework that grows more efficient and impactful each year. Audience feedback, attendance data, and faculty engagement levels will directly inform film selection, outreach strategy, and panel composition in future editions. I also envision adding pre and post live music to the event with local and/or GCC students and Alumni.

Most importantly, each successful year builds GCC's reputation as a progressive, culturally engaged campus that celebrates local artists, honors diverse histories, and creates space for meaningful community dialogue.

21. Please provide a 2 – 3 sentence summary of your project proposal. *

We propose to host a community documentary film screening series on the campus of Glendale Community College, featuring two locally produced independent films — SPEAK! and Far East Deep South — each followed by a live panel discussion with the filmmakers. The series is designed to celebrate art and independent filmmaking, build community, and spark meaningful dialogue around diversity, identity, and social justice, while creating an engaging and welcoming campus experience for current students, local high school students, and the broader Glendale and surrounding communities. If successful, this will become an annual series expanding each year to feature additional locally produced documentaries, possibly including some prescreening music from student and local bands, establishing GCC as a cultural destination that champions LA's independent film industry and the city's rich and diverse communities.

Signature and Acknowledgments

22. I hereby acknowledge/certify: *

- My Dean or department head is aware of this application and has authorized its submission.
- If my proposal involves the hiring of temporary/contracted professionals, I will obtain approval from Human Resources before proceeding and will provide documentation to the Foundation that the hiring/contracting has been reviewed and approved.
- If my proposal involves conference and/or other travel, I will complete the GCC travel approval process and adhere to GCC travel guidelines.