

Chabot College
Memorandum

From: Carey Harbin, Counselor/Instructor
To: Distance Education Committee
Re: DE Offering of PSCN 15, "College Study Skills"
Responses to Guidelines for Distance Education Curriculum Review
Date: January 17, 2006

1. Describe how the course content will be delivered.

The content will be delivered exclusively over the Internet via Chabot's server using Blackboard as the course management tool. Internet activity will involve reading on-line instructional materials, locating academically accountable web sites related to course topics, viewing appropriate web sites provided by the instructor and critiquing the content of web sites, both academically accountable and non-academically accountable, and evaluating instructional samples provided by the instructor (e.g. 3 X 5 card summaries, time managers, etc.) Students will communicate with each other via Blackboard synchronous features (electronic classroom/chat) and/or asynchronous features (discussion board threads). Students will communicate with instructor via Discussion Board thread replies and email. The combined activities in this course will occupy students for two academic hours per week (2 semester unit course) plus the normal four or more hours of preparation and study usually associated with collegiate level instruction.

2. Describe the nature and frequency of instructor-student interaction.

It is anticipated students will submit written comments, interpretations, and analyses to the instructor on a weekly basis, usually multiple times per week. Students will communicate with instructor via Discussion Board thread replies and email.

Provide examples of synchronous and asynchronous course components.

Students will communicate with each other via Blackboard synchronous features (electronic classroom/chat) and/or asynchronous features (discussion board threads). The following are two examples of possible course components that could be incorporated into the curriculum:

Synchronous Format Example:

Students will be assigned to a discussion group and provided instructions to read a chapter or other selection provided by the instructor. The objective of the synchronous discussion would be to identify the key points and ideas presented in the reading materials. . After conducting their group discussion, at their own convenience, each student would be asked to submit a list of bulleted key points from the reading.

- Topic: Time Management
- Reading: Read Chapter 2 in the text, How to Study in College by Walter Pauk, 6th edition.
- Discuss: What are the main ideas presented by the author in this chapter related to effective time management in college?
- Response: Provide a list of bulleted points listing the key ideas presented in chapter 2 of the text, How to Study in College by Walter Pauk by each individual by the specified due date.

Asynchronous Format Example:

Students will be given a reading assignment related to the topic of discussion, asked to locate an academically accountable web site relating to the topic and then reply via a discussion board thread.

- Topic: Personal Success Motivation and Success
- Reading: Read Chapter 1 in the text, How to Study in College by Walter Pauk, 6th edition.
- Response: Locate one academically creditable site where the selected concept is discussed. Post a one page summary of the concept or ideas of the site in Discussion Board #XX. List the selected web site's URL at the top of your paper and make sure the URL is complete. You may find it beneficial to write the summary in MS Word or another word processing software then copy and paste it into the Discussion Board.

When using the Internet for research, it is important to be selective in using sites for academic research. Make sure the site(s) you use in your summary are creditable. Rather than narrate on this topic, I am providing a rather extensive list of on-line sources that discuss this specific topic. Some are tutorials and some are straight informational pieces. The main idea here is for you to select one or two of these resources and review them thoroughly. You need to develop a general sense of how to evaluate an individual web site for its academic integrity.

http://www.library.ncat.edu/ref/information_literacy/course/internet/limap0.htm

Title - Using The Internet.

This tutorial is courtesy of North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University Library in Greensboro, NC. Just click on the "continued on next page" button to progress through this module. Be especially attentive

to the Web Evaluation section at the very end. At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- * Define the terms network and Internet.
- * Describe the origins of the Internet and its basic structure.
- * Identify the components of a URL.
- * Apply the principles of evaluation to Web sites.

<http://www.chabotcollege.edu/Library/abby/evaluation.html>

Title - Web Page Evaluation Form

This is an assistive tool designed and developed by the professional library staff at Chabot College. It takes the evaluator, you, through a series of questions related to Accuracy, Authority, Objectivity, Currency, and Coverage of materials. This provides a very good structured evaluation of an individual web site.

<http://www.sc.edu/beaufort/library/bones.html>

Title - A Basic Tutorial on Searching the Web

This major tutorial is anything than basic. It provides an extensive series of 17 lessons on searching the web. Lesson 5 Evaluating the Web is especially important in this activity. We can thank the University of South Carolina at Beaufort's Head Librarian for this excellent informational site. Did anyone remember that the University of South Carolina is my alma mater? I went to the main campus in Columbia, S.C.

<http://www.chabotcollege.edu/Library/onlineref/websearch.html>

Title - Web Guides and Search Engines

This is another excellent informational tool designed and developed by the professional librarians at Chabot College. You can scroll down and walk through each individual area OR you can click on one of the hyperlinks to go to a specific section. If linking, go to the "How to Evaluate Web Sites". This will provide an extensive list of other recommended links to web sites covering this key topic. Some of these specific sites are duplicated here too.

<http://www2.widener.edu/Wolfgram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/webeval.htm>

Title - Evaluating Web Resources

This tutorial brought to you by Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania. Several of the links are noted as being powerpoint files. If you do not have PowerPoint software on your computer, these may not work properly. Evaluation of web sites for different purposes is also covered.

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/webeval.html>

Title - Evaluating Web Sites: Criteria and Tools

Cornell University in NY brings this informational site to you. Numerous links are provided for further study and review. Pay especial attention to the Evaluation Criteria section to learn more about selecting the most beneficial sites for academic research.

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>

Title - Evaluating Web Pages:

Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask

The University of California, Berkeley hosts this site of valuable information. It is probably one of the strongest learning tools I found. Evaluating web pages skillfully requires you to do two things at once:

1. Train your eye and your fingers to employ a series of techniques that help you quickly find what you need to know about web pages;
2. Train your mind to think critically, even suspiciously, by asking a series of questions that will help you decide how much a web page is to be trusted.

This page is organized to combine the two techniques into a process that begins with looking at your search results from a search engine or other source, follows through by investigating the content of page, and extends beyond the page to what others may say about the page or its author(s).

<http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-49.html>

Title - Evaluating Websites for Educational Uses: Bibliography and Checklist

The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill brings this site to you. With millions of pages on the Web purporting to serve educational purposes, how do educators sort out the good from the bad, the useful ones from the time-wasters? Librarians and other information specialists share their expertise in evaluating Web information resources in the articles listed here. Included in this resource guide is a checklist of questions to ask when evaluating a Web site as a potential educational resource. More checklists are available in the articles cited.

In addition to the list of links, a checklist of evaluation questions is also included at the end of the site.

<http://www.library.unt.edu/genref/internet/evaluate.htm>

Title - How to Evaluate Web Sites

This quick and easy summary is presented by the University of North Texas. Be sure to check out the "Evaluating Websites is a SNAP" link.

<http://www.snow.ocad.on.ca/library/TILT/nf/module3/urls.htm>

Title - Dot What?

The Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto, Ontario Canada shares this tutorial site. Use the arrows at the bottom of each page to progress through this module. Be sure to focus on the Dot What? section.

<http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/critical/index.htm>

Title - Thinking Critically about World Wide Web Resources

UCLA's Library generates this informative site focused on the critical thinking aspect of web based resources.

<http://libweb.sonoma.edu/assistance/eval>

Title - Evaluating Web Resources

Sonoma State University brings this excellent learning resource to you.

Each evaluative quality also contains a sample link for review. This makes for a nice learning experience.

The primary idea in this activity is to continually remind students conducting academic research that anyone can say anything about any subject and post it to the web. Good graphic design and clever formatting can lead one to believe the site is creditable.

List criteria to be used to substantiate student learning, and describe the methods of evaluating student achievement.

See Grading Rubric below for grade, point distribution, and evaluation of student achievement. This chart will be provided in the Blackboard Syllabus for students.

PSCN 15 On-Line Grading Rubric:

Letter Grade Earned	Accumulated Points PLUS→	Work Quality
A	300 – 250 plus →	All assignments submitted on time. plus Assignment content at appropriate collegiate level. plus Writing and style of assignments appropriate for collegiate level with few, if any, grammatical errors and good transition from one idea to another. plus Mid-term and Final Exams Taken
B	254 – 225 plus →	All assignments submitted on time. plus Assignment content at appropriate collegiate level. plus Writing and style of assignments appropriate for collegiate level with some grammatical errors and/or transitional issues from one idea to another. plus Mid-term and Final Exams Taken
C	224 – 195 plus →	Most assignments submitted on time. plus Assignment content at appropriate collegiate level. plus

		Writing and style of assignments may not be fully appropriate for collegiate level but ideas are clearly communicated. Papers have grammatical errors and/or transitional issues from one idea to another.
D	194 – 165 plus →	Most assignments submitted on time. plus Assignment content at appropriate collegiate level. plus Writing and style of assignments may not be fully appropriate for collegiate level but ideas are clearly communicated. Papers have grammatical errors and/or transitional issues from one idea to another.
F	≤ 164	

Describe the number and frequency of interactions for students making satisfactory progress, and for intervention when students are at-risk of dropping or failing due to poor performance or participation.

Students will be expected to complete assignments on time and submit assignments on time, per grading rubric noted above. It is expected instructor and student will have interaction weekly by the methodologies noted above. Students failing to submit assignments on time and/or communicate with instructor/other students as directed will be contacted via their email address provided by students. A progress report will also be submitted for students failing to make satisfactory class progress.

3. For each type of interaction listed above, describe why you believe it will be effective for this type of curriculum and delivery model.

Describe how the interactions will facilitate and affect student learning and how students will benefit from the DE modalities selected.

Early in my DE classes for a Certificate in Distance Education, I discovered major features of an on-line course that make it more challenging – too many screen icons, slow internet and/or computer response time, multiple emails and the challenges of coordinating group partners on-line. Interestingly, Jakob Nielsen (October, 1997 and March, 1997) makes the same points in his minimalist views on making the World Wide Web download faster for users. Nielsen stresses the need to use graphics and time consuming visuals only if they truly add to the user’s understanding of the materials and being clear, concise, and cognizant of scan ability. He suggests avoiding a marketing style of writing – give them the straight facts without unnecessary wordiness or claims. My experience teaching PSCN 13 on-line at Chabot College for the last three years provides experiential evidence and actual experience that validates these ideas.

The advantages and disadvantages of on-line instruction were assessed in a recent study of 32 experienced on-line instructors by Lucio Teles (May/June 2002). Respondents identified flexibility, easy access, supports flow of communication, creates a sense of community, provides structure, and empowers students as advantages. Disadvantages reported include technical/administrative issues, the amount of time required to

implement on-line courses, and the rigidity of standardized computer conferencing systems (WebCT, Blackboard, etc.).

Therefore the flexibility of the on-line format, using the Internet and email will allow students more freedom to pursue independent learning and within their own time needs. They will be able to review materials more often, if needed, and work on individualized critical thinking and analysis. Individual interaction with the instruction affords the opportunity to address specific questions.

This is a college study skills course often recommended for new college students, returning college students, and transferring students. The goal of PSCN 15 is for students to build their study skills through a practical process of learning strategies that will help them achieve better grades and a higher level of comprehension of course materials. It is a skill needed by a number of students locally, as well as, from other areas of the English-speaking world. Having an on-line option will give our students another resource to build skills for their academic success.

Nielsen, Jakob. "The Need for Speed." Alertbox. From [\[http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9703a.html\]](http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9703a.html). March 1, 1997.

Nielsen, Jakob. "How Users Read on the Web." Alertbox. From [\[http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9710a.html\]](http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9710a.html). October 1, 1997.

Teles, Lucio. "The Use of Web Instructional Tools By Online Instructors" from The Technology Source, [\[http://ts.mivu.org/default.asp?show=article&id=966\]](http://ts.mivu.org/default.asp?show=article&id=966), May/June, 2002.

4. Describe the use of assignments and methods of evaluation to ensure effective student-instructor contact.

Describe the planned interactions and evaluations to ensure participation and verification of student learning that permit timely instructor intervention.

Students will be accessing learning materials on Chabot's Blackboard course management system via the Internet, submitting materials via discussion board threads and email to the instructor. Feedback will be provided to students by the instructor via thread replies and emails. Students will reply to survey instruments designed by instructor using evaluative items designed through Blackboard. Students will be required to provide instructor feedback related to web sites assigned, reading materials assigned, and visual resources required for viewing. Feedback can easily be provided via the Discussion Board threads in Blackboard and email on a 24/7 basis, making it easier for student input.

Exams and quizzes can be posted using the test management features of Blackboard. The instructor will be including instruction on Internet Research (search engines, keyword

searching, Boolean search operators, URL domain name extensions, and evaluating the academic accountability of web sites.)

5. Describe the availability of adequate technology and support to carry out the course design.

Describe the adequacy of available technology to carry out your proposal for an effective DE course, including any support personnel required to maintain hardware and software, for both faculty and students.

Designing PSCN 15 (On-line) must take into account the broad range of computer skill sets potential students will bring to the class and NOT overwhelm the novice NOR totally bore the expert. The technological fluency issues introduced by David Thornberg (Jan. 6, 2003) will be put to the test. Will all the students enrolling in my on-line course be able to handle the technology independently? I see initial design and flow as key to the course's success. I have used a technology survey tool in PSCN 13 (On-line) to apprise students of the technological skills necessary for success in an on-line course and will continue to use that survey tool in PSCN 15 (On-line).

Currently the IT staff at Chabot College appears adequate to support this course. However, it is important for me to design curriculum that minimizes extensive use of graphics programs, download speeds, and require expensive software investments by my students. These issues are based on the demographics and income of many Chabot College students and the many students who do not own state-of-the-art hardware systems. The IT staff has indicated their willingness and interest in supporting on-line educational offerings at Chabot College. Library personnel are available for input via the Chabot College library web page. Students without their own computers can use any computer lab on campus, most notable the new lab in the library to complete course requirements. Finally, the instructor will identify adequate print materials, on-line resources, and open access resources to support the course. The instructor has been using a faculty web page to disseminate information for traditional classes for four years.

Thornberg, David. "Technological Fluency as a Survival Skill"
[\[http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/thornburg/thornburg0501.shtm\]](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/thornburg/thornburg0501.shtm), Jan 6, 2003.

6. Describe the support services that ensure student success.

Describe how students will access services such as tutoring, counseling, financial aid, and supporting course materials, library materials, learning resources, etc.

Students with internet service will have all the necessary access required for this course. The Chabot library is accessible via their web page. The Chabot Counseling Office is accessible via their web page and the instructor is also a Counselor. Students without internet service can use campus labs for access, if necessary, but will have to coordinate schedules with times of operation. Textbooks are currently available through the Chabot College bookstore and will be identical to those used for the instructor's traditional classroom-based course in PSCN 15.

7. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

By minimizing any graphics and other visual files, there should be minimal impact on students with disabilities and their use of adaptive software for reading, etc. By having the entire course available from day one, students with disabilities can better manage their time and medical needs. They can work ahead or integrate class modules into their lives more easily. Students would be referred to DSRC for accommodation consultation whenever necessary.

8. Class size and first term to be offered.

Maximum class size will be the same as the traditional classroom of 40. First term to be offered is projected to be Fall 2006.