Chabot College

Distance Education Curriculum Support Committee

Course Proposal Form
(Send as an email attachment to DECSC chair)

2004-2005

These questions are meant to provide you, our faculty colleagues, a framework for your Distance Education Curriculum Proposal. These are *guidelines*, not mandates. Much of this emerged from an Academic Senate for California Community Colleges white paper, available in our resource area. We believe careful and thorough consideration of these issues will improve not just your proposal, but also your entire course design. Please feel free to elaborate where you think most important. Note: Please click on *File, Save As* to save this form as a document, so you can work on it and submit it electronically to the DE Curriculum Support Committee chair.

Each proposal or existing course, if delivered by distance education, shall be separately reviewed and approved by the curriculum committee prior to being offered. (Ed Code 55378)

Course Title & Number: World Regional Geography (Geography 5)

Faculty Name: Don Plondke

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1.   **Need/Justification**

- What is the intent in offering the course by distance education?

The course already has been approved by the Chabot Curriculum Committee for delivery in Distance Education format. The intent now is to take advantage of developed Blackboard™ online resources for this course, expand these resources, and link to worldwide resources on the Internet that highlight the geography of many regions of the world.

2.   **Course Content Delivery**

- Describe the distance education modalities used to deliver the course content and provide an approximate schedule of the time allocated to each modality. How much of the class will be on-campus lecture, video, email, web, CD-ROM, etc.
- Note that the total number of contact hours should approximate the equivalent number of hours required in an on-campus setting. And, because indicators to date suggest that many community college students do better with some face-to-face contact with their instructors, there should be some provision for on-campus or in-person contact.

Geography 5 is a standard 3-unit lecture course, now meeting on campus for approximately 42.5 hours per semester. The proposed 'hybrid' course will encompass approximately 42.5 total hours on online and in-class activities, including:

- 16 hours of online research and exercises

- 10 hours of online lectures/presentations (PowerPoint® slides with text commentary) interactive discussions, and email dialog
- 6 hours of online quizzes and exams
- 6 hours of on-campus classroom sessions
- 4.5 hours of videos from a regional geography series

Over a period of 4 semesters (2002-2004), Don Plondke has developed course content resources, online tests, and external links for Geography 5 using the Blackboard™ platform. Existing, expandable content of the Blackboard™ site for Geography 5 includes PowerPoint® presentations, downloadable maps, lists of key terminology and place names for access in students' reviews for tests, and links to 'virtual field trips' of major regions under study in the course content.

3.   Nature and Frequency of Instructor-Student Interactions

- Provide examples of course components taught using distance education technology. This will include either or both synchronous—online at the same time and asynchronous—online at different times.

Instruction will be asynchronous in delivery, as students will logon to Blackboard™ according to their own study scheduling. However, students will be expected to participate weekly in discussions based on instructor-initiated questions, primarily using the Discussion Board facility of Blackboard™ and email. Students will also receive feedback from the instructor electronically on all submitted mapping and analytical exercises.

The primary instructional component will be sets of PowerPoint® slides that highlight key points and examples about the principles of regional geography, supplemented with additional instructor commentary and links to images that exemplify regional landscapes. Map illustrations and map exercises will be posted, available for download, and printable from the course documents and assignments sections of the course site.

External links will enable students to access directly Internet sites outside of Blackboard™ that illustrate geographic relationships in particular regions of the world and provide sets of images of regional landscapes discussed in the textbook and class presentations.

- Describe the number and frequency of interaction 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 have weekly interaction with each other and the instructor via the Discussion Board and email on specific topics initiated by the instructor. Critical comments from the instructor on student responses to discussion questions will be delivered as private emails and not posted to the Discussion Board. The instructor will periodically 'intervene' in the Discussion Board to re-direct, correct, or elaborate on the interactive class discussions.

One two-hour class session per month (a minimum of three sessions) will provide group face-to-face interaction, review and feedback on assignments, and a forum to resolve questions and issues. Additional student-instructor interaction will be available through office hours, email, fax, and telephone.

The instructor will provide email and/or telephone feedback to students concerning the completion and assessed quality of map exercises, written assignments, and exams. Quiz and

exam scores will be posted on the Blackboard site according to an appropriately timed schedule to give students clear indication of their progress.

- For each type of interaction listed above, describe why you believe it will be effective for this particular curriculum and delivery model.
- Describe how the interactions will facilitate student learning and how students will benefit from the DE modalities selected.

The Discussion Board format allows students to develop 'threads' of discussion on their own, independent of classroom time and instructor initiation. The electronic Discussion Board should invoke discourse among class participants and encourage students to find answers on their own using the 'library' of the worldwide web. Students who may be inhibited ordinarily in classroom settings from participation in discussions may find freedom of expression and elevated levels of involvement through the discussion delivery plan.

Monthly classroom sessions of 2-hours each will focus on summarizing the major themes for each geographic region under study. They will also provide a venue for clarification of points that may have been confused in the Discussion Board 'threads' and for instructor feedback on completed assignments and student presentations.

Announcements will posted weekly on the course site to remind students of due dates, upcoming quizzes and exams, and new course material provided via the Blackboard™ site.

4. Assignments & Methods of Evaluation

- List the criteria that will be used to substantiate student learning, and describe the methods of evaluating student progress.

Students will complete map exercises for each region studied. The base outline maps will be available for download from the Blackboard course website. Students will be expected to identify locations and label maps accurately for submittal as hardcopy to the instructor.

Students will be required to complete a minimum of 3 online midterm examinations, a final examination, written descriptions of major geographic distributions (such as population) in selected regions, and written definitions of key terms and concepts in regional geography. Written exercises will be designed to demonstrate application of principles, concepts, and perspectives learned from the text and online resources. Emphasis will be placed on comprehension of cultural contrasts and critical thinking about regional problems.

Students may also be required to develop a presentation on a world region or sub-region that, upon completion, will be evaluated and edited by the instructor for posting on the course Blackboard™ website. Presentations may include PowerPoint® slides, video clips, audio files, and/or links to Internet sites. It will be encouraged that the student utilize multi-media components to illustrate geographic characteristics of the region researched by the student. Each student's packaged presentation will be made available to all students as part of online course content during the semester.

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

Instructor-initiated questions will be posted on the Discussion Board for each major topic and geographic region in the course plan. Each student will be expected to respond with answers

and comments on these questions that will be evaluated for quality and relevance by the instructor. Through the Discussion Board 'threads' and individual emails to students, the instructor will provide timely guidance on the use of course resources and direction in addressing discussion questions.

5.   Technical Support

- Describe the technology necessary to carry out your proposal for an effective DE course. Include an assessment of the adequacy of support personnel required to maintain hardware & software, for both faculty and students.

The publisher of the proposed course textbook, Pearson Prentice Hall, provides an online 'e-book' and links to the companion website that supplements the textbook. The textbook also contains a CD-ROM with images, interactive learning animations, and links to the companion website. Our communication with the publisher's representatives has been frequent and their willingness to support us technically is clear. They have accommodated the Chabot Geography program with new textbook price reductions and packaging of valuable supplemental materials (atlases, etc.).

The course will be delivered primarily via the Blackboard Learning System™. Chabot's Instructional Designer, Lynn Sandoval, and Blackboard™ platform specialist, Minta Peterson, provide continuous and effective training and support in using Blackboard™ productively for Distance Education course delivery strategies. Online 'help' facilities in support of Blackboard™ use are in place now and easily accessed by students (e.g. see *www.chabotcollege.edu/Bb411*).

6.   Student Services

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

Chabot's library has a substantial collection of videos on world cultures, cultural processes, and regional themes that will be tapped for inclusion in course materials.

The Social Science Division's computer laboratory provides interactive tutorial modules on the basic principles of world physical geography, and also is well-equipped with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) desktop software for student use in making and visualizing maps and solving spatial problems using the analytical components of the lab's GIS state-of-the-art software, ArcView™.

7.   Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

- Describe how you will accommodate students with disabilities. For a telecourse, is the video close-captioned? If you plan to use Blackboard, please review the accessibility information at http://www.blackboard.com/products/access/faqs.htm. For online accessibility, please email your web site to the DSRC Alternative Media Specialist or coordinator. For more information on accessibility resources, visit http://www.w3.org/WAI/.

Blackboard™ has accessibility features that seek to comply with industry standards and federal guidelines for accessibility. Quoting from the Blackboard™ FAQ webpage, "All users participating in a Blackboard Learning Services training session are instructed on the

accessibility features of the software. In addition, Blackboard™ has created documentation for course builders on how to create course content that implements Section 508 standards."

8.   Class Size & First Term to be offered

- Indicate the standard limit for the class and the first term you plan to offer this course.

The maximum class size for this course is 44, which appears manageable using the proposed delivery plan. Geography 5 would be first scheduled for delivery as a 'hybrid' online class in the Fall semester, 2007.

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