**Online Course Proposal Fall 2011 (course to be offered Fall 2012)**

**Course Title and Number: College Study Skills, PSCN 15**

**Faculty Name: Sadie Ashraf**

**Course Delivery Method: Online** (all instruction is online)

1a. Consult with Online Learning Support Staff: Completed 8/22/11

1b. Review of similar courses: Las Positas College and Ohlone College

1c. Division dean preliminary support: 8/10/11

2a. Kristen Moore counselor at LPC who teaches the same course (PSCN 15) on 8/24 and Jennifer Harper from Ohlone College 8/25 who teaches a similar study skills course online. Discussion: They both shared their syllabus, talked about teaching the course online vs. in person, talked about relevant discussion questions to engage students for participation, also talked about cheating/plagiarism. Recommendations: That it is great that I am going forward with getting my proposal approved since it offering courses online is beneficial to students. They said since I’ve taught online before the career planning class (PSCN 10) that it would be similar to that since I’m familiar with blackboard but somewhat more challenging in terms of student retention as often the students who take a study skills class are either first semester college students or students on probation and the latter the format for engaging is already a challenge but to have it online means that as the instructor I will need to be especially mindful about follow up and checking in with students. One suggestion was to ask the students upfront why they are taking this class and as part of a check in questionnaire to ask if they are on probation.

2b. Subdivision colleagues:

Meeting with Carey Harbin 10/12/11 5-6pm: Carey Harbin presently teaches PSCN 15 online and he showed me his online course. He shared that he tells his students that he can tell them how to be star students but it’s up to them to use the tools he provides in the class. He said that early on he talks about motivation and then soon after jumps into the course material by having a unit on 3X5 cards, a unit on notetaking, a unit on test taking, etc. He says he hardly ever uses the discussion board and finds that it is not a tool he needs to use. He says he uses announcements to post reminders and keeps up to date with the grading. His course was well laid out, organized and thorough. The retention in his class is 27 out of 40 and I personally think that might be partly due to the less frequent interaction he has with his students but he seemed comfortable with his approach. I also had a candid conversation about my hopes to teach this class and he said he hopes that won’t be for at least another 2 to 4 years.

Meeting with Dara Greene 10/18/11 2:30-3pm: Dara talked about the importance of bringing the intra and interpersonal “soft skills” to online teaching that is more easily captured in the traditional classroom. She said my proposal was good in regards to the number of contact hours listed but the key would be bringing the “hands on” activities online and keeping students motivated and engaged. Dara suggested the possibility of doing group projects. For example using a textbook and dividing up the chapters in groups that they have to do a summary of and post and also respond to another group’s summary so that the entire class is involved. Dara and I talked about the importance of instructor involvement in order to increase retention in this type of course.

Meeting with Patricia Molina 10/25/11 2-2:30: Patricia reviewed my proposal and talked about the importance of instructor engagement by means of using the discussion board. She also brought up the issue of plagiarism and I shared with her in my syllabus I talked about cheating but that this course is so highly individualized and has self reflection that there is less of a concern or opportunity to cheat. She said that she supported by proposal but this has now gotten her thinking about whether she in fact really wants to teach online or not because the work load is actually not any easier.

Feedback from Felicia Tripp 11/1/11: Felicia suggested checking in with students as a pre-post survey. The survey could be used to assess students reasons for taking the class, topics students want to cover in the class, and self assessment of growth in the class at a mid check in point. She also mentioned trying to create a “warm and fuzzy” feel on line and using interactions to help students apply study skills to specific academic subjects. Felicia encouraged me to use as much of the discussion board and peer reviewing as possible.

**3. Student benefits:**

**Q**: How will this course meet student needs?

**A:** This course is about developing study skill techniques for success in college. Students taking this course will learn time management skills, note taking and test taking strategies along with learning about their own personal learning style which will benefit them not only in this specific course but will allow the student to apply what they learn in this course to all their courses. The opportunities possible as an online course not only allow for more accessibility for students who may prefer an online course for a myriad of reasons (transportation, social anxiety, time, etc.) but this course being taught online also fosters tapping into a wealth of online resources that are perhaps more user friendly compared to a traditional textbook dealing with the same lecture topics.

**Q:** What have you learned from prior instructors that will influence your instruction in this course?

**A:** The importance of posting announcements and chiming in on the discussion board so the instructor’s presence is known online.

**4. Course Content Delivery**

**Q:** Account for Contact Hours

**A:** PSCN 15 is a 2 unit course which means 36 hours of instruction and in class discussion and activities in the semester. The following are “in class” activities and approximate percentages for contact hours:

**Reading lectures/content:** 50% (example topics: factors for student success, degree information, how to calculate grade point average, multiple learning styles, memory, concentration, time management, procrastination, note taking, reading strategies, writing tips, test taking tips, stress management, etc.)

**Participate in Discussion Board Forums and posting feedback to peers**: 25% (examples: sharing goals, , test anxiety, etc).

**Assessments:** 10% (examples: values, learning styles, discovery wheel, self esteem, etc.)

**Viewing multimedia content:** 5% (examples: inpirations: negative turns positive, online campus resources “virtual fieldtrips” , etc.)

**Reading another student’s presentation:** 5% (presentation on time management, stress management, test taking, note taking or another study skills related topic).

**Transformative learning activities in class:** 5%(example: critical thinking activity, other topics that arise based on student responses in discussion, etc.)

**Q:** What % of the course will be on campus, if any:

**A:** 0%. The entire course is offered online. Online lecture (text, presentations) is offered in weekly units and consists of approx. 50% of the course. Class discussions via the discussion board consists of approximately 25%. Group Projects: 5-10%. Online resources 5-25%: I will be using an optional text that is fully available online as well as websites, assessments: 5-10% of the course. Student research: 5%. Reading: 95%; Writing: 40%.

**Q:** Will any portion of the course by synchronous:

**A:** No

**5. Nature and Frequency of Instructor-Student Interactions:**

**Q:** How frequently will you interact with your students?

**A:** The first two weeks of class I will try to post an announcement daily. I generally have two discussion questions per week and would plan to check those daily or every other day. Assignments are generally due each week by Friday and I grade them over the weekend. My policy for responding to students is within 48 hours though I try to it within 24 hours. My goal is for students to know I am accessible as well as that I am reading what they write. Being a full time counselor I am also aware of resources and opportunities that become available and would post these in the announcements section (example: transfer representative is on campus, how to become a tutor, etc.). When students are at risk of failing due to poor performance or participation I would follow up by emailing these students. I would consider dropping students who have not turned any assignment in or participated in the discussion board or shown any activity on blackboard in my class. I would also be sure my syllabus clearly outlines my classroom policies, online etiquette, how to get a hold of me and my general 48 hours policy on turn around time for responding. I believe my method of interaction and follow up would be effective for this college study skills course because students need to be able to feel my presence in the course particularly early on so that they can get comfortable and into a rhythm with the structure of the class. In particular, students in this class may be first time college students in their first semester or they may be continuing students who were referred to take this class because of probation status. Whatever the reason that led them to enrolling, it is important that they know the instructor is easily accessible, approachable and cares enough to hold them accountable to college standards thus making the importance of timely student feedback crucial to the nature of this course.

**6. Nature and Frequency of Student-Student Interactions:**

**Q:** Opportunities or student to student interaction

**A:** Student will not only post their own response to the discussion topic posted but will also often be instructed to respond/give feedback to 1-2 peers to encourage student interaction. Week 1 I also try to incorporate an icebreaker to foster students getting to know each other in the class. In this course students will also be asked to do a presentation on a study skills topic and will do a peer review of other students submitted assignments as well.

**7. Assessment of Student Learning:**

**Q:** How will you assess learning In this course?

**A**: I will assess student learning in this class by means of exams, quizzes, response to discussion questions, and completeness of assignments. While I cannot positively 100% ensure academic integrity particularly when the course is online, I can however highlight the importance of academic integrity as well as consequences of cheating in the course syllabus. Given the nature of this class being highly personal and a basis for which the student will learn now to become a better student, I would hope that students would not see any benefit to cheating in this class. I would provide my feedback to students assignments by not only giving a letter grade but also noting something that captured my eye about what s/he wrote or perhaps a follow up question I have based on what was written. Personalizing my comment to each student assignment that I grade lets the student know that I am reading what they have taken the time to submit. If I were to suspect students were cheating I would contact the students directly by email to clarify any suspicion that I may have.

**8. Technology.**

**Q:** multimedia tools:

**A:** I plan to use you tube, websites and an optional text that is completely online (College Success v. 1.0 Authors Bruce Beiderwell, Linda Tse, Thomas J. Lochaas and Nicholas B. DeKanter, available through flatworldknolwedge.com). I plan to use information from the Virtual Pamphlet Collection: <http://www.dr-bob.org/vpc/virtulets.html#Study-Skills> and mind tools: <http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/stressstudy.shtml> and self growth: <http://www.selfgrowth.com/successskills.html>

**9. Accommodations for students with disabilities:**

A: I would work with DSRC to help ensure accessibility for students with disabilities.