

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: D. Gagan, Chair 
Senate Committee on Academic Planning

Subject: Proposed Non-Credit Certificate Program:
Certificate in Distance Learning
(Reference: SCAP 98-4)

Date: February 10, 1998

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies and the Senate Committee on Academic Planning gives rise to the following motion:

Motion:

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.98 - 22 , the proposed Non-Credit Certificate Program: Certificate in Distance Learning."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

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Memorandum

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To: Alison Watt, Secretary
Senate Committee on Academic
Planning

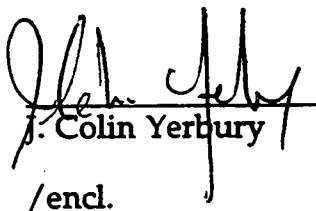
From: J. Colin Yerbury, Chair
Senate Committee on
Continuing Studies

Re: Proposal for Consideration
by SCAP

Date: December 17, 1997

Enclosed is a proposal for a Non-Credit Certificate Program: *Certificate in Distance Learning*. The Senate Committee on Continuing Studies has recommended that this proposal go forward to SCAP for consideration, approval and forwarding to Senate. Please place this proposal on the agenda for the February 4, 1998 meeting of the Senate Committee on Academic Planning.

As recommended by the SCCS, this proposal has also been sent to the Senate Committee on International Activities for information.


J. Colin Yerbury
/encl.

Senate Committee on Continuing Studies

**PROPOSAL FOR
A NON-CREDIT CERTIFICATE IN DISTANCE LEARNING**

Prepared by

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Centre for Distance Education
Office of Continuing Studies
Simon Fraser University

December 1997

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PROPOSAL FOR A NON-CREDIT CERTIFICATE IN DISTANCE LEARNING

PURPOSE

The Non-Credit Certificate in Distance Learning is designed to provide a theoretical and practical overview of the field. Both traditional and emerging modes of delivery and their attendant issues will be examined. A set of core courses coupled with a selection of electives ensure that participants receive not only a common grounding in distance education but also an opportunity to examine topics specific to their professional responsibilities.

BACKGROUND

This initiative is a response to frequent requests to SFU to offer internships in distance education for individuals whose responsibilities include establishing and operating distance education programs. Typically the requests come from countries outside Canada, especially from southeast Asia and Africa. The need appears particularly great for those who are involved in the startup phase of a distance education program and are developing infrastructure and programs simultaneously. The Centre for Distance Education's international projects in the South Pacific, the Philippines, and in Ghana have involved working directly with organizations that are introducing distance education initiatives within their respective institutions. Consequently, the Centre's professional staff are familiar with the issues and challenges these situations present.

HOW THIS PROGRAM DIFFERS FROM OTHERS

Several institutions throughout the world offer training programs in distance education—both face-to-face and online. The proposed program, which builds on SFU's international reputation as a leader in the field of distance education and telelearning, differs from other programs in the following ways.

- Increasingly programs offered elsewhere cater to those seeking a Master's Degree. What appears to be missing from the market is a program that provides a comprehensive overview of distance education theory and practice without the time and financial constraints associated with a Master's program.

Many of the individuals who seek to benefit from the Centre's experience in Distance education already hold graduate degrees, often the doctorate, from well-reputed institutions. Many of these individuals are Ministry officials or senior university faculty members and/or administrators. The proposed

certificate is designed to meet their need for professional knowledge within a timeframe that is compatible with their institutional responsibilities.

- The field of distance education is constantly in flux. A quality learning experience, therefore, demands that topics, learning materials, and approaches to delivery be current. The proposed program is committed to currency of content and delivery modes.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The program has been developed to meet the needs of participants who have:

- leadership responsibilities to develop, implement, and sustain a distance education infrastructure in a tertiary educational setting where none currently exists.
- management responsibilities to oversee the development and delivery of course materials and services to students.

It is anticipated that participants will, for the most part, be sponsored by their employer, a government agency, or by an international agency.

It is anticipated that the program will appeal predominantly to an international audience. This, however, does not preclude the participation of others.

It is expected that a group of participants from one context would follow the program as a cohort. Once mounted, however, the program will be sufficiently flexible to allow individuals to pursue the Certificate with guidance from the faculty members noted within this document and the Centre for Distance Education's professional staff.

FACULTY/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

The program will draw on the expertise of faculty members from the School of Communication (Faculty of Applied Sciences) and the Faculty of Education and the professional staff of the Centre for Distance Education. The program will also establish instructional liaisons with scholars and practitioners at other institutions known to have expertise in areas pertinent to the program. The list of those who have expressed an interest in contributing to the development and delivery of this program include, but is not limited to:

Faculty of Education:

- Dr. Peter Coleman
- Dr. Tom O'Shea

School of Communication:

- Dr. Linda Harasim
- Dr. Brian Lewis

Office of Continuing Studies

- Dr. Colin Yerbury, Acting Dean

Centre for Distance Education

- Dr. Joan Collinge
- Dr. Jane Cowan
- Dr. Laura Millar
- Dr. Vivian Rossner
- Dr. Lucio Teles
- Dr. John Whatley

All faculty members and the professional staff noted above have experience working with overseas colleagues. Program participants will also benefit from working with support staff from the Centre for Distance Education (administrators, desktop publishers, graphic artists, technology specialists), many of whom also have international experience.

THE CURRICULUM

Participants will complete a minimum of 120 contact hours. This requirement will be met by combining core courses with a range of options suited to the participants' professional development needs. Participants may choose elective courses from any area of specialization to complement their program. The three areas of specialization are: management and leadership; the development and delivery of print-based learning materials; and the development and delivery of online courses.

Wherever possible, the program will form partnerships with the Faculties of Education and Applied Sciences as well as other units within the Office of Continuing Studies to:

- benefit from existing courses (e.g., courses offered through Continuing Studies' Writing and Publishing Program. Courses that appear with an asterisk, for instance, draw heavily from courses presently on offer).
- develop new courses that are of mutual benefit to the Certificate's and the academic unit's programming initiatives (e.g., the Faculty of Education's PBD and Non-credit Certificate Program in Teaching and Learning in an Information Technology Environment).

Core Courses

All participants will take the core courses described here. Whether an individual is responsible for the overall operation of a distance education unit or a smaller unit of function within such an operation, it is important to place the activities within a larger context. The core courses provide that context.

Introductory Course: An Overview of Distance Education

Duration: 20 hours

Topics covered in this course include: a background and history of distance education; visions of the future; the needs addressed by distance education; and the basic components of a distance education unit. The course also provides a brief overview of administrative issues in distance education.

Models of Distance Education

Duration: 10 hours

This course presents different models of distance education and examines their relative strengths and limitations. Participants will be encouraged to reflect upon their own experiences and to identify an appropriate model for the context in which they operate.

Current Issues in Distance Education

Duration: 10 hours

This course will introduce participants to current issues in distance education such as: the convergence of distance and conventional education; the implications of the increased use of technology; managing change, and faculty resistance to change. The course will be sufficiently flexible to allow inclusion of topics of specific interest to each cohort group (for instance, the global marketing of distance education materials).

Program Evaluation

Duration: 20 hours

Topics covered include: the rationale for evaluation in distance education; factors affecting the need for evaluation in distance education; building evaluation plans into program planning; typical evaluation process for each aspect of distance education, assessing evaluation outcomes.

Elective Courses: Management and Leadership

Leadership in Distance Education Management

Duration: 20 hours

Topics covered include: the contexts of leadership (starting new programs, operating existing programs, retooling existing programs); leadership tasks (building support for distance education both within and beyond the institution, developing systems and linking them to existing systems, staff planning; staff development; assessing and using technology in distance education; financial planning and planning for cost effectiveness.

Administration in Distance Education

Duration: 20 hours

Topics covered include: establishing systems for course development and delivery, student recruitment, student support, learner assessment, student record keeping; financial management and budgeting; establishing administrative linkages with other parts of the institutions and modelling working relationships.

Managing Technology

Duration: 10 hours

This course will prepare participants: to analyze their program's technology needs; to select and allocate these resources based on budget, scheduling, time management, and considerations. It will also examine technology's impact on leadership and management.

Elective Courses: The Development and Delivery of Learning Materials

The courses listed under this heading focus on the development of print-based materials. However, some courses would be of interest to participants focusing on online teaching strategies.

Instructional Design for Distance Education

Duration: 20 hours

This course introduces participants to different theories and models of instructional design and examines their application to the development of distance education learning materials. Participants will also study the major design features and procedures for developing and maintaining a typical distance education course package for academic courses. There will be a balance between theory and praxis. The participant will be asked to study and conceptualize sample distance education materials and, on the basis of this study, to develop courses or parts of courses of their own.

*Writing, Editing, and Producing
Educational Materials: An Editor's Perspective*
Duration: 15 hours

This course covers the following topics: the role of the editor, evaluating materials available for use or adaptation, improving existing materials; print and electronic publishing; preparing and editing graphic material; scheduling, the production process, and maintaining quality.

*Copy Editing: An Introduction**
Duration: 15 hours

Topics covered include: using editing marks, watching for mistakes in spelling and punctuation, striving for consistency, and preparing style sheets.

*Substantive Editing**
Duration: 15 hours

Topics covered include: identifying structural problems, reorganizing, reworking and rewriting manuscripts; communicating with authors; considering the needs of the reader; and dealing with issues such as sexism and stereotyping.

*Basic Proofreading**
Duration: 5 hours

Topics covered include: the proofreading process; the difference between copy editing and proofreading, how to make copy for correction, and when to hire a professional.

Copyright
Duration: 5 hours

An introduction to copyright issues for both print-based and online learning materials.

*Publication Design and Print Production**
Duration: 10 hours

Topics covered include: the principles of design, the process of design, the effective use of illustrations and photographs, working with a printer, and how to formulate a budget.

Introduction to Computer-based Graphic Design

Duration: 15 hours

This course is designed to provide an introduction to the use of computers for graphic design. It is intended for individuals who are familiar with traditional graphic design methods. The course will introduce participants to the main computer applications and hardware used for graphic design and explore how graphic design differs for print, multimedia, and the World Wide Web. Depending on the interest of the group, the assignment for this course could be designed for print or for on-line presentation.

*Elective Courses: The Development
and Delivery of Online Learning Experiences*

Overview of Educational Technology

Duration: 5 hours

This course introduces participants to the various technological tools available to support teaching and learning.

Instructional Technology: An Introduction to the Literature

Duration: 10 hours

This course introduces participants to current literature in the field, both theoretical and empirical.

Critical Issues in Online Learning

Duration: 10 hours

The move to electronic means of distributed teaching and learning presents organizations with important new challenges not necessarily encountered when delivering courses in traditional formats. These issues include how to implement these technologies within the organization (or, "how to do things right"), but include as well questions about the nature and purpose of education, the role of professors/trainers, and the goals of business-education partnerships (or, "doing the right things"). This course will survey some of the more important new administrative and policy issues surrounding the implementation of telelearning technologies.

*Teaching Online: Theories and Models for
Instructional Design and Strategic Learning*

Duration: 20 hours.

This course examines selected theories and models of teaching and learning in order to extract from them features adaptable to asynchronous and synchronous instructional design. It also examines ways to integrate learning strategies as key features of instructional design practices.

Web Designs for Knowledge Building

Duration: 20 hours

This course introduces students to module and course designs in support of knowledge building strategies for online environments. Theoretical foundations of network learning and distributed cognition will be introduced. Online models combining information access, individualized learning, and group tasks for effective teaching practices will be presented. Participants will learn how to use pedagogical models appropriate for multimedia Web content and Delivery.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Learning opportunities will blend individual and group work in the form of face-to-face and online instruction, lectures, small group discussion, demonstrations, field visits, and workshops. The combination of approaches adopted for any given cohort group will take into account cultural factors and participant learning objectives.

DELIVERY MODE

Initially, the proposed program will be offered to overseas educators at the Burnaby Campus of Simon Fraser University. The program, however, is intended to be sufficiently flexible to permit a variety of delivery options in the future.

EVALUATION

A variety of assessment techniques will be used to assess the extent to which participants have mastered program objectives (for example, projects, case studies, essays). Assessment procedures will be negotiated for each cohort group and will take into account cultural considerations and participant learning objectives. Wherever possible, material produced for evaluative purposes will be linked to the participants' professional responsibilities. A pass/fail system will be used to grade assignments and to ensure university standards are maintained.

The program itself will be evaluated after each offering through student evaluations and through contact with sponsoring institutions to measure the extent to which the program met institutional needs.

CREDENTIAL GRANTED

Successful completion of this program leads to a Non-credit Certificate in Distance Learning granted by Simon Fraser University—an institution with an international reputation for its innovative approaches to teaching and learning and its Centre for Distance Education.

PROGRAM LENGTH

It is anticipated that a four week program would be manageable for overseas visitors. It would provide sufficient time for participants to be acclimatized to their new surroundings and for them to complete the requisite number of contact hours. Four weeks, however, is not so long as to be a major interference to work-related responsibilities at home.

Most holiday periods in the education sector are at least three to four week's in duration. Programs could be scheduled to coincide with the holiday period between terms.

ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Educational/Experiential Background

An undergraduate degree is a recommended prerequisite, as is familiarity with a post-secondary education system (or experience within the professional context to which distance education is to be introduced). No previous experience in distance education is necessary.

English Language

The language of instruction and assessment is English. Participants, therefore, must be sufficiently familiar with both written and spoken forms of academic English to satisfy program requirements.

In addition to satisfying the above requirements, applicants will be asked to provide:

- a memorandum intended to facilitate the Canadian partner's understanding of the social, economic, demographic, and cultural background of the participant's country and its requirements, so as to encourage cross-cultural exchanges
- a description of local resources currently available for the development and delivery of learning opportunities via distance education.

TUITION FEES

The program will operate on a cost recovery basis. Fees will vary according circumstances such as, but not limited to, the following: travel costs, housing needs, field trips, course materials (textbooks, study guides), instructional resource persons required for on- or off-campus delivery.

LOCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY

The proposed program will be housed within the Centre for Distance Education, which will assume responsibility for its administration. Working in partnership with the Centre, faculty members from the Faculties of Education and Applied Sciences will oversee the development of the proposed program through representation on the certificate program's Advisory Committee.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee is comprised of the following individuals.

Dr. Ian Andrews
Director, International Education
Faculty of Education

Dr. Peter Coleman
Professor
Faculty of Education

Dr. Joan Collinge
Acting Director
Centre for Distance Education
Office of Continuing Studies

Dr. Linda Harasim
Professor
School of Communication
Faculty of Applied Sciences

Dr. Brian Lewis
Director, School of Communication
Faculty of Applied Sciences

Dr. Tom O'Shea
Associate Professor
Director, Field Relations and Teacher Inservice
Faculty of Education

Dr. Lucio Teles
Co-director, Lohn Lab for Online Teaching
Centre for Distance Education

Dr. Colin Yerbury
Acting Dean, Office of Continuing Studies