

SIMPSON COLLEGE
2010 MAY TERM OFF-CAMPUS TRAVEL COURSE PROPOSAL

Date: February 17, 2009

Completed forms should be submitted to the Office of International Education no later than January 15, 2009 for international travel courses and no later February 17, 2009 for domestic travel courses.

Name of proposer(s): Department(s):
Clint Meyer, Biology and Environmental Science
Paul Craven, Computer Science

Please check one of the following:

- INTERNATIONAL Off-Campus Travel Course**
 DOMESTIC Off-Campus Travel Course

I. Course Information

- A. Course number, if course has been offered previously:
- B. Course title: Ecological Investigation of Pacific Coastal Habitats
(Note: The name of the place of study should appear in the title)
- C. Transcript Course Title (max. 21 characters): Ecology of Pacific Coast
- D. Course level (100/200/300): What is the rationale for offering the course at this level?
290 This course requires a prerequisite 100 level course in biology or geology, but will be designed for someone with no prior experience in coastal ecology. Students without a prerequisite course need to get prior approval from the instructor.
- E. Minimum enrollment: 10
(For 1 instructor, must be at least 10 students; for 2 instructors, must be at least 20 students.)
If proposed minimum is less than the requirement, provide a rationale for receiving variance.
Field biology is a required experience for Environmental Science Majors.
- F. Maximum enrollment: 30

II. Course Description

- A. Course goals and objectives: Given that Simpson May Term Off-Campus Travel Courses aim to provide students with an active learning curriculum that integrates a rigorous academic program with experiential immersion activities, please outline the learning objectives for your course.

This course will expose students to multiple coastal habitats along the Pacific Coast that they will have never seen in the Midwest. We will visit Redwood forests, coastal grasslands, tide pools, and other habitats along the northern California Coast. This is a region of incredible diversity, because it contains marine, freshwater, and land-dwelling plants and animals, most of which do not occur in the region surrounding Simpson. We will explore this diversity by visiting natural areas, preserves, as well as interpretive areas such as the world-renown Monterey Bay Aquarium. Activities will combine field research and sampling methods and discussions with area experts and land managers to help students appreciate the diversity in land forms, flora, and fauna that this coastal area provides.

- B. Rationale for the course: Please explain how the course fits in with your department and/or the college's curriculum.

This course is a hands-on study of the coastal marine environment off the California coast. Students will log, photograph, and classify marine wildlife. The students will learn and observe first-hand the changing

environments impact on the marine ecosystem. Students will be conducting much of the research in national parks. We will also arrange travel by chartered vessel to make observations of marine mammals such as the Humpback whales, fin whales, orkas, minke whales, blue whales (the largest mammal inhabiting the earth), as well as several species of dolphins.

This class can help students apply knowledge gained in biology and environmental science classes. Giving students the opportunity to study an ecosystem not available in Iowa will broaden their knowledgebase.

- C. In-country activities: Describe how the planned immersion activities (these could include home stays, service learning opportunities, interviews with locals, Q & A sessions with local guest lecturers/speakers, etc.) will be integrated into educational goals of the course.

Immersion activities will include meeting with area rangers and land managers at state parks and preserves. Through question and answer sessions, students will be able to discuss the evolutionary and geological processes that shaped these areas, as well as how ongoing management is used to continually shape the ecosystems and protect them from invasive species, climate change, and other impending threats. We plan to charter a vessel out into the ocean in order to make observations of several large marine mammals: such as the humpback, minke, orka, and blue whales, as well as several dolphin species. We will also increase student exposure to unique life forms with visits to local displays such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium, which is a world-renown collection of marine fauna.

D. Required course assignments and evaluation

1. Explain specific course requirements and indicate when they would occur (e.g., P=during the on-campus spring semester prep course, O=off-campus, and D=during the de-briefing portion of the off-campus experience; it's possible that some assignments will happen in all of the periods, e.g., Readings could be P-O-D)
 - a. Participation: P-O-D. Participation will be critical during the entire course to ensure students are actively involved in all facets of the class.
 - b. Readings (please specify what these will be):

On-campus: A textbook on marine ecology, the exact text is yet to be determined.

A few copies of these will be available off-campus to identify species as they are found:

A PocketExpert Guide to Marine Fishes: 500+ Essential-To-Know Aquarium Species by Scott W. Michael (Paperback - Nov 1999) – Illustrated

A PocketExpert Guide to Marine Invertebrates: 500+ Essential-to-Know Aquarium Species by Ronald L. Shimek (Paperback - Feb 15, 2005)
 - c. Journal reflections: O-D. A notebook will be kept during the off-campus portion of the course, in which students will list organisms observed, and their behavior.
 - d. Exams: none
 - e. Papers/Presentations/Field reports, etc.: D. A comprehensive essay will be written upon return to Simpson College. This essay should detail expectations of students before taking this trip, and final over-all impressions of course findings through observations and data collection.
2. Approximately what percentage will each of the above course requirements contribute toward the final course grade?

- a. Participation: 40
- b. Field observation journal: 40
- c. Final paper: 20

E. Catalog course description of about 100 words which includes a statement of expected course work (papers, exams, journal writing, presentations, etc.)

The Northern California Coast contains an incredible diversity of habitats, as well as associated flora and fauna. From tide pools to Redwood Forests, dozens of these unique ecosystems can be found within a 100 mile stretch of the Northern California Coast. This May Term trip would give you a chance to enjoy the coastal vistas, hike coastal trails, and sample marine, freshwater, and land-dwelling plants and animals that don't occur within 1,000 miles of the Midwest. We will visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium, with over 200 award winning displays of marine life, Redwood Forests with trees over 130 meters tall, and see the site of the largest mainland breeding colony in the world for the northern elephant seal. Come experience the incredible diversity of the Pacific Coast.

F. Are there prerequisites for this course? Yes No If yes, please list them and briefly provide a rationale.

This course will require a previous 100-level biology or geology course, or permission from the instructor.

III. Other Information

A. Has this course been offered in a previous May Terms? Yes No
If yes, please indicate *when* it was offered and the approximate enrollment.

B. Department(s) in which credit is to be awarded: Biology and Environmental Science

C. If this course will meet requirements for a departmental major or minor, please explain briefly:

This course will meet requirements for the Field Methods requirement for the Environmental Science major or minor, and also meet requirements for an elective in the Biology major.

D. Proposed dates of the travel course, including dates you anticipate being abroad:

On Campus: May 3-5th

Depart: Thursday 6th

Return: Thursday May 20th

Recap, Essays Due: May 21st

E. Proposed location(s) and how the site location(s) relate to the core objectives of the course:

Los Padres National Forest
Point Reyes National Seashore Area
Point Lobos State Park
Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
Butano State Park
Año Nuevo State Natural Reserve
Monterey Bay Aquarium

All sites represent unique habitats with fascinating flora and fauna found within this region.

F. Indicate your level of familiarity with the site(s) visited during the course.
I have visited this area, and have been to about half of the planned areas. Other areas have been recommended by colleagues in the northern California area.

G. Will the off-campus component of this course require a significant amount of physical exertion on the part

of the course participants? On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being little physical exertion and 5 being a tremendous amount of physical exertion, please rate the anticipated activities related to this course. Do you anticipate that the course activities would pose any significant challenges for someone with physical disabilities?

4: Daily throughout the off-campus portion of the course students will be hiking or walking long distances to observe coastal areas and sample plants and animals. Weather conditions may be harsh (rain, heat, thunderstorms). Accommodations will be rustic and include primitive camping. The course would pose a challenge to someone with limited mobility.

V. Proposed Budget for the Course

First, estimate expenses for instructor(s) and course assistant(s), if any, (in total, not per student)

Air transportation	\$0
In-country transportation (4,500 miles)	\$600
Lodging	\$1500
Meals	\$1500
Events: tickets, admissions, excursions, etc.	\$500
Any necessary entry visas	\$0
Misc.	\$200
Other (explain):	\$
Total expenses for instructor(s) and course assistant	\$4300

Next, estimate the cost per student, based upon the minimum enrollment number (20) from page 1 of this document:

Air transportation	\$0
In-country transportation	\$300
Lodging	\$750
Meals	\$750
Events: tickets, admissions, excursions, etc.	\$250
Honorariums	\$0
Tips	\$0
International Student I.D. card (\$22 each for all Int'l courses)	\$ 0
SC Study Abroad Program Fee (\$100 each for all Int'l courses)	\$ 0
Any necessary entry visas	\$0
Contingency fund (\$100 recommended)	\$100
Other (explain):	\$0
Subtotal per student expenses (based upon minimum enrolled #)	\$2150

Finally, divide the "Total instructor(s) and course assistant expenses" by "the minimum enrollment number (20) from page 1 of this document" to get a "per student instructor cost." Then add

Subtotal per student expenses (based upon minimum enrolled #)	\$2100
+ per student instructor cost	\$215
= Total per student cost	\$2315

Additional expenses not covered by the program for which students need to budget:

For example, passport @ \$97, books, some or all meals, immunizations, trip cancellation insurance, etc.

Total estimated additional expenses not covered by the course: _____

Instructor signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructor signature: _____ Date: _____

Dept Chair approval: _____ Date: _____
(department(s) in which credit is to be awarded)

Dept Chair approval: _____ Date: _____
(department(s) in which credit is to be awarded)

Div. Head approval: _____ Date: _____
(division of the instructor)

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