

Program Review Committee Members – George Rodgers and Narinder S. Bansal

Program description and scope:

The Geography/GIS program has several common sutras – increasing high enrollment, high retention rates and successful completion rates, and no full time faculty. George Rodgers was hired 16 years ago to teach Geography, Anthropology and Geology. He divides his time between teaching Anthropology and Geography classes. Seven years ago, Paul Belasky was hired to teach mainly Geology. He currently teaches a World Regional Geography class. In August of 2007, Narinder Bansal was hired full time as the District's new Environmental Studies instructor. Narinder has been teaching Geography and GIS on a part-time basis here at Ohlone for the past 5 years. He will continue to teach Geography and GIS until a full-time Geographer can be hired. Our team also consists of three adjunct professors that teach Geography and GIS courses. This dynamic growing program is and has always been staffed by part-time professors. George, Paul and Narinder are full time staff, but none have Geography as their full time assignment.

Geography and GIS provides the students/community with a better understanding of their physical environment, and how it effects their daily lives.

Geography and GIS use the latest technologies provided by the smart classrooms, meeting the needs of a technically savvy and diverse student population.

Geography and GIS provides the college and our division with high FTES which is a testament to our adjunct faculty, because there are no fulltime faculty members assigned to the department.

From 1967 to the present the course offerings at Ohlone College were dependant upon hybrid full timers and part-time instructors. Today we average approximately 460 students per semester in our Geography and GIS courses. The courses that we offer are as follows:

- a. Physical Geography – lecture (fulfillment of physical science requirements)
- b. Physical Geography – lab (fulfillment of physical science requirements)
- c. Cultural Geography – lecture (fulfillment of social science requirements)
- d. World Regional Geography – lecture (fulfillment of social science requirements)
- e. California Geography – lecture (fulfillment of social science requirements)
- f. GIS certificate.

All of the courses are articulated and meet the general education requirements for the AA degree, as well as transfer requirements for the four-year higher learning institutions.

Relationship to Ohlone College Mission and Goals:

1. Promote appreciation for and understanding of diverse races and culture by expanding the diversity of college personnel, international education offerings and exchanges, cross-cultural curricula, and ethnic/cultural events. The Geography/GIS Program offers courses in cultural, world regional, and California geography. These classes provide students and the community cross cultural and diverse education.
2. Develop strategies to increase the proportion of full-time students including learning communities, cohort groups, enhanced facilities, and improved course availability. The Geography/GIS Program has in the recent past developed learning communities combining history and geography, geography/GIS/environmental studies, and by teaching geography and GIS course at the Newark Campus the department invasions an increase in to the already high enrollment.

Program Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Investigate their physical environment and explain how various physical forces shape the environments in which they live.
2. Demonstrate and assess the component elements of their natural environment and the interrelationships of these environments which are crucial to the continuance of all life on earth.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the background, the sequence, and effects of the origin and spread of people as users and change agents of the earth, with particular reference to how different cultures have used and interacted with the natural environment.
4. Discuss and describe the major concepts in human geography including place, space, scale, landscape, etc.
5. Explain how the successive cultural changes people have made directly affect the present crucial balance between human population and the delicately balanced ecosystems which make possible the continuance of life on earth.
6. Demonstrate and explain important characteristics of the major world regions and discuss and compare the major issues confronting that region.
7. Assess how all inhabitants of earth are interrelated with the lives of people in other places, thereby creating a greater appreciation for the places and landscapes encountered in everyday life.
8. Distinguish the characteristics and key principles of geography, specifically the subdivision of cartography.
9. Develop an understanding of uses, organization and analysis of geographical data.
10. Practice and develop skills in fundamental operations of geographical information systems.

Assessment of Student Success in Reaching Program Outcomes:

1. A questionnaire will be developed and passed around to all students within the first 2 weeks of the semester. It will be attached to (but not be counted as part of the first quiz they have to take). The questionnaire will assess the student knowledge of the topics as pertaining to each student learning outcome (see above). It will contain objective questions that will ask them to rate their knowledge of that general topic on the scale of 1 to 10, then answer specific questions (matching, lists, multiple choice) on that general topic or pertaining to the short text provided. To insure objectivity, the students will be able to use Scantron sheets for most of the questions.
2. The students will be asked to rate their geographic knowledge on the scale of 1 to 10. The students will then be given a copy of a large-scale map of the world and a topographic map the Fremont area. They will be asked questions locating some continents, major physical features, oceans and seas on the map of the world. They will also be asked to determine latitude and longitude of a few features on the map. The students will also be asked to determine the location and elevation of the Mission Peak.
3. The students will be given a plate tectonic map of the world and asked multiple choice questions testing students' familiarity with concepts of plate tectonics, continental drift, seafloor spreading, Pangea, and types of geological phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanoes, mountain ranges) associated with different plate boundaries. They will also determine locations of several geographical localities on particular tectonic plates.

Assessment of Program through Review of the Teaching Learning Process:

Over the years, the Geography and GIS programs stressed the traditional methods of teaching the earth and social sciences, such as formal, structured lectures, more informal, specimen-based hands-on labs, emphasis on classroom instruction, attendance, note-taking, etc. These techniques are still being used and are quite effective. At the same time, new technologies such as the computer-based learning, electronic student response devices, in-class links to the Web, on-line instruction, and other innovative methods of teaching have been introduced. The current goal of the Geography and GIS program is to incorporate both of the traditional and electronic teaching approaches. To that end, the digital image data base has been (and is being assembled), new media were added (new videos, animation sequences, DVD's, PowerPoint presentations with web links) were added to aid student learning and better utilize the "smart" classroom in 8109, 1222, 1224, and 2106. In addition, a new course - Geog 105 California Geography has been created, linked to a learning community which combines this course with California History. A new department, Environmental Studies, has been formed, utilizing the skill sets of the Geography and GIS faculty. The Geography and GIS program will continue to utilize innovative, web-enhanced teaching techniques. In the future, on-line classes will be created as needs arise. It is the combination of the traditional and innovative teaching methods that is believed to be the key to student success in the program.

Assessment of Program Improvement since Previous Program Review:

The Geography and GIS program has experienced a metamorphic growth over the last several years. It has seen growth and maturation. This has been accomplished through the efforts of mainly adjunct faculty. There has never been a fulltime position in geography. The two fulltime faculty members – George Rodgers and Narinder S. Bansal – have only been assigned to the program. For the past 16 years, George Rodgers has also taught anthropology and geology. Recently, Narinder S. Bansal, who was an adjunct faculty member for the past seven years, was hired in August of 2007 as the new fulltime Environmental Studies professor with a pastime assignment in geography. The program has grown over the years, for its continuous growth a fulltime position would be beneficial.

Describe Review and Dissemination Team Involvement:

1. George Rodgers – has been a fulltime professor at Ohlone College for the past 17 years. He shares his time between geography and anthropology. Currently, he has 50 per cent release time load as the districts sustainability coordinator. He is also the curator of the Anthropology Museum.
2. Narinder S. Bansal – has been an adjunct faculty member throughout the Bay Area. He has spent seven years at Ohlone College in the geography and GIS program. He was recently hired fulltime as the new Environmental Studies professor.
3. Other team members contributing to this review were Dr. Ausaf Rahman, Monika Moore, and William Harmon.