

Compilation of faculty responses to SJSU courses

CS 46A (not currently articulated, requesting articulation with HSU CS 111).

Sharon Tuttle's initial response about SJSU's CS 46A course:

I have several questions about this articulation request:

1. *My copy of the .docx attachment, the CS 46A course syllabus, seems to be cut off -- it seems to end with:*

*Suggested programming assignments: 10 weekly programming assignments requiring students to use the concepts and programming techniques covered in the course. Programs should be appropriately documented via javadoc comments and should [** see next line]*

*Is there a way that I could get a complete copy? [What was missing from the original syllabus: "**" ...be appropriately documented via javadoc comments and should adhere to the Java Coding Style Guidelines posted on the CS Department web page.]*

2. *Reading the syllabus, the only mention of programming assignments is the above, with the word "suggested". Is there a way to find out whether programming assignments will be a course requirement, or if they are indeed just suggested if the instructor chooses to include them?*

3. *Is there a way to find out any more detail about the "Weekly hands-on activity" mentioned in the catalog description?*

4. *Is there a way to get a grade breakdown (what percentage of the grade comes from exams, from programs, etc.?)*

5. *Is there a way to find out how exams are administered? (in particular, are they proctored?)*

SJSU's reply about the CS 46A questions:

Hi, you asked about the Udacity CS46A course. Here is what I know about it. Feel free to contact me if you have more questions.

> Is there a way to find out whether programming assignments will be a course requirement, or if they are indeed just suggested if the instructor chooses to include them?

Programming assignments are required.

> Is there a way to find out any more detail about the "Weekly hands-on activity" mentioned in the catalog description?

Students must answer the questions that are asked after each section of a lesson (about 30 per lesson). Most of them are programming questions.

The effort involved is comparable to that of the weekly hands-on labs that are offered in the brick-and-mortar course.

> Is there a way to get a grade breakdown (what percentage of the grade comes from exams, from programs, etc.?)

Exams and final: 55%

Programming assignments: 30%

Participation (in lecture questions and on the discussion forums): 15%

> Is there a way to find out how exams are administered? (in particular, are they proctored?)

One exam and the final are proctored. Udacity uses a proctoring service that seems at least as good as what one can do in a lecture hall.

Sharon's most recent response about CS 46A:

Dr. Horstmann's reply is encouraging, but we still are uneasy about the fact that certain of these points are not listed in the syllabus. In particular, we feel that the syllabus needs to:

- * say that programming assignments are required (instead of just "suggested", as the syllabus is currently written)*
- * include the grading breakdown*
- * say that at least one exam during the semester and the final exam will be proctored*

We would also be more comfortable if the "Weekly hands-on activity" indicated that programming questions would be included.

We do not feel we can accept the articulation based on the course as described in this syllabus, but if the articulation application were to be revised to include a syllabus including the above, we would be happy to consider it again.

Math 8 (currently articulated with HSU Math 115)

Tyler Evans' initial response and final evaluation about SJSU's Math 8 course:

This San Jose Math 8 course is not equivalent to HSU MATH 115 as it has no trigonometry.

Tyler's further comments regarding the Math 8 course as noted in a later email string:

The proposed SJSU Math 8 course does not have the same content as HSU MATH 115.

Psy 1 (currently articulated with HSU Psyc 104)

Gregg Gold's initial response about SJSU's Psy 1 course:

I am inclined to reject this course. My main concerns is that there is no text associated with the course, only "online lessons" with suggested websites and an optional e-text. There is simply no way you can cover what is required in Psych 104 without an online text. Also, to set a standard of "no text" is a terrible message to send to 1st time students. In spite of what they say they will cover, it seems that the coverage can only be very shallow at best. Though this should serve the marginal students needs quite well, it does a disservice to the bulk of students who will take the course. Psychology 104 is a foundation course for the major, one of the most important courses a student will ever take. For example, I teach Psych 104 on a regular basis, and find the refresher that I receive to be quite valuable. Without reading the text before each lecture, I could not make that statement.

My other concern involves the proctoring. Cheating is a huge problem, the easier you make it to cheat, the more students will do it. This is particularly true now, given the already engrained student culture of stealing music and movies online. Properly done, exams should be taken at a testing center, where cheating is impossible.

SJSU's reply about Valerie's question asking if they could provide reasons/justification for not requiring texts:

That is correct. We do not require any textbooks for our Udacity courses. However, we do point student to several open source textbook options in case they would like additional material and/or different perspectives. One of our primary goals for these courses is to keep them as accessible as possible, and a big part of that is costs. As such, we have elected to develop the courses without a required textbook.

Hope that helps, but do let me know if they have further questions or would like me to go into greater depth in my explanation.

Gregg's final evaluation of SJSU's Psy 1 course:

O.k. so they don't require a text because "One of our primary goals for these courses is to keep them as accessible as possible, and a big part of that is costs". I understand their desire to offer the course as cheaply as possible, but what I would have hoped they would have replied would have been, "We find that we can offer superior student learning by not requiring textbooks, and making sure that students are using a superior online source." Here at Humboldt State our goal is to offer students the best academic experience possible. To sacrifice academic rigor for costs and mass appeal is not something we are willing to do. We will not accept the Udacity course as equivalent to our Psych 104 course.

STAT 95 (currently articulated with Psyc 241. Stat 95 was CAN approved to Math 108/Stat 108 but never posted in ASSIST. SJSU syllabus sent to Psyc and Stat departments for review.)

Tyler Evans' initial response about SJSU's STAT 95 course:

I cannot speak for PSYC 241. As far as I see, this syllabus does not specify how exams are to be proctored, but only that two of the three exams are proctored. I do not want to approve the course for equivalence to HSU STAT 108 without information on how the examinations are administered. Is it possible to request more specific information before I decide?

SJSU's reply about the proctored exams for SJSU's STAT 95 course:

1) Proctored exams

-The exams are proctored using the company, ProctorU (<http://www.proctoru.com/udacity/>)

-Student make an appointment with the service prior to the exam date

-At the appointed time, then student connects with a live proctor at ProctorU

-The proctor verifies the students identity by having the student show a government-issued picture ID to the webcam

-The proctor verifies that the student only has the allowed material and is alone by either having the student use the webcam to show their workspace or by using a mirror.

-The proctor take control of the student computer remotely, making it impossible for the student to open or switch to other programs or to lookup information online.

-The proctor logs the student into the Udacity testing service

-The proctor monitors (visual and audio) the student during the one-hour testing period, monitoring their eye movements and sounds within the room to verify that they are not interacting with others.

-The proctor signs the student out of the testing service when they are done, or when time has expired.

2) We have three exams, two of which are proctored via ProctorU. The first, unproctored exam is only worth 10% of their grade (the proctored exams constitute 60%). It is a timed exam, administered through Udacity's password protected testing system. In addition to our first summative assessment, this exam is meant to help to student get comfortable with online testing before we hit them with the intense proctored experience that I described above.

Tyler's evaluation of SJSU's STAT 95 course:

I will not approve this course as described for equivalence to HSU STAT 108. The online courses I have approved articulation agreements for all use more secure proctored exams such as students using a testing center. I am not comfortable approving a course for HSU credit in which the exams are proctored as you describe above.

Tyler's additional, final comments after reading email string from Gregg:

Thanks for sharing this, Valerie. Gregg raises many good points that I agree with but did not include in my response to you. In particular, I think his comments about the lack of a specific text, the lack of submitted exercises and the lack of the implementation of a standard statistical software package are all cause for serious concern.

Gregg Gold's initial and final response about SJSU's STAT 95 course:

Thanks for sharing Tyler's decision with me. I have many of the same concerns regarding proctoring for exams. In addition, I have concerns that the course does not have a text, or any required online exercises, just an incomplete list of online websites that "Some students, may wish to use". This seems to speak to a lack of academic rigor in the course. In addition, in our 4 unit (compared to their 3 unit) course, students use attend 2 hours of lab a week where they get hands on experience with SPSS, the most widely used statistics program in world. Being able to understand and use this program is a valuable skill both in and out of psychology. The SJSU course has students using StatsCrunch for some of their assignments, which is a free program that will allow them to get through the course, but (according to Dr. Aberson, who is widely recognized as an expert in these matters) does not have any translatable skills they could use outside of the course. I also shared the syllabus with Dr. Aberson who felt that compared to our course, SJSU's online course was "pretty weak". Given these concerns, we will not accept the SJSU course for articulation.

-VG 5.16.2013