

Campus Request for Proposals: UCSC Massive Open Online Course offered through Coursera

Overview

Following the pilot of two UCSC MOOCs offered through Coursera in 2013, UC Santa Cruz is requesting proposals for a new course to be offered on the Coursera platform.

The campus partnership with Coursera affords our faculty the opportunity to reach a wide-ranging global audience, inspiring course participants on a massive scale to think critically, to innovate, and to engage intellectually. At the same time, the partnership aligns with our campus' long tradition of teaching excellence and high impact research activities.

Priority will be given to proposals for courses that are designed synergistically with credit bearing courses on campus, such that the videos and learning modules developed for the MOOC will complement existing face-to-face UCSC courses by acting as the foundation for creating hybrid courses or as supplementary course resources.

Proposals are composed of two parts, consisting of both a written and video request that will be reviewed by a faculty committee. All levels of faculty are welcome to submit proposals.

Developing an online course is a challenging and time-consuming process. The faculty member selected for the award will receive one course release that can be used to develop or offer the course, funding to hire a graduate student for one quarter, extensive collaboration with an instructional designer, as well as access to campus-based resources to develop the course.

Funding is available for the development of one MOOC in the 2014-15 academic year (or potentially later dependent on curriculum leave planning). A second request for proposals is likely to be released in Fall 2015.

RFP highlights:

- Competition among UCSC faculty
- Open to all faculty titles
- Award is one quarter faculty course release that can be used to develop or offer the course, funding to hire a graduate student for one quarter, extensive collaboration with an instructional designer, as well as access to campus-based resources to develop the course
- Proposals are due by November 9 at 6:00 p.m.
- Submit proposals to VPAA Herbie Lee at vpaa@ucsc.edu

Two Part Request for Proposals

PART ONE: WRITTEN REQUEST

Faculty proposing a course for Coursera must complete the following request by submitting a project narrative organized and labeled by sections indicated below.

Course Information

- Explain how the course will enhance on-campus education. Faculty are encouraged to develop proposals for courses that are designed synergistically with credit bearing courses on campus, such that the videos and learning modules developed for the MOOC will complement existing face-to-face UCSC courses by acting as the foundation for creating hybrid courses or as supplementary course resources.
- Provide a brief course description of the Coursera version, including your syllabus, proposed course length (e.g., 5, 8, 10 weeks), learning outcomes, and planned methods of assessment.
- Explain why this course will be a good candidate for the Coursera platform. For instance, does it highlight a unique campus strength, will it attract a significant number of external participants, does it fill a niche?

Compatibility for the Online Environment

High enrollment online courses use short video segments that typically range in length from 4-15 minutes. These segments include embedded assessments (tests or quizzes) to provide immediate feedback and serve as a basis for awarding certificates of completion. Manual grading by faculty or teaching assistants is not practical in this teaching format.

- Given the content of your proposed course, to what degree are you able to assemble topics into 4-15 minute segments?
- Given that enrollments can be in the tens of thousands, will your assessments sufficiently assess student learning? Do you plan to assess student work using peer review methods or by machine grading? How will you determine if your assessments are resulting in learning gains? If you plan to use peer review, are your grading rubrics sufficiently clear for students with a variety of backgrounds to use?
- How is the proposed course length aligned with the scope of learning objectives? (Courses for the Coursera platform do not need to run for 10 weeks, allowing faculty to think creatively about course topics, learning objectives and course duration.)
- How stable is the course content, and will it often need to be updated for future offerings?

Copyrighted and Supplemental Materials

“Fair use” doctrine in copyright law is not thought to be applicable in MOOC environments. Further, MOOCs do not typically require participants to purchase supplemental materials. More information on copyright policy can be found at: <http://copyright.universityofcalifornia.edu>

- Will your course use any copyrighted content that requires payment of permission fees to rights holders?
- Are you familiar with open access and open educational resources? To what extent can you implement the use of them in your course? (Note: a research librarian is available at instruction@library.ucsc.edu to assist in locating alternative course materials. The faculty member whose proposal is accepted may be required to consult with a research librarian.)
- Will your course require participants to purchase any supplemental materials?

Qualifications and Expertise

Because developing an online course is a complex and challenging activity, use this section to provide information that will help reviewers assess the likelihood that the proposed online course will be successfully completed. You are welcome to include information about any relevant work experiences (including those that do not involve course development or online work) in which you achieved the objectives of the proposed project and did so in a timely way with the resources allocated to you.

Departmental Approval

Proposals require departmental approval from the Department Chair. Attach written or email approval to your proposal from your Department Chair stating that he/she is informed about the nature of the proposal and is supportive of it.

Coursera Course Development Agreement

The faculty member selected for the award must be willing to sign the Coursera Course Development Agreement.

PART TWO: VIDEO REQUEST

In addition to the written request, each proposal must include a brief (2-5 minute) demonstration video. The video does not need to be polished, but should effectively demonstrate to viewers that you will be able to develop an engaging course.

You are welcome to select the format and content for your video, but it should demonstrate a teaching method, or review a topic that will be covered in the course.

Faculty can request basic technical support to create their video proposal by contacting the [FITC](#) at least one month prior to the proposal deadline.

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Deadline

All proposals must be received by 6:00 p.m. on November 9, 2014. Written proposals should be sent to vpaa@ucsc.edu. Video proposals will be submitted via an eCommons site; please contact Michael Tassio at mtassio@ucsc.edu or 459-1349 for more information.

Assessment of Proposals

A UCSC faculty committee with representation from the administration and Learning Technologies will assess proposals according to the following criteria:

- The potential for the course to enhance UCSC's reputation as a research institution that fosters a culture of excellence, inquiry, creativity, diversity, and public service.
- The potential for the course to provide a meaningful learning experience and attract a substantial audience.
- The potential for the course to enhance on-campus education.
- The potential for the course to attract students to existing UCSC academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Although only one proposal will be accepted for the Coursera platform this year, faculty whose proposals are not accepted will be encouraged to pursue developing their course as a credit-bearing blended learning alternative using campus resources and facilities.

Questions or Consultation

If you are interested in submitting a proposal but would like more information about Coursera, the Coursera Course Development Agreement, or the proposal process and timeline, please contact Michael Tassio at mtassio@ucsc.edu or 831-459-1349.