

RESERVOIR JR

Distance Learning • Continuing Education

Program Adds Business Courses to Degree-at-a-Distance Offerings

Six business courses (the first two described at right) are being added to the curriculum for students earning the Master of Engineering (MEng) in Petroleum Engineering by distance learning.

The two courses are offered through the Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business. They have been developed in response to requests by distance students to include more business management instruction in courses offered away from the College Station campus.

These courses may be used as out-of-department work toward the MEng or they may be taken as part of the requirements for the 42-hour International Petroleum Management area of interest for the MEng degree. The same six courses are offered to on-campus students following this plan.

Broadening the curriculum through offerings such as these helps us ensure that our graduates have a firm foundation in managerial skills that will prepare them to step into middle-management positions upon completion of the degree, according to John Lee, head of the Department's Distance Learning and Continuing Education programs.

The degree already provides a solid, broad-based petroleum engineering foundation without the business courses, which John believes this Department is best suited to fill the niche within the industry for graduates with that middle-management capability. The business courses will enhance the business-skills side of the program.

For information about enrollment in the distance degree or any of its courses, please see the information box on Page 4.

Business Courses for Fall 2000

Survey Of Management (MGMT 655) Dr. Gareth Jones

This course will cover management concepts and applications important to managers in all types and sizes of organizations. Issues covered include strategic planning, global management, and organizational design for effectiveness; goal setting, control, decision making, and managerial ethics.

It will also include human resources management including staffing, performance appraisal, and compensation; and issues in managing individual and group behavior in organizations including leadership, motivation, communication, and group and team management.

Survey of Marketing (MKTG 621) Dr. Ursula Alvarado

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic marketing concepts and functions in modern firms. It will provide insights into the basic principles of marketing management, including the concepts and tools used by managers. Various industries will be examined in order to better understand and analyze marketing activities. We will analyze marketing management from economic and social-psychological viewpoints in order to comprehend the motivations of organizations and their consumers.

We will discuss the marketing and business environment in which organizations face their primary challenges and opportunities. Then we will concentrate on learning the fundamental concepts of marketing, including segmentation, targeting, and positioning. In doing so, we will then turn our efforts to specific tactics in marketing to help execute an effective marketing strategy.

NExT Offers Solutions To Fill Continuing Education Needs

Texas A&M has joined two other universities and a corporation to create NExT—a Network of Excellence in Training—in response to the need for more advanced training for members of the petroleum engineering profession.

The mission of the organization is to provide academic excellence combined with practical application from the industry's technology leaders.

William Cotten, general manager of NExT, explains, "We are committed to becoming the pre-eminent training and technology transfer provider to the petroleum industry."

One of the goals of the new organization is to ensure standards of excellence in training. This will entail careful evaluation of course materials and approaches before the course is offered as well as afterward. Certificates of completion will be awarded only to those students who successfully complete course activities and evaluations.

The three universities—Texas A&M, Heriot-Watt, and Oklahoma—will share ownership of the training alliance with Schlumberger. Each university will house a NExT Center of Excellence capitalizing on the strengths of the university programs.

A&M will house the center for reservoir engineering. David Schechter will represent us on the center's peer review board. Oklahoma will feature well engineering, with Stuart Scott as the A&M representative to the peer review board; OU at Tulsa will host the center for petrophysics and geoscience, with geophysics professor Joel Watkins as the A&M representative; and Heriot-Watt will focus on distance learning and production engineering, with John Lee as the A&M representative. Schlumberger provides professional expertise and the interface to the petroleum industry worldwide.

The peer review board of each center will

report to the relevant Director of Curriculum for the center. The boards will validate coursework, recommend certification, and accreditation of coursework to member universities, periodically audit coursework in their fields of excellence, determine necessary updates to courses, and identify subject matter experts.

Legally a limited liability company, NExT will be guided by a Board of Directors that will oversee the company's strategies, business plan, and financial performance. The seven members, including A&M Department Head Chuck Bowman, will also evaluate new business opportunities and quality improvement processes.

An Industry Advisory Board will identify opportunities to enhance and strengthen the curriculum and will act as a counsel for continuous improvement. Each NExT owner will have one representative, and approximately 15 representatives will be appointed from the global industry. Chuck Bowman will also represent A&M on this board, and Steve Holditch will represent Schlumberger.

Courses scheduled by NExT for open enrollment use facilities at the universities, at Schlumberger training centers, or at other external sites. The schedule and course costs are posted on the NExT web page, <http://www.nexttraining.net>.

Custom-designed courses can also be delivered at client sites worldwide.

RESERVOIR JR

is published occasionally by the



Harold Vance Department
of Petroleum Engineering
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-3116
pumpjack.tamu.edu

Courses in Distance Program Qualify for Credit, CEUs

Courses offered through the Department's web-based distance-learning program are designed to lead to a Master of Engineering (MEng) in Petroleum Engineering for students wishing to complete the degree from anywhere in the world. The broad-based program allows students some degree of flexibility in studies, but largely its goal is to prepare students to move into middle-management positions.

Courses in the program are also available for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for students who do not expect to complete the degree plan. This alternative may be attractive to students who already hold degrees in other fields but wish to take additional courses to increase their understanding of petroleum engineering practices.

It may also appeal to students who hold advanced degrees in petroleum engineering but want to learn more about developing petroleum engineering technologies.

All courses in the distance program are fully accredited graduate courses, bearing credit that can be transferred to other universities in accordance with the other university's guidelines. Program Director John Lee recommends that students who might consider advanced degrees register as for-credit students because courses taken for CEU credit cannot be changed later to credit toward a degree.

CEUs are awarded roughly on a basis of one CEU per 10 hours of coursework. Since distance classes are based on a 15-week semester of 3-hour classes, each course qualifies for 4.5 CEUs.

Students enrolling in courses for CEUs participate in all class activities, including the final exam, which is used as an assessment tool for the course. However, CEUs are awarded on a pass/fail basis rather than on the traditional grading system.

Courses offered for CEUs will carry a fee of \$1,800 per course. That fee is roughly equivalent to fees for similar week-long (40-hour) courses offered through other programs. University policies govern admissions and fees for the degree program.

However, both programs offers the advantages of delivery over a longer time period, more individual involvement in the learning process, and no need to leave the work environment for "training courses." In addition, the web environment allows the student to participate in the course on his own schedule from any location where a web connection can be made.

For further information on either program, contact John Lee at 979-845-2208 or lee@spindletop.tamu.edu.

Joint Project Offers Courses in Taiwan

A joint project of the Petroleum Engineering Department and the Geology and Geophysics Department will deliver five short courses for Opicoil in Taiwan this summer and early fall.

John Lee taught the first 5-day course, "Integrated Reservoir Management" in mid-July. Joel Watkins of Geology and Geophysics will deliver "Migration and Entrapment Mechanisms and Applications to Exploration, Development and Production" in late July and "Carbonate Reservoir Management" in early September.

John will return to teach "Economics and Risk Management of Exploration and Production" in mid-August, and Maria Barrufet will teach "Waterflooding and Water Control for Gas Wells" in late August.

All-Web Courses Earn Accolades

Students See Advantages of Interactive Course Offerings

Student responses to the Department's all-web courses offered for the first time this spring have been enthusiastic.

Two courses were offered completely through the Web in an agreement with Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA) to offer the Master of Engineering degree to its engineers. In addition to PDVSA's eight students, enrollment in the courses included students on site in College Station and three students working at other locations—two in the Houston area and one from Houston but working in Kuwait.

The courses use software supported by the university that allows instructors to post lecture notes and other materials, including slide presentations, to the web site. Bulletin boards, chat rooms, and e-mail provide opportunities for group discussion and projects.

Feedback from several of the students has been enthusiastic. One of them points out that the important difference between this program and others that offer only videotapes or only traditional hard-copy "correspondence" courses is the involvement of the instructors in the courses.

As Department Head Chuck Bowman said, "We want to be sure that if a student enrolls in a course with John Lee, he gets John Lee teaching that course and not a graduate assistant."

In the courses this spring, Maria Barrufet and John Lee worked closely with course

managers who converted existing materials to HTML or pdf files to be posted to the course instructional pages. Those notes include necessary figures and equations to assist students in understanding the subject matter.

In addition, the course managers prepared and posted the computerized slides for class presentations in College Station. Although those slides did not include voiceovers, they often served to clarify and illustrate materials in the course notes.

Videotapes of the College Station classes were also made available to the distance students, but students found that more timely interaction through e-mail or bulletin boards gave them a clearer understanding of the materials and a closer feeling of working with the professor than did the videotapes alone.

One student's course evaluation included comments that class notes were excellent and showed the professor's investment of time in them. That student also found that the web courses encouraged a great deal more focus on scientific concepts ("not chug and plug"), which "makes the student think."

The same student said, "The material of the course is broad-based and covers a lot of different subject matter. The instructor did an excellent job of explaining such a wide range of topics in one sentence.

As faculty learn to use the new teaching methods, we are developing improved approaches to teaching. Materials under development for the fall include videos with voiceovers and more focus on discussion groups and cooperative learning, with frequent guidance and encouragement to groups from the course instructor.

Links to university assistance, such as the library, bookstore, and special services for distance students, are available through the web software.

Want more information?

Check our website at
<http://pumpjack.tamu.edu/academic/distance-learning.html>

For information on enrollment, see
<http://pumpjack.tamu.edu/grad/index.html>