



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

August 29, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: World Geography Connects to 1500 A.D. – An Interactive Online Geography Course Beginning October 20, 2014

World Geography Connects to 1500 A.D., an interactive online course for Virginia teachers, will be taught this fall. This course supports the Standards of Learning for teaching World History and Geography to 1500 A.D. This course is free for Virginia teachers who wish to earn up to 45 license renewal points, or it may be taken for three graduate credits through Old Dominion University.

This course will be offered on the Internet at <http://geoconnectsto1500.pwnet.org>. Registration may be completed online at the same Web site. Teachers may register from Monday, September 8, 2014 through Friday, October 3, 2014, and the course starts October 20, 2014. The course ends December 21, 2014.

The goals of the course are as follows:

- connect the events of world history to their geographical foundations;
- connect the events of world history to the contemporary world in which we live;
- connect the events of world history to events in Virginia and the United States; and
- provide lesson plans, resources, and links for classroom teachers.

This course consists of five components, each of which is expected to take approximately three hours. Each component includes learning and practice activities, letters from the instructor, resource links, a discussion board, and quizzes. Teachers will find many ideas, resources, and links that will assist them in the classroom. This course includes the following five topics:

- the geography behind history;
- world political maps;
- geography of religion;
- trade and commerce as shaped by geography and technology; and
- ancient Egypt and the Fertile Crescent.

Dr. Don Zeigler, a professor of geography at Old Dominion University, will teach the course. Please contact him at dzeigler@odu.edu or at (757) 368-4113 for information about earning graduate credit. Although the course content is the same for everyone, teachers enrolled in World Geography Connects to 1500 A.D. for credit will be required to complete a lesson or unit plan.

For more information, please contact Betsy Barton, history and social science specialist, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood, by e-mail at Betsy.Barton@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3454.

