

Start Where You Are magazine 2010–2011 curriculum — page 3

Be a freeloader

Objective: Students will explore online college courses and report their findings.

Grade level: 9–12

Teacher prep time: 5–10 minutes

Class time: 30 minutes, plus approximately 1 hour or more of out-of-class time for students

Materials

- Start Where You Are magazine (volume 1, 2010), page 3 (included here)
- Internet access
- worksheet (attached)

Format: group setting within the classroom, individual work outside the classroom

Procedure

1. Have students read the top of page 4 of the Start Where You Are magazine.
2. Discuss courses that students may be interested in trying: If they could take any courses they wanted, what would they be? Write ideas on the board.
3. Have the class watch the selection below, or choose a lecture your class might enjoy more.
 - the 11-minute video lecture from Stanford University about new technologies in brain research (<http://academicearth.org/lectures/blindness-and-the-brain-brian-wandell>)
4. Discuss what students thought about the online class format. What worked for them? What didn't? What could be the advantage of learning this way?
5. Ask each student to choose one online course to investigate. It can be a lecture at one of the following sites or something else on the Web that interests them:
 - <http://academicearth.org>
 - <http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm>
 - www.apple.com/education/itunes-u
6. Have students answer the questions on the attached handout at the end of this file.
7. Have students report their experiences to the class. What did they learn? What worked or didn't work for them about the online format? What did the lecturer do that was helpful or unhelpful?

Extension

Have each student take a virtual tour of a college campus and report back to the class on his or her findings. For starters, check out the Saint Michael's College virtual tour at www.smcvt.edu/tour/default.asp.



NCDA guidelines for educational achievement and lifelong learning

- attain educational achievement and performance levels needed to reach your personal and career goals
- participate in ongoing, lifelong learning experiences to enhance your ability to function effectively in a diverse and changing economy

Vermont's Framework of Standards vital results

Section 1 Communication Standards

- 1.18** Students use computers, telecommunications, and other tools of technology to research, gather information and ideas, and represent information and ideas accurately and appropriately.

Section 3 Personal Development Standards

- 3.2** Students assess how they learn best and use additional learning strategies to supplement those already used.
- 3.7** Students make informed decisions.

VTSCA career standards

Academic Development Domain, Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.

- A:A1.1 articulate feelings of competence and confidence as learners
- A:A1.2 display a positive interest in learning
- A:A2.1 apply time management and task management skills
- A:A2.2 demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning

Academic Development Domain, Standard B: Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential for choosing from a wide range of substantial postsecondary options, including college.

- A:B1.5 organize and apply academic information from a variety of sources
- A:B1.7 become a self-directed and independent learner

Be a "freeloader"

Ever wonder what it's like to be an engineering major in college? Or to take a class on the philosophy of art? Now you can find out — for free, and on your own time — through online "open courseware."

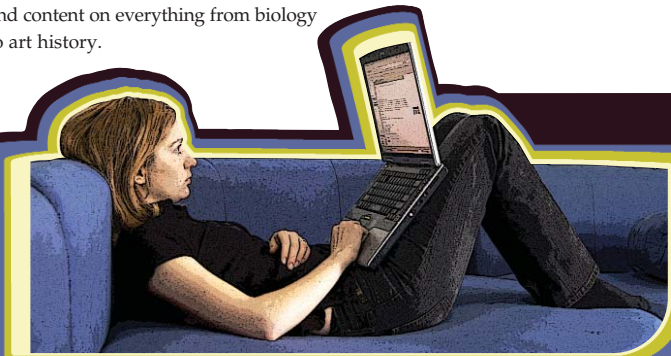
Stanford University in California sponsors the Stanford Engineering Everywhere (SEE) program, offering some of its most popular classes in computer science, electrical engineering, and artificial intelligence — all online, all for free. You can listen to lectures via YouTube and iTunes podcasts, and you can take online tests and network with other "freeloaders." You don't have to worry about grades, you'll learn something new, and you can connect with other members of the global nerd herd.

The idea isn't original. Back in 2003, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) began providing its course notes, schedules of reading assignments (called "syllabi"), and audio/video lectures online for free. Now, more than 200 colleges and universities offer free online lectures and content on everything from biology to art history.

TRY IT!

"Drop in" on three open courseware classes that interest you. They could be three different classes at the same school or three classes on the same subject that are offered by different schools. Start at www.oedb.org/library/features/236-open-courseware-collections. The list of offerings isn't all-inclusive, but the site provides links to classes on everything from physics and Chinese language to the history of the Civil War. Other sources? Try www.AcademicEarth.org, www.youtube.com/edu, iTunes U, or www.ocwconsortium.org to see what might interest you.

Virtually visit a classroom



Open courseware can introduce you to college academics before you ever step onto a campus. Though it costs schools a bundle, it's a win-win for everyone. Schools get to advertise their professors and curriculum, and they attract interested applicants as a result. Meanwhile, you get a feel for typical college classes and the kind of material college students study; plus, you can look into the different ways that instructors approach their material. One teen even used open algebra courseware to raise his high school grades.

Your first college class for FREE

How would you like to acquire great skills *and* earn a voucher worth hundreds of dollars in tuition savings? Take Introduction to College Studies (ICS) — a *free* class at Community College of Vermont — to develop strategies for success in college and beyond.

Once you successfully complete ICS, you can apply for a voucher to take *one college course, tuition free*, at:

- Burlington College
- Castleton State College
- Champlain College
- College of St. Joseph
- Community College of Vermont
- Green Mountain College
- Johnson State College
- Lyndon State College
- New England Culinary Institute
- Southern Vermont College
- University of Vermont
- Vermont Technical College

Learn more, get class schedules, and apply at:
www.gotocollegevt.org or
www.ccv.edu/intro_to_college_studies

Here's some of what you'll do in ICS, for free:

- participate in activities that teach communication skills
- explore your best learning style and develop study habits that work for you
- set goals for college, work, and life
- explore ways to pay for college and develop money management skills
- develop stress management techniques and apply them to various situations
- meet with a CCV academic advisor who will help you decide on the appropriate next step, whether it's taking a foundational skills course or a college-level course

the ICS buzz:

"The most important thing I learned in ICS was about financial aid. I didn't ever think I could go to college. It made me realize there were ways I could cover the cost."

Matt Lajeunesse

"Intro to College Studies is a great chance to get your stuff together and prepare for the real world."

Greg O'Connor

"I took Intro to College Studies because I wanted to get a better understanding of how college works ... Most kids think they know how college works because they've been accepted, but that doesn't mean they understand the many aspects of college. Students lead the class, which I loved. I was able to ask every question I had, and that led to many good discussions."

Nick Cain

Now attending The Cooper Union, one of most selective American colleges, mainly because it offers full-tuition scholarships (valued at \$140,000 as of 2010) to every admitted student.



**Freeloader online
lecture experience**

What class did you investigate, and why did this class capture your interest?

What was the format of the class — lecture, video, online discussion, or something else?

What did you like about it?

What did you find challenging?

Describe one new thing you learned from this class.

Would you consider taking an online course? Why or why not?

