

College exploration scavenger hunt

Objective: Each student will explore a college Web site of his or her choosing and complete the scavenger hunt activity (attached) in order to become familiar with college Web sites and ways to find information.

Grade level: 9–12

Teacher prep time: 5–10 minutes

Class time: 1 hour

Materials

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

Format: group setting within the classroom

Procedure

1. Have students read page 3 of the Start Where You Are magazine.
2. With the class as a whole, review one college Web site (*www.uvm.edu*, for example). Bring their attention to the myriad areas to navigate on such a site — including, but not limited to, student blogs, campus maps, academic program pages, open house dates and other information for prospective students, info for current students, school policies, athletic programs, costs and charges, social and cultural activities on campus, local community services, and meal plan options.
3. Have each student identify one college that he or she wants to learn more about. Students who want to look at Vermont schools can find info and links at *www.vtcolleges.org*. For students who don't have a school in mind, this is a perfect time to introduce them to School Finder, a free tool within VT Guidance Central that enables students to choose interesting characteristics in order to find matching schools.
 - Go to *www.vsac.org* and click on the VT Guidance Central link in the Quick Links box on the right-hand side of the screen.
 - Click on “Create a Portfolio.”
 - Once students have created their portfolios, have them click on “Choices Planner” from the main page and then “School Finder” in the “Learn” section.
4. Using a college Web site as a resource, have each student complete the scavenger hunt worksheet at the end of this file. To make it easier, show students how to use the Advanced Search feature on Google to find information on the Web sites they've chosen.
 - Copy the college's home page URL (for example, *www.uvm.edu*)
 - Go to *www.google.com* and click on the “Advanced Search” link.
 - Paste the URL into the box “Search within a site or domain.”
 - Type your search term in either the “all of these words” box or the “this exact wording or phrase” box.
 - Hit “Enter” for more choices than might result from simply using the college's search feature.



5. Have the class discuss their experiences on various Web sites. Were any sites especially challenging? Did students find interesting tidbits? Did any of them find and read student blogs?

NCDA guidelines for educational achievement and lifelong learning

- attain educational achievement and performance levels needed to reach your personal and career goals

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 2 Reasoning and Problem-Solving Standards

- 2.2** Students use reasoning strategies, knowledge, and common sense to solve complex problems related to all fields of knowledge.

Section 3 Personal Development Standards

- 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:A2.1 apply time management and task management skills

A:A2.2 demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning

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."

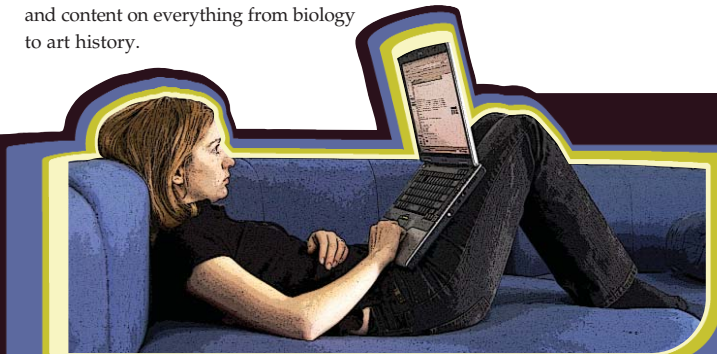
Stanford University in California sponsors the Stanford Engineering Everywhere (SEE) program, offering some of its most popular classes in computer science, electrical engineering, and artificial intelligence — all online, all for free. You can listen to lectures via YouTube and iTunes podcasts, and 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.



Web site explored: _____



You want to take a tour of the campus. Whom do you contact? Provide a name and title:

You want to sit in on a class. Whom do you contact? Provide a name and title:

What are the admissions requirements for this school?

Name three majors offered at this school that sound interesting to you:

How many students go to school here?

Where are the students from?

Do students live on campus or do they commute?

What is the cost of tuition for the school?

- with room and board:
- without room and board:

Where would you find help on campus if:

- you were sick
- you needed help with homework
- you had concerns about alcohol or drugs
- you needed support with emotional issues

What types of campus activities can students join?

What is one thing that really looks great about this college?

