

Engaging a GLOBAL AUDIENCE through online education

Whether it's one massive, open class reaching 5,000 students or over 40 full degree programs being delivered to learners in 50 states and 40 countries by OSU Ecampus, the message is clear: OSU is a leader in the online world. This issue of O&E shares examples of how OSU is expanding access to learners around the world through online education.

Free online course helps OSU connect with the world on a massive scale

Last fall Oregon State launched its first-ever massive open online course, or MOOC, that was available for free to learners everywhere. The eight-week course – **Supporting English Language Learners under New Standards** – attracted more than 5,000 participants.

A MOOC is just as its name suggests – a large online class offered freely to anyone with Internet access.

"People can participate from anywhere," said Karen Thompson, an assistant professor in OSU's College of Education who served as one of three instructors in the course.

Offered in partnership with Stanford University and funded by the Oregon Department of Education, the course provided professional learning opportunities for educators who teach English as a second language or work with bilingual students. Oregon State Ecampus helped make the

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OSU Ecampus by the numbers

19 
undergraduate degrees

22 
graduate programs

900+
online classes

1,900+ 
students have earned an OSU degree
online since 2002



OSU Ecampus has earned multiple rankings as one of America's best providers of online education. And our reputation keeps growing. This year, Oregon State's online bachelor's degree programs are ranked fifth out of nearly 300 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

Oregon State
UNIVERSITY

Increasing accessibility through hybrid learning



With the explosion of smart phones and tablets, instantly accessible Internet and a limitless cloud, the way we gather and absorb information in 2015 is drastically different from the way our great-grandparents processed it in 1868 – and the ways in which we want to learn have changed, too.

“Part of our challenge is increasing access to a world that’s increasingly online. And Extension needs to be there.”

— Jeff Hino, Learning Technology Leader, Extension & Experiment Station Communications

At Oregon State University, OSU Extension and the Center for Teaching and Learning are working to accommodate just that through hybrid learning, a combination of on-site meetings with a course instructor and online course work.

“The idea of hybrid is that the online and the on-site really shake hands,” Hino said. “I would hope that within three to five years, OSU Extension could have a very robust online presence for delivering the kinds of information that the citizens want in a hybrid format that’s super convenient for them,”

But hybrid learning is still new territory for OSU.

Last spring, in a pilot program, a group of Extension faculty was offered the chance to develop hybrid learning opportunities. A few of those faculty members are now building their own hybrid courses, including a workshop in urban forestry, study skills for OSU Open Campus students and 4-H leadership training.

“The most effective management of disease is to educate all levels of the industry... with relevant information and training.”

— Jeff Chang, Associate Professor

Luisa Santamaria teaches nursery workers how to use test kits in the field to test for different diseases. (Photo by Lynn Ketchum)



Arming the nursery industry against devastating plant pathogens



The National Institute of Food and Agriculture recently awarded a \$2.9 million grant to an OSU team, led by Jeff Chang, Associate Professor in the College of Agricultural Sciences, to conduct research on broad host range, gall-forming bacterial diseases: plant diseases that are difficult to diagnose, spread quickly and easily, and eventually kill all infected plants.

The research team has partnered with OSU’s **Professional and Continuing Education (PACE)** unit to develop a series of online courses offered in both English and Spanish.

According to Luisa Santamaria, OSU Extension specialist, 80–90 percent of the agricultural workforce in the United States is native Spanish speaking. With this innovative program, cutting-edge research will be disseminated quickly to the industry in a language and approach tailored to the workforce, closing the gap and providing nurseries with the tools necessary to combat plant pathogens effectively.

Ecampus graduate paves new career path

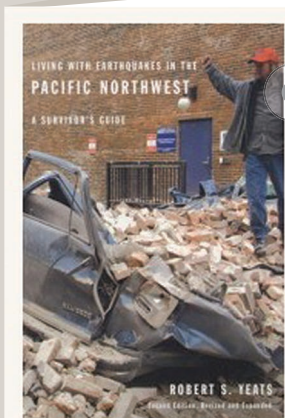
After several years working as a chemist, Ato Jackson-Kuofie decided he wanted more out of his career. More specifically, he wanted a new one. **Getting there wasn't easy, but Oregon State Ecampus helped make it possible.**

*"Earning a new degree online from Ecampus allows me to tell my children that no matter what path you take, you don't have to be tied down to a situation... **you can always seek a new dream.**"*



Ato Jackson-Kuofie
B.S. in Computer Science
(post-baccalaureate)
Lewis Center, OH

Taking down college costs, one text at a time



Dianna Fisher, director of **OSU Extended Campus' Open Oregon State**, doesn't have to look far to see why she and her colleagues on campus and across the nation must succeed in their efforts to offer free textbooks for high-enrollment classes.

"One of the things we learned when we were getting started is that visits to our Emergency Food Pantry on

campus increase when students have to buy their books," she said. "We have students choosing between eating and buying required texts!"

Besides free textbooks, Open Oregon State includes several other initiatives, such as free online modules, and massive open online courses (MOOCs), to provide free access to teaching and learning resources. The open textbook program, aimed at making college less expensive, has received enthusiastic support from the OSU faculty – with one open text already published and several more in the production pipeline – and from Oregon legislators.

The open text project is a joint effort of the OSU Libraries, the OSU Press and Open Oregon State. Coordinating with similar programs on campuses across the nation, it aims to deliver – online and for free – peer-reviewed, academically sound, frequently updated texts, incorporating traditional and newer multimedia content, and focusing on lower-division, high-enrollment courses. Downloadable in several formats, the texts can be printed, read

in PDF format on any computer or viewed in an e-reader such as a Kindle.

Fisher and her colleagues will share Oregon State's open textbooks around the world and will watch for similar free texts from other campuses that OSU's teaching cadre might use. The days of having dozens of expensive texts intended to teach the same standard subjects, each frequently re-released with minor edits so that students must buy new versions, may be numbered.

"Let's face it," Fisher said. "There are only so many ways to teach quadratic equations."

Textbook authors who take part in the project don't work for free; they typically receive stipends in the range of \$10,000 – up to \$15,000 for particularly ambitious projects – or in some cases they will be "bought out" of part of their teaching load while they're preparing a text. A rigorous approval and review process will ensure that OSU's open texts are up to date and effective.

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Global audience *Continued from front*

MOOC a reality, lending its expertise in online learning to the course by providing multimedia and support services.

Although OSU's inaugural MOOC was conceived with Oregon educators in mind, it ultimately had an international reach. About one-third of the participants studied from outside of the United States, with students hailing from Brazil, Syria, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Romania among other nations.

"Even though our course wasn't targeted toward teachers teaching English in another country, people outside the U.S. are hungry for opportunities and ideas, and they are interested in seeing how they can improve their students' language development," Thompson said.

The opportunity to engage learners on a global scale is an endeavor Oregon State plans to explore further, according to university provost and executive vice president Sabah Randhawa.

"It is important to be open to new possibilities and to be flexible and adaptable to new learning paradigms, including the MOOC learning format," he said.

For Thompson, teaching the massive course made her even more aware of the desire for information – and the leadership role Oregon State can play in delivering it.

"I had a student who emailed me saying, 'I'm sorry, I haven't been able to complete my assignment – we haven't had electricity for the last three days,' " she said. "Think about the opportunities that person had in the past to engage with materials from excellent universities in the U.S. – they were probably very limited."

"There is this big group of participants from around the world, but we don't really know much about them, what they need or how what we're already doing can meet their needs," Thompson said. "Potentially there might be other OSU offerings in the future that might be of interest to them."



College costs *Continued from page 3*

Fisher noted that although it's on the cutting edge of technology and innovation, the open textbook project is rooted in OSU's oldest mission: to make knowledge more accessible.

To learn more about the program, and to gain access to a prototype text and see a list of other open texts in progress, visit [» open.oregonstate.edu/textbooks](https://open.oregonstate.edu/textbooks).

Fisher noted that although the response from current Oregon State faculty has been gratifying and is enough to get the project rolling, she would love to cast the net wider, and to include emeriti faculty and alumni who have pertinent expertise. She invites interested, qualified potential contributors of any open initiatives to contact her at [» dianna.fisher@oregonstate.edu](mailto:dianna.fisher@oregonstate.edu).

"This helps get the knowledge out to more people who can use it. As a land grant university, this is what we're supposed to be doing."

— Dianna Fisher, director of OSU Extended Campus' Open Oregon State unit



**Outreach and
Engagement**

The Division of University Outreach and Engagement connects Oregon State University to the rest of the world by making its educational programs accessible wherever and whenever people need to learn. The division provides leadership across campus for the outreach and engagement mission and includes the OSU Extension Service, OSU Open Campus, Extended Campus and Professional and Continuing Education.

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