

CourseCompass charts new path

Kimberly Maier

The Clackamas Print

Instructors at Clackamas are always on the lookout for new resources to help students learn.

This year, some instructors have decided to test out a product called CourseCompass. It is similar to and powered by Blackboard, an online teaching resource with which the college is already familiar.

CourseCompass is owned by the textbook publishing company, Pearson Education. Students must buy a special code that corresponds to the course's textbook for an additional \$49. Once the code is obtained, students can log on to "MyMathLab," "MyChemistryLab," or "MyCrimeLab."

Pearson Education offers CourseCompass for every subject they publish, but so far, the interest at Clackamas has been focused in the three previously mentioned areas.

Math teacher Kurt Lewandowski is one of the instructors who currently uses the system in his classes.

"The publishers of CourseCompass came on campus

and demonstrated 'MyMathLab.' We as a department decided it was something we wanted to explore," said Lewandowski.

When students log in to CourseCompass, the entire text and syllabus is available to them, along with assignments and other activities preloaded into the program.

Some students who are computer-savvy or have used Blackboard in the past have a positive reaction to CourseCompass.

Student Eric McCombs said, "CourseCompass is way better than Blackboard. It's easy to know when my assignments are due because it's all right there on the page when I log in. It's so convenient."

McCombs also said that doing homework on CourseCompass is more understandable than using the book alone.

"It works through the problem with you. Having the whole book online is cheaper, too, because then you don't have to buy it," he said.

However, not everyone is thrilled about the new program.

"Our class had a hard time with it at first," said student Nicole Hauser, "People complained about it, so our instructor gave us the option of turning in assignments

out of the text. It's tough because the Compass has a hard time running on a slow program. My dad had to upgrade our computer so it could work."

Lewandowski confirmed that dial-up service makes it very hard to use CourseCompass.

"There are obvious drawbacks," he said. "Mac computers can't work in that environment. Mac is just not compatible, but we have other ways that students can access the Internet here on campus. Students can use the computers in the library or at Streeter [Hall]."

Students would be wise to do so, because the system has a feature that allows the instructor to view when and how long pupils are logged on to the program.

At this point in time, it is unclear as to whether or not this will become a required part of courses. This is the second term that CourseCompass has been available at Clackamas.

Instructor Bruce Simmons is using MyMathLab for the first time this term. Although he has reservations about the extra financial cost to his students, he's willing to give the system a try.

"We're all getting used to it together," he said.

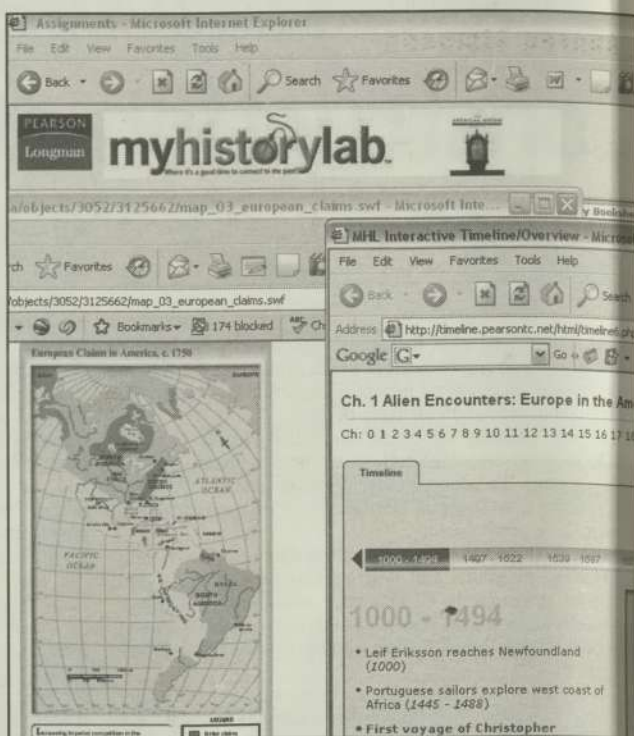


Illustration by Elizabeth Hitz and Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

CAMPUS NEWS & EVENTS

Clackamas Repertory Theatre Winter Production

Born Yesterday, directed by David Smith-English, will be performed in the Osterman Theatre, and evening performances are scheduled for 7 p.m., Thursday through Saturday, March 1 through 3 and 8 through 10. Matinees are scheduled for 2:30 p.m., March 4 and 11. General admission is \$10; seniors 62 and older, as well as students, \$8. For more information, call 503-657-6958, ext. 2356.

Scholarship workshops will be offered on Tues., Feb. 27 and Tues., March 6, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Roger Rook Hall, Room 117. The deadline for CCC scholarship applications is Tues., March 13. For more information, please contact Darcie Iven at 503-657-6958, ext. 5008.

Spring Term Childcare Grants

Childcare grant applications for Spring Term are now available in the ASG office. The last day for students to turn in their applications is Fri., March 9. For more information, please contact ASG at 503-657-6958, ext. 2245.

University degree programs at community college expense

Jennifer Jenkins

The Clackamas Print

The structure of community college is getting a much-needed update to battle rising tuition prices for private universities.

Clackamas Community College's Business Department has developed a new AAS (Associate of Applied Science) Degree in Retail Management. The program will be submitted to the state for approval at its March meeting.

"We are all very excited about this new opportunity," said Joan Ryan, department chair of the program.

With this degree, students can earn a Bachelor's from a private university and pay for most of it at the community college level. Additionally, students with on-the-job experience in retail can use the AAS alone to gain access to upper management positions previously excluded, according to Ryan.

The program will be called an Articulated Degree because it will require 120 credits, making it a three-year Transfer Degree and giving a student entry into Marylhurst University as a senior.

Ryan has been working alongside other Oregon community colleges to make the program statewide.

Each college's classes will need to be evaluated by Marylhurst University in order to qualify. The program requires pending certification by the State of Oregon before it can be offered.

When the Articulated Degree gets off the ground, it will give people who couldn't see a four-year program as a possibility new hope. It may eventually be transferable to other universities, or open the door for other three-year Articulated Degrees.

Anyone who would like to know more about this degree program can contact Ryan at 503-657-6958, ext. 2363, or by e-mail at joanr@yahoo.com.

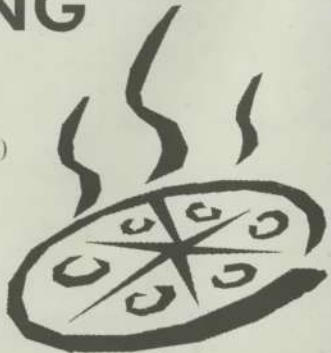
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