

Study Up before Applying to Online Universities

The Better Business Bureau is warning prospective students to be wary of certain online schools and education opportunities.

With nearly 6.5 million people involved in some form of online learning, it is more important than ever to take precautions to ensure time, energy and money aren't wasted.

"The popularity of distance degrees and similar programs has led to more diploma mills, unaccredited universities and shady institutions that take advantage of unassuming students," said Robert W.G. Andrew, chief executive officer of the BBB serving Alaska, Oregon and Western Washington.

Degrees from accredited universities are more likely to be recognized by employers and other higher education institutions. Before applying, understand accreditation information provided

by the U.S. Department of Education and research accreditation claims through the Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs.

Take note of enrollment processes. Is admission granted based on test scores, entry exams and additional background information or by simply paying tuition? Degree fees are typically based on credit loads; be cautious of schools that accept all students or charge a flat degree fee.

Be skeptical of accelerated degree programs that promise quicker-than-average completion dates; compare program lengths to those of well-known schools.

Speak directly with school counselors to get answers to all financial, degree and enrollment questions. Also, gather information from websites, including physical locations, faculty biographies and program specifics.

Champion of Campus Diversity

Anna Gonzalez, a 17-year veteran in the student-affairs field and a champion of campus diversity, is the new dean of students at Lewis & Clark College.

Gonzalez most recently served as associate vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of Illinois. She previously led a variety of student-life functions at the University of California at Irvine, the University of Virginia and University of Pittsburgh.

At Illinois, she led efforts to recruit and retain a diverse stu-



Anna Gonzalez

dent-affairs staff and oversaw the management of cultural centers for Asian American, African American, Latino, and other minority student groups. Gonzalez currently serves as treasurer and secretary for the National Association for Asian American Studies.

"What excites me about Lewis & Clark is its ethos of social justice, environmental awareness, and commitment to preparing students to be positive change agents in the world," Gonzalez said.

Mt. Hood Adds Auto Skills Program

Mt. Hood Community College will launch a new automotive program in light repair and maintenance, providing men and women with the hands-on skills to succeed in the evolving automotive repair industry.

Typically, people who perform light auto repair and maintenance start in the \$12 - \$20 per hour range and find jobs at tire service centers, quick lube stations, car dealerships

and independent shops.

Dennis Mattoon, dean of instruction for Industrial Technology at MHCC, says this new program addresses the evolving automotive field. "Technology has improved. Cars are designed better and last longer, provided they receive high quality maintenance," he explains. "Because of this, there is a significant need for LRM mechanics."

MHCC is the only Portland-

area college to offer a training program in automotive light auto repair and maintenance. Twenty-five students will be admitted into the program when it begins next winter term.

Students can complete the program in a relatively short period of time, just three terms, and at significantly less cost compared to other automotive training. For more information, visit mhcc.edu.

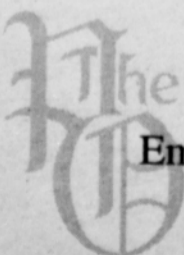
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