

## Home Design To Poetry To Web Page Design: Online Learning Has Something Free For Everyone

(NAPSA)—Most people want to keep learning after they graduate from school, but don't know how to go about it. They may be interested in Picasso or impressionism, but can only find classes at local community colleges. These classes require time and money—two resources most people can't spare. There is hope in sight, however.

With Online or Distance Learning sweeping the Internet, 40 million students are expected to use these services within the next three years. Many Distance Learning programs began as a simple and cost effective way for companies to train their employees. Now, a few companies are bringing this idea to everyone for little or no cost.

Bookseller Barnes & Noble.com is making Online Learning work with great success. Since Barnes & Noble University launched in June 2000, the program has become the leading online community for free distance learning with over 200,000 registered students. Additionally, Barnes & Noble University works with experts and authors, developing online courses and generating a stellar course selection, which includes more than 50 free classes.

"The creation of Barnes & Noble University is a perfect fit for all consumers," says Len Gilbert, Vice President, Distance Learning. "Barnes & Noble University students are a community of life learners and self learners. They have taken to the idea of online classes in fantastic numbers."

Barnes & Noble University offers a variety of courses for all walks of life, allowing their students to learn life-enhancing lessons that offer enjoyment after work, or develop career-changing skills. For example, Barnes & Noble University offers a course on conquering the clutter in your life taught by an instructor who speaks to corpora-



tions about getting organized in the workplace. If a career in computer programming looks exciting, Introduction to C++ by Metrowerks will develop the background necessary to make the change.

Each class description includes a list of necessary materials, which can be purchased on the site. If a student already owns the course materials, there is no requirement to purchase them from Barnes & Noble.com. Also, in a feature unique to Online Learning, students at Barnes & Noble University can interact with their professors, and each other, through a message board where they comment on the lessons.

Unlike other free online learning services, Barnes & Noble University offers real experts as teachers. Though Barnes & Noble University is a non-accredited program, instructors range from authors to professors at accredited universities.

New lessons are posted twice a week. When a lesson is posted, students can access a new lecture from the professor. Following the lesson, students are quizzed on the material to be sure they absorbed the information. All new postings also include an assignment for the next session. Enrolling at Barnes & Noble University is simple. Log on to [www.bn.com/university](http://www.bn.com/university) and click "Join Now."