



PRESS RELEASE

Making Open Education Easy: New Course Frameworks from Lumen Learning Offer Blueprints for Teaching with Open Educational Resources

Frameworks for six general education courses now freely available through Canvas by Instructure

PORTLAND, Oregon and Salt Lake City, Utah (May 22, 2013) – [Lumen Learning](#) and [Instructure](#) broke new ground for open education today with the introduction of six [open course frameworks](#) that make teaching with open content easier and more effective than ever before. Now freely available for anyone to access through the [Canvas](#) platform, these frameworks serve as blueprints instructors can use for designing and teaching general education courses based exclusively on open educational resources (OER).

“These course frameworks encapsulate what is revolutionary and great about open education,” said Dr. David Wiley, a long-time proponent of open content and co-founder of Lumen Learning. “First, they are and always will be free. Second, each framework represents a complete course that uses only open content, so every student has free access to 100% of the course materials on day one. Third, instructors can teach the course as is, adapt or add to the content to make it work better for their students.”

The open course frameworks were created through collaborative work between members of the Lumen Learning team and faculty members at nine institutions participating in the Kaleidoscope Open Course Initiative. For each course, multiple faculty members worked together applying pedagogical and subject matter expertise to review, curate and refine open course content in alignment with defined learning outcomes and quality standards. This project, funded by grants from the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) program, developed OER-based general education courses impacting over 10,000 students in 2012 and 2013.

With the decision to make courses freely available on the Canvas platform, Instructure affirms its support for open education and making open educational resources more widely available and easy to use. Although the frameworks are available via the Canvas platform, because they are published under open licenses, faculty members may choose to reuse, revise, remix and redistribute the materials using any technology tools and systems.

“Instructure is deeply committed to innovation that makes education better,” said Devlin Daley, co-founder and chief technology officer at Instructure. “The open course frameworks from Lumen Learning invite instructors to keep creativity in the education process by co-creating and evolving open course materials. We are pleased to provide open access to these materials for instructors, students and also institutions using any learning management system.”

The Canvas platform houses the course frameworks as “master courses” anyone can use without permission and without cost. Each instructor creates their own instance of the course based on the open

framework, and then adapts and teaches the course according to their own preferences and desire for hands-on involvement in the course content.

“I have used the open course framework with my algebra students for the past three semesters,” said Linda Casper, assistant professor of mathematics at Mercy College. “My students benefit from free and open access to their course materials. They respond particularly well to the embedded assignments that follow each video. I am seeing better student learning, engagement and success.”

Open course frameworks for the following developmental and general education courses are now available. Anyone may access them freely via the [Lumen Learning website](#):

- English Composition
- Developmental Reading
- Developmental Writing
- Beginning Algebra (Developmental)
- Intermediate Algebra (Developmental)
- College Success

More open courses are planned for the future: Introduction to Business Management, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Chemistry, Introduction to Biology, and Introduction to Geography will be available in the coming weeks. As Lumen Learning expands its work with institutions to develop more OER-based courses and programs, it plans to continue publishing master course frameworks.

The company is exploring options for taking the course frameworks through third party review processes to confirm alignment to established quality standards. Lumen Learning also offers learning analytics services for institutions using these open courses. Each time instructors teach a course, they can apply a data-driven continuous improvement process to strengthen future learning results. The open course frameworks will continue to evolve and improve based on feedback from learning analytics and incremental improvements identified as instructors teach courses year-over-year.

“Our ultimate goal is to provide sustainable open textbook alternatives for an entire general education curriculum and even entire OER-based degree programs,” said Kim Thanos, CEO and co-founder of Lumen Learning. “We are thrilled with the interest and momentum we are seeing around OER today. It is definitely a rising tide, benefitting students, instructors and institutions alike.”

About Lumen Learning

Lumen Learning provides an evidence-based approach for using open educational resources (OER) to eliminate textbook costs and improve student success. Founded by open education innovator Dr. David Wiley and education technology strategist Kim Thanos, the Lumen team has played an integral role in several of the most influential OER initiatives to date in secondary and higher education. Lumen services guide educators in integrating OER into academic strategy, training and supporting faculty, measuring success, and improving the quality of OER-based courses over time. Learn more at www.lumenlearning.com.

About Instructure

Instructure is a technology company committed to improving education. We provide instructors and students with modern tools and resources that empower and simplify the learning experience.

Instructure offers Canvas—the open, easy-to-use, cloud-native learning management system—as well as [Canvas Network](#), an index of open, online courses by educators everywhere, from Ivy League to community colleges. To keep learning visit <http://www.instructure.com>.

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For More Information

Lumen Learning
Julie Curtis
503-840-5569 | julie@thanospartners.com

Instructure
Devin Knighton
801-722-8187 | devin@instructure.com

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