

# An Overview of E-Learning at Ryerson University

Toronto, Canada

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**RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY**

## A short bit about my e-learning background

- Graduated in 1997 with an MBA from Queen's University
- Course was taken with other mid-career professionals
- Groups or “pods” located across Canada
- In-session classes held alternate weekends on Fridays and Saturdays
- Subject of many focus groups - results

# Geographic Overview

- Largest city in Canada with population of 6M+ persons
- Over 140 languages spoken
- Many students commute via subway, bus, tram and train to Ryerson
- Little room to expand the university, cost of urban space is very expensive
- Canada is geographically large and diverse
  - Many potential students do not wish to leave their home communities

## Cultural Overview

- For many students, English is their “other” language
- Students bring a vast expanse of cultural backgrounds into the classroom
- Increase in the number of students with learning and mental health challenges
- Employment opportunities for our graduates is very strong
- Parents want their children to leave home – experience education the way they did
  - Classroom communications leading to marriage

## Student Overview

- “Digital Natives”
- Many students commute via subway, bus, tram and train to Ryerson
- Cost of commuting from \$6.00 to over \$20 per day
- Many students hold down part time jobs in addition to their studies
- Tuition increases/class size increases
- Lack of study space on campus

- Many “first generation” students have extraordinary family responsibilities
- Flexibility around their personal scheduling
- Some students take more than four years to complete a degree
- Few dormitory rooms for student housing on campus

## Faculty Overview

- **Experiential learning is fundamental to supplement theoretical learning**
- **Some labs/practices are not currently possible in an e-learning environment**
- **Students benefit from faculty interaction**
- **Issues related to academic integrity**
- **Faculty already utilizing e-learning tools such as Moodle, Blackboard, turnitin.com and others for classroom management & organization**

# University Planning Overview

- Teaching space increases are unlikely
- Co-development projects
- Use of local movie theatres as classrooms
- Cost savings to departments due to blended learning applications



# University Overview

## “Our Time to Lead”

- Academic 5-year Plan for 2014 – 2019 currently being developed
- To become “Canada’s leading comprehensive innovation university”

- **Four goals:**
  - **Enable greater student engagement and success through exceptional experiences**
  - **Increase scholarly, research and creative (SRC) excellence, intensity and impact**
  - **Foster an innovation ecosystem**
  - **Expand community engagement and city building**

- **29 Strategies**
  - **Number 11:**
    - **University-wide blended e-learning strategy which incorporates the principles of inclusive design and accessibility, in order to expand technology-enhanced and high quality online offerings**

# E-learning Applications in Use

## G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education

- Largest continuing education program in Canada
- Rumored – over 60,000 course registrations
- 91 certificates – 22 of these can be completed online
- Distance education is composed of:
  - Internet
  - Blended classroom and internet learning)
  - Videoconference and internet learning
  - Print and audio-learning

# E-learning Applications in Use

- [Google Apps](#): Google Apps at Ryerson is a package of web applications that includes Gmail, Calendar, Drive (Docs, Forms, Presentation, Spreadsheet), Contacts, and Mobile.
  - Google Drive is used to share documents, sheets, presentations and online forms. These tools promote collaborative learning.
- Technology available at Ryerson and supported by the [Digital Media Projects Office](#) (DMP): The DMP provides educational technologies to support Ryerson's faculty and instructors.
  - [Blackboard](#): The current learning management system implemented for Ryerson. It offers various features to enhance classroom learning experiences.
  - [Ryecast](#): The Ryecast service is provided by Ryerson University's [Computing and Communications Services](#). Ryecast can be used to provide live lecture, seminar, and event broadcasts as well as host streaming video and audio on demand.
  - [Blogging](#): Currently, Ryerson has [blog.ryerson.ca](http://blog.ryerson.ca), running [Wordpress Multisite](#), for courses and administrative purposes. The DMP can accommodate various needs and ways of using blogs for teaching and learning.
  - [Wikis](#): The DMP supports the Blackboard wiki, and a wiki plug-in through [blog.ryerson.ca](http://blog.ryerson.ca)

- Visit the [Digital Media Projects Office](#)(DMP) website for a complete list of educational technology tools and support services.
- [Computing and Communications Services](#) (CCS) at Ryerson provide "**How To**" documents on the following:
  - [Microsoft Office](#)
  - [Internet](#)
  - [Web design](#)
- [Microsoft free self-paced training courses](#) are available to faculty and staff in departments currently participating in the Campus License Agreement; provided by [CCS](#). These online self-paced modules includes tutorials for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Communicator, Groove, InfoPath, OneNote, Outlook and Publisher for Windows and Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook for MAC.  
[Install Requirements](#) (Note: Known issue with XP, awaiting MS solution)  
[Acquisition Options](#)
- [Blackboard in the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education](#): All continuing education courses in The Chang School are supported by a Blackboard course shell as a means to enhance student interaction, engagement, and communication, as well as to support Ryerson's sustainability and paper reduction goals.

# Resources

- Learning and Teaching Office
  - <http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/online/>
  - [http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/online/online\\_course\\_design.html](http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/online/online_course_design.html)
  - <http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/activities.html>
  - [http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/tech\\_tools.html](http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/tech_tools.html)
  - <http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/video.html>
  - <http://www.ryerson.ca/lt/elearning/video.html>

# Resources

- Ryerson University
  - [www,ryerson.ca](http://www.ryerson.ca)
  
- G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education
  - [www,ryerson.ca/ce](http://www.ryerson.ca/ce)



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