

TUESDAY TECH TIP



NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY/NIAGA LIBRARY SYSTEM

OCTOBER 24, 2017: ONLINE LEARNING & MOOCS

Massive online open courses (MOOCs) are online learning platforms used by students, hobbyists, professionals and retirees.

- MOOCs allow online users to register for courses presented by some of the world's most renowned universities.
- Users watch videos, view lecture slideshows, complete homework, take tests and participate in interactive forums with instructors and fellow students.
- Coursework can be accessed by desktop/laptop computer. Some MOOC providers even have apps for phones and tablets!
- Registration for courses is free (sometimes referred to as “auditing” a course), but users often have the option to pay for a certificate of completion to prove attendance.
- Users can sign up for formal sessions in which course content is available only during a certain period of a time (usually 2-4 weeks). However, many courses are “self-paced”, meaning learners start and finish them on their own schedule – so there is no need to wait for the course to be offered at a different time.
- Courses are offered in English and many other languages. In addition, there are courses for ESL learners, or for learning foreign languages.



URL: <https://www.coursera.org/>

Account required? Yes

Mobile app available? Yes – iPhone and Android

Free? Free to view course content and participate in interactive forums. Cost for *verified certificates*.

Self-Paced Available? Yes

<https://www.coursera.org/courses?languages=en&query=self+paced>

Example Course Titles: Business English for Cross-cultural Communication, Indigenous Canada, Introduction to Typography, Introduction to Forensic Science, Copyright for Educators and Librarians



URL: <https://www.edx.org/>

Account required? Yes

Mobile app available? Yes – iPhone and Android

Free? Free to view course content and participate in interactive forums. Cost for *verified certificates*.

Self-Paced Available? Yes

<https://www.edx.org/course/?availability=Self-Paced>

Example Course Titles: Accounting and Financial Management, Introduction to Computer Science, The Science and Practice of Yoga

FYI: edX recently announced a new eight-course specialization for librarians and library managers/directors, *Public Library Management*. Users may take one or all of the courses. If the learner is pursuing a verified certificate, the cost is reduced if taking all eight courses.

As of October 2017, the courses included in the specialization are:

- Identifying Community Needs for Public Library Management
- Managing a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace for Public Libraries
- Personnel Management for Public Libraries
- Budgeting and Finance for Public Libraries
- Infrastructure Management for Public Libraries
- Strategic Planning for Public Libraries
- Grant Writing and Crowdfunding for Public Libraries
- Public Library Marketing and Public Relations



URL: <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Account required? Yes

Mobile app available? No – but the website is mobile-friendly

Free? Free to view course content and participate in interactive forums. Cost for *Certificate of Achievement*.

Self-Paced Available? No

Example Course Titles: Environmental Justice, Learn Jazz Piano, Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance, Introduction to Korean, Start Writing Fiction



Niagara Falls Public Library is pleased to announce we will offer Lynda.com access to all users of the Library. As of October 2017, users will need to use this service while at the Library, as the website uses the Library's IP address to validate users.

URL: <https://www.lynda.com/signin/ip>

Account required? Users must create their own accounts with their email addresses to track their progress in coursework.

Mobile app available? Yes – iPhone and Android

Free? Free for users at Niagara Falls Public Library (no card required – verified by IP address)

Self-Paced Available? Yes – all courses are self-paced

Example Course Titles: Accounting and Financial Management, Introduction to Computer Science, The Science and Practice of Yoga



Webjunction offers live webinars, webinar recordings and self-paced courses on a variety of topics relevant to librarians and library staff. Certificates of completion are available for continuing education credits.

URL: <http://webjunction.org/>

Account required? Yes

Mobile app available? No

Free? Yes

Self-Paced Available? Yes, in addition to webinar recordings.

Example Webinar/Course Titles: Bilingual Storytimes: Reaching Through the Language Barrier, Wikipedia for Libraries: Preview the Possibilities, Discover the Opportunities, eReader Detective: Solving the case for your library patrons