

Getting Started with WWCC's Outdoor Power Equipment Program

Now that you have registered for the OPE program, you may have questions about how to begin. The following information should answer many of the questions you have and will give you an introduction to the web based format of the program.

Frequently asked Questions

How will this be taught?

- Both on and off campus students will interact and work through the lecture material in a web based program called Blackboard (hosted through Washington Online).
- On campus students will complete their competencies and hands-on training with the Outdoor Power Equipment instructor.
- Off campus students will complete their competencies and in-field training in more of an apprenticeship environment. All students must be working in a repair facility and must have a mentor who will be available to give advice and “The Feel” that can not be demonstrated on video or the web.
- Grades will be based on the completion of competencies, web based assignments, and the results of the Equipment and Engines Training Councils Certification Test (EETC).

What time commitment is there on WWCC campus?

- Since the lecture material is all web based it is possible that a student off campus could complete the certificate without ever coming on campus.
- All on campus industry seminars are open to off campus students or an edited video version will be available on line.
- On campus students can expect to spend 20-30 hours per week in the shop

How long is the Program?

- Currently we are only offering a one year certificate, which is three college quarters for a total of 79 credits.
- Other options being considered include the second year and shorter modules.

When does it start?

- Fall 2008 (September 22)
- Students can also start in any quarter after Fall 2008

What credentials will I earn?

- After completion of three college quarters, students will receive a Certificate as an Outdoor Power Equipment Technician.
- After completing any one of the four core classes and passing its corresponding test, you will get an EETC certification certificate and a set of arm patches.

What will be taught?

- Students will learn the technical knowledge and mechanical skills necessary to service, troubleshoot and repair today's sophisticated recreational, residential and commercial turf equipment using the competencies and national testing provided by the EETC.

What are the benefits of this program?

- Opportunities in various job settings such as motorcycle dealers, golf courses, landscaping businesses, parks and recreation departments, rental outfits and consumer equipment.
- Beyond being a technician, advancement opportunities exist in the areas of service management, product support, customer service, sales, and management.

What are the benefits of this teaching model?

- It allows the flexibility to be on campus and focus on education or earn money in an apprenticeship environment while learning or improving skills already learned.
- The Web course can be accessed anywhere, anytime via the Internet and a Web browser. The times and places for interaction and communication are flexible and generally asynchronous. The primary characteristic of a Web course -- that it is fully available on the Web -- means that the faculty member teaching the course and the students taking the course can participate from anywhere in the world. This also means, generally, that location-based activities such as class meetings or gatherings at physical seminars or conferences are not required.
- The location of WWCC and the small number of colleges across the USA that teach this profession make it necessary for most students to have to relocate to attend training. Students who are far away save money by not temporarily relocating or traveling to and from school. Those already employed do not have to take a leave of absence or quit their job to improve their skill level or earn a college degree.
- Those students who have basic knowledge and just want to fill holes in their education or to refresh their skills can speed through the material faster and not be bored or waste time.
- Those students with little background can go back and review any of the material until they have mastered the subject.

Who is the program targeting?

- People new to the industry with a limited knowledge of equipment fundamentals
- Students who like to work with their hands to repair things
- Students who enjoy the environment of recreational, consumer, and/or commercial equipment industries.
- Currently working techs that are seeking a degree or industry certificates but can not stop working.

Getting Started with Blackboard

All of the lecture and supplemental material for the courses in the Outdoor Power Equipment Program will be available through the web based course management system called Blackboard. Blackboard is hosted through Washington Online and you will access your courses by going to the Washington Online website and logging into Blackboard. The courses you are registered for will not be available to you until the week before the quarter starts, but in the meantime, you can explore a Blackboard tutorial that is available. This tutorial will help you learn your way around a Blackboard classroom and let you become familiar with the online environment.

To Access the Online Blackboard Tutorial:

- Use your web browser to go to the Washington Online website: <http://www.waol.org>
- Add this website to your Favorites (bookmark the site) because you will be accessing it frequently during the quarter.
- Locate the column labeled **Current Students**. The first item in the column is **Login to Your Blackboard Classroom**. Click this item to go to the Blackboard login window.
- Click the **Login** button to see the Blackboard Login screen.
- To access the Blackboard tutorial, use this information:

Username: **weekzero** Password: **guest**

After you have clicked the login button, you will see the Washington Online welcome page.

- In the **My Courses** section of the welcome page, you will see the course **PFSWEEK0:Week Zero – Learning Blackboard**. Click on the course name to enter the Blackboard tutorial classroom.
- Click the **Course Information** button on the left side of the course. Now follow the directions to begin learning how to navigate and participate in a Blackboard classroom.

Exploring Your OPE Program Online Courses

Your actual online classrooms will not be available to you until the Thursday before the WWCC quarter starts. For example, if the WWCC Fall Quarter starts on Monday, September 22, your online classrooms will be open and available to you on Thursday, September 18.

Once your classrooms are open, you will follow the directions on the Blackboard Login screen to login to Blackboard with your personal login information. After you have logged in, you will see all the classes you are registered for and you will be able to enter the classrooms and begin exploring the information available to you. **The Shop Fundamentals class** will have additional orientation material for you to read and get started on.

On Campus Orientations

For those of you who have access to the WWCC campus and would like to attend an in-person orientation, the following sessions will be available for Fall 2008:

Tuesday, September 23 at 5:30pm and Thursday, September 25 at 1:30pm

The orientation sessions are held in room 281 in the Library and last for 30 – 45 minutes.

These orientation sessions provide general guidelines for being successful in any online course offered at WWCC and will give you an opportunity to login to your classrooms if you haven't already done so. There will be time for questions at the end of each session.

Contacting Your Outdoor Power Equipment Program Instructor

If you have additional questions or have not yet registered for the program and would like to, you can contact George Klein by email at george.klein@wwcc.edu or by phone at 527-3673.