



Connecting Online Students to Campus Library Resources

by Linda Beninghove,
Library Director

The Samuel C. Williams Library is the center for information discovery at Stevens Institute of Technology. Students, faculty and researchers have access to more than 90 research databases in subject areas ranging from Engineering and Science to Management and Business and the Arts and Humanities (researchguides.stevens.edu/az.php).

The library supports on- and off-campus students and faculty by providing access to books, ebooks, journals, trade publications, newspapers, dissertations and more. As a Stevens student, you have access to EVERYTHING, not only those topics associated with your online course. Want to read the online version of *The NY Times*? Don't pay for a subscription — you already have a subscription through the library! Want to research a company for your job search?

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Student Feature

Engaged. Advancing. Way-Off Campus. And Online.

by Robert Zotti, Assistant Dean, WebCampus



Erik James is a senior Systems Engineer at UTC Aerospace Systems in Danbury, CT. He will receive his Master of Science, Systems Engineering from Stevens in 2017.

As working professionals begin to advance in their organizations, many come face to face with a crucial decision regarding the advancement of their skills and knowledge. For Erik James, this decision came shortly after he joined United Technologies Corporation's Aerospace Systems Division in Danbury, CT, as a senior engineer. This exiting role put him in the center of program management, systems design, and systems architecture activities. It also made it more challenging to earn an advanced degree that would help him reach his career goals — at least in a conventional classroom-based academic program. This ultimately led Erik to enroll in the Systems Engineering program, available through WebCampus since 2003. "The flexibility and advanced course offerings online made this decision a simple one," he said. "The tempo and depth of content was ideal."

Erik's pursuit of his degree actually began in a regular classroom, as Stevens conducted several courses at UTC's Danbury site.

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The university worked out a schedule to accommodate an initial cohort of 12 students. But as they progressed through the first 2-3 courses of the 10-course program, several students were attracted to tracks that were not available at the UTC site. Erik was one of the students who opted to take the rest of his courses online. One of the courses in his "high interest" list was SYS750 (Advanced System and Software Architecture Modeling and Assessment). What made this course particularly memorable for Erik were the assignments that made use of a software package called Astah, which helped students develop and practice system modeling skills. "I learned a lot about planning and forethought of systems architecture. We also got into really deep-level topics — ones that are really applicable to what I do currently," he said. He is now confident that he will be able to avoid many pitfalls and missteps on the job due to his experience using Astah. According to Professor Peter Korfiatis, who conducted the SYS750 class, the assignments built around the Astah application were the first experience for most students in using such sophisticated system modeling tools. "I ask the students to do a full-scale model of a system, or a system of systems, using Astah," said Korfiatis. "As they slowly start to build their models, they share with me the diagrams they created and the rationale for why they did the things that they did." In order to walk the students

through the modeling procedures, Korfiatis held weekly online office hours using Blackboard Collaborate, the school's web conferencing system. "It's a challenging class to deliver online because it's tool-oriented, so it takes some time to walk them through the modeling procedures. But because of that I offered a lot of one-on-one time," said Korfiatis.

The online office hour sessions proved to be a significant factor. A "straw poll" was taken at the beginning of the semester to determine the best time to hold them. There were also recordings for those who could not make the real-time sessions. The flexible format and agenda worked well for students who had a variety of constraints on their time. "We had a lot of people who were spread out over the West Coast, the East Coast, and some on travel," noted Erik. "The recordings worked out really well for people who were on the West Coast and got out of work after the class had already started. Most of the time I could make the online sessions but sometimes when I was just too busy, I used the recordings." The real-time and recorded sessions allowed students to follow detailed demonstrations and get answers to related problems without the delays associated with email exchanges and discussion boards. "Dr. Korfiatis was very clear and objective in his responses, which allowed me to better resolve the learning blocks I was having," noted Erik.

Another factor that has been growing in significance for online courses over the past

several years is the use of mobile technology by course participants. "I used my iPad a lot to go into the Canvas application, which was VERY helpful," noted Erik. "I did this about a quarter of the time when I just wanted to check for postings but didn't have time to open up my PC."

The payoff

The Systems Engineering curriculum has already had a dramatic effect for Erik. "My skillset as a practicing systems engineer is now more comprehensive in reference to all the activities I engage in. I think I've absorbed a high percentage of the collective experience of the professors," he said. "In fact, the professors had experience which ran much deeper in the industry than I initially expected."

Epilog

Erik is scheduled to graduate in May 2017 and plans to go on to earn his OMG-CSMP certification in systems modeling. He also plans to become involved in the INCOSE professional society.

Professor Korfiatis continues to improve the SYS750 course. "I have videos that I record where I actually walk through the examples myself in the modeling tool. I also requested that the tool vendor create videos of their own, and they have actually done that, so there is a bigger library of videos to choose from," he noted.

Campus Library Resources...

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You have access to MarketLine Reports through the Business Source Premier database, Hoover's database, and Mergent Online through the Library! (library.stevens.edu/find/databases-by-subject#table_3)

The library is dedicated to fostering an innovative environment with technology, education and culture. Our librarians are trained experts in searching and retrieving research and providing innovative information and media literacy instruction, in-depth research assistance, and guidance regarding best practices in global scholarly communication.

If the library does not have the material you need, the library staff can obtain it for you through Document Delivery Services (library.stevens.edu/services/interlibraryloan). To guide and support your research, the librarians create useful Research Guides (researchguides.stevens.edu), teach library instruction classes and workshops, and offer research assistance in person and by phone, email and chat (library.stevens.edu/research-help/research-assistance).

At Stevens, we encourage ALL students to visit the online library site and look around (library.stevens.edu). You never know what you might find!

Your Voice Counts! Take the Library Survey!

The survey will be available through March 10 and will take approximately five minutes to complete.

The link to the survey may be found at surveymonkey.com/r/WJN7C2V

On-Demand Training for Instructors

Faculty members who are looking for hints on how to use a particular feature in Canvas or who want to sharpen the delivery of their online course are encouraged to check out the CanvasLearn training resource. This resource can be accessed from the standard Canvas dashboard via myStevens, and covers course design, grading, assessments and much more.



Online Master's in Construction Management Gains Momentum!

Stevens is planning to roll out a fully online master's degree in construction management later this year. This program will give online students an immersive experience designed to build complex construction skill sets. The curriculum shall consist of:

Core courses

CM506WS

Computer Applications in the Construction Process

CM592WS

Advanced Project Controls in the Built Environment

CM605WS

Construction Safety Management

Electives

CM501WS

Construction Engineering I

CM510WS

Construction Industry Fundamentals

CM530WS

Strategic Responses to Cyclical Environments

CM560WS

Sustainable Design

CM561WS

Green Construction

CM590WS

Construction Management II

CM671WS

Practicum

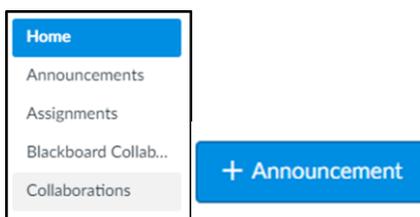
Contact Linda Thomas,
Program Director
201.216.5681 or
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Instructor Tip of the Month

Using Announcements in Canvas

Canvas provides an “announcement” feature that allows you as the instructor to broadcast a message to all students. This is a great tool to remind students of upcoming deadlines, let them know you will be unavailable or point them to external information without needing to add a module to your course. Select “Announcement” from the left-hand side of the course home screen, click the “+ Announcement” button on the upper left and complete the form!

Step 1



Step 2

> [Announcements](#) > Create new

Prepare for exam on 3/24

B *I* U A **A** *I*

Use chapter 5 of the textbook and the recording from 2/24 to prepare for the exam on 3/24

Attachment No file chosen

Options Delay posting
 Users must post before seeing replies
 Enable podcast feed
 Allow liking

Advanced options like embedding videos, photos and Canvas activities are available.

Student Tip of the Month

Keep a Canvas Calendar

Canvas provides a calendar within your course for you to use. Even if your professor does not utilize the calendar, you can add reminders for upcoming assignments and tests. Click on the word “Calendar” on the right-hand side of your course Home screen. At the top of the next screen, click the “+” and fill in the details!

Important Dates

Spring break	March 12-19
Last day for 25% refund	March 20
Last day to withdraw w/o signatures	April 10

Tell us what you think

What stories would you like us to publish?

Would you like to write a story?

Let us know!

Contact: Wendy Pate
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