Welcome to Coursera
Welcome to Coursera!

Coursera is a technology company that helps teachers at top universities and organizations worldwide offer courses online for anyone to take, free of charge.

We aim to empower people with education that will improve their lives, the lives of their families, and the communities they live in. To do that, we work with top universities and organizations to offer classes that reach tens of thousands of students, from all over the world. A Coursera student is as likely to hail from Bangalore as she is from Boston, and student ages range from under 18 to over 80.

But Coursera is more than a tool for reaching large numbers of students. Coursera’s platform allows you to deliver content in a variety of new ways. The Coursera community — comprised of thousands of university officials, faculty members, and teaching staff — is a vibrant forum for sharing ideas and collaborating across institutions. Our partners have also found Coursera to be a valuable tool for improving on-campus teaching — through facilitating flipped-classroom learning and through private courses open only to on-campus students.

However you choose to use Coursera, we’ll be here to help along the way. Thank you so much for joining us.

Daphne Koller
Andrew Ng
The Coursera Community

A global community, from Andorra to Zimbabwe

Students in many Coursera classes have created Google Maps to mark their locations around the world. This map was created by students in Johns Hopkins’ “Vaccine Trials: Methods and Best Practices.”

~5M
students are enrolled on Coursera

195
Coursera students hail from 195 nations — every country in the world

40%
of Coursera students live in the developing world

The Coursera community includes nearly five million students, from every country in the world. The community also includes our nearly 90 partners from across the globe. Together, these universities and institutions have launched hundreds of courses and generated over 15 million student enrollments.

Coursera is a global community, and primary languages on the platform include English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Chinese, and Arabic. And now, thanks to our new Global Translation Partners Program, Coursera is working with organizations throughout the world to translate course content into Japanese, Kazakh, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian, Chinese, and many more languages to come.
Meet your students

Who are Coursera students?

Why are you taking this Coursera class?
- I’m generally interested in the course material
- I want to connect with other students interested in this subject
- I have friends taking this course
- This course relates to my current academic program
- This course relates to my current job responsibilities
- The skills from this course can help me obtain a new job

Coursera students come from all over the world, speak scores of languages, and range in age from teenager to senior citizen. Students also take courses for a variety of reasons: Some may be seeking skills that will unlock new job opportunities; others may be lifelong learners with a general interest in the course material. In creating a class on Coursera, here are a few factors you may want to keep in mind:

Language
Many Coursera courses use English as their primary language. Still, it’s important to note that for a large number of Coursera students, English is not a first language. Coursera provides a number of resources to facilitate teaching to an international audience, including subtitling and a video player that allows for slower playback speeds.

Student motivations
Students have diverse motivations for taking Coursera courses. Some students will be committed to taking your class from beginning to end: Their goal is to earn a Statement of Accomplishment or Signature Track certificate. Other students, however, may simply watch the lecture videos, or participate in the course for a few select modules.

Diversity
Coursera students hail from every country across the world (you’ll even find Coursera students in Antarctica). Coursera also attracts students of all ages, from teenagers to mid-career professionals to senior citizens. In creating course materials, keep in mind that your students may not share a common cultural or linguistic background.
Meet your students

Student profiles

The skills-builder
Name: Urmat
From: Kyrgyzstan

My work requires new approaches and skills. As for all young people it is hard to receive quality education especially if you work for only 250 USD a month. I always try to find opportunity for new knowledge, but there weren't such opportunities before I discovered Coursera. It was an amazing finding! I enrolled in An Introduction to Operations Management by University of Pennsylvania and applied for Coursera Financial Aid.

The organizer
Name: Sharon
From: United States

The Learning Cafe is a community “learning environment” located in a high poverty community. We had 10 of our members enroll in a business class through Coursera. Their ages ranged from 16 to 70+ and all but two had no college degree. Nine completed the class, 8 took the exam and 6 passed!

The lifelong learner
Name: Susan
From: Canada

In the mid-1960’s I told my high school guidance counselor that I wanted to study archaeology and work at the Royal Ontario Museum. She said to me, “You cannot expect your parents to send you to university. You will only get married and have babies anyway.” I never told my parents. Coursera has proven to me that I could have done it. My self-worth has risen, and my children are proud of me.

The advancer
Name: Rachel
From: Philippines

I am from Cebu, Philippines where I work as a software engineer. Unfortunately, there are very few people in Cebu who can teach advanced CS courses. Luckily, I learned about Coursera. Since then, I have taken several classes and participated as a Community TA. I am very grateful for the opportunity to learn from the very best teachers without having to relocate or pause my career.
A community of educators

Meet your 3,500 new colleagues

By joining Coursera, you join not only a community of students, but also a group of top educators from around the world. Coursera partners work with each other to study educational outcomes, share best practices, and even offer joint courses. And from our annual Partners’ Conference to our online Partners’ Portal, Coursera gives you the tools and opportunities to connect with educators across the globe.

Partners’ Conference

Each year, Coursera partners gather to trade best practices, share experiences, and explore new ideas. The 2013 conference drew over 400 guests from around the world.

Partners’ Portal

The Coursera Partners’ Portal is both a collection of resources — from video tutorials to example galleries — as well as a forum for university instructors and administrators.
About Coursera
learning without limits

Crafting your MOOC
designing your course

The student experience
Learning on Coursera

Crafting your MOOC
How Coursera works

Thinking about teaching a course with us? From recording lecture videos to building a course description page, there are a number of steps that go into creating a MOOC.

Step 1: Sign up!

As an instructor, once you have a Coursera account, your university administrator can grant you access to the course administration platform.

Step 2: Course page

Once you have access, you can start by creating your course description page, which includes informational text and a short promotional video.

Step 3: Course materials

Each run-through of a course is called a “session.” Once you create a session, you can start adding course materials like lectures and assessments.

Step 4: Launch!

Once your course description page is ready and you’ve begun to put together your materials, launch your course to allow students to sign up!
Interactive video lectures

Interactive video allows you to redefine the lecture format. Your students can speed up or slow down video playback, re-watch challenging segments, and read subtitles in English and in other languages. As an instructor, you can embed quizzes and other exercises directly into the lecture video, allowing students to test their understanding on the spot. In past Coursera classes, instructors have used lecture videos to share animations, play external video clips, film interviews with guests, and much more.

Free textbooks & other resources

Coursera also gives you the tools to supplement your lectures with a variety of additional resources. In addition to videos, you can upload lecture slides, notes, and recommended readings. Finally, thanks to a new partnership with top textbook publishers, you can apply for free access to a wide selection of textbooks for the duration of your course. Using a special in-browser e-reader developed for Coursera by Chegg, students can highlight passages, bookmark pages, and buy the book for out-of-class use.
In his course on “Democratic Development,” Stanford professor Larry Diamond interviewed high-profile guests for a series of supplementary videos. In this video, Diamond talks with former president of Peru Alejandro Toledo.

With web-based lecture videos, you can create content targeted at specific student groups. This screenshot shows a listing of lectures from University of Maryland’s “Exploring Quantum Physics.” Lectures marked with two asterisks are for students with intermediate math skills; lectures with three asterisks are for students with more advanced skills.

In his introductory Calculus class, University of Pennsylvania Professor Robert Ghrist uses intricate, hand-drawn animations to illustrate mathematical principles.

In University of Pennsylvania’s popular “Gamification” course, Professor Kevin Webach introduces himself to students as an avatar in a video game.
Assessments

Make content stick — with more than multiple choice

Interactive lectures help you to deliver content; assessments **make content stick.** Online exercises engage students, prompt recall, provide instant feedback, and put material in context. Assessments on Coursera are grouped into three categories: quizzes, programming assignments, and peer assessments.

### Quizzes

Quizzes include multiple kinds of auto-graded assignments: highly customizable multiple-choice quizzes, short answer questions (that can be graded by regular expression), and math expressions. You can use Coursera quizzes as exams, homework assignments, problem sets, or whatever fits for your class.

### Programming assignments

A “programming assignment” is an exercise in which a student submits code that is then graded by an instructor-created script. Programming assignments greatly expand the range of machine-gradable assessments, and can be used in a number of disciplines, from computer science, to math, statistics, and other fields.

### Peer assessments

Peer assessments make personal feedback possible even in classes with thousands of students. In peer assessments, instructors provide students with both an assignment and a detailed rubric that guides students to be effective evaluators. Students then learn by being both “student” and “teacher.”
Assessments

Snapshot: Quizzes

On Coursera, quizzes are much more than a simple multiple-choice affair. Rather, quizzes can be customized to incorporate features such as randomization, short answers, mathematic equivalence checking, and more.

Randomization

With randomization, you can create quizzes that students can take again and again — without ever seeing the same questions. Our randomization tool allows you to create a pool of questions (and answers within those questions) that can be displayed at random to your students.

Math questions

LaTeX notation can be used to generate math symbols in quizzes and in other parts of the platform. Additionally, Coursera allows you to design questions that ask for a free-form math expression or equation as a response.

Short answer

On Coursera, students can also submit short answers that can be matched to an instructor-provided pattern. This format works well for fill-in-the-blank questions, lists, and more.
Assessments

Snapshot: Programming assignments

Programming assignments expand the range of machine-gradable assessments, allowing you to engage your students with a diversity of interactive exercises. Programming assignments are perfect for computer science classes — and for classes in many other disciplines as well.

Client-side grading

In this type of programming assignment (the most common we see on Coursera), students run their code locally and submit the output for grading on our servers. Grading is done by comparing the student’s output to a pre-specified answer, either numerically, or via regular expressions.

Server-side grading

For more complex assessments, we can run instructor-designed grading scripts on our servers. Custom graders work well for complex assignments which may have a variety of correct answers (and thus cannot be assessed through simple answer matching).
### Assessments

**Snapshot: Peer assessments**

*Not all assignments lend themselves to automated grading by a computer.* Coursera instructors have used peer assessments to give students the opportunity for personal feedback in classes ranging from English literature to design to computer science.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Creating the assignment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Student submission</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Training period (optional)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Evaluate classmates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>“Ground truth” (optional)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Self-assessment (optional)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Viewing grades</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching — and taking — a Coursera course is hardly an impersonal experience. Students are typically eager to participate, and you’ll have a variety of tools at hand to make your MOOC social.

**Discussion forums**

Coursera students have voiced themselves in hundreds of thousands of discussion threads. Forums are a great place for students to interact with each other, and to post questions and comments about course material. With thousands of students regularly posting in a course, forums can create self-sustaining class communities.

A number of courses have used Google Hangouts to host live office hours with a small group of students, while allowing a larger group of students stream the video in real time and ask questions through a forum. You can use Google Hangouts to answer questions that students have, or to have a live discussion on class material.

**Google+ Hangouts**

Community TAs (CTAs) are students who have performed exceptionally well in one session of a course and are invited back to help monitor discussion boards in a subsequent session. Community TAs facilitate near-effortless re-running of courses.
Building class community

Case studies

Design competition

The staff of the University of Pennsylvania course “Design: Creation of Artifacts in Society” organized a t-shirt competition in which over 20,000 students voted. The university will be making and selling shirts using the first- and second-place designs.

*At left: The winning design by José Carlos Montes Ríos of Spain.*

Google+ Hangouts

In his “Introduction to Sociology” class, Princeton professor Mitchell Duneier hosted weekly live chats with his students using Google Hangouts. After the broadcasts, each Hangout was edited together from multiple camera angles and uploaded to the live site for other students to watch.

*At left: Mitch Duneier hosting one of his weekly live chats.*

Global office hours

University of Michigan professor Charles Severance has traveled to many cities across the United States hosting open office hours. He personally films these open office hours with a handheld camcorder while interacting with students, and then uploads the sessions to his course site.

*At left: Coursera student Arcelia at an office hours session in Los Angeles.*
Coursera On-Campus

Flipping your classroom and internal courses

Coursera gives you a way of reaching tens of thousands of students from across the world. It also can help you improve the education you offer to students closer to home.

The Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom is a teaching strategy that allows instructors to more actively engage with students in the classroom. In the flipped classroom, instructors typically assign recorded video lectures as homework, and use class time for active learning exercises and direct engagement with students.

Many of our partner universities have used Coursera to encourage flipped-classroom teaching on campus, and Coursera offers a number of tools to help. Coursera’s Flipped Classroom Field Guide, for instance, is a compilation of best-practices and community resources centered around the flipped classroom and blended learning. Our Flipped101 Video Lectures also offer a high-level overview of the flipped classroom.

“I will never, ever, ever, teach a class any other way. This is so much better — I had so much more fun teaching and the students learned so much more.” — Professor Scott Rixner, Rice University

Internal courses

Many of our partners also use Coursera to create classes that only on-campus students can access. When an on-campus student logs into an internal class, he or she authenticates through the university’s login system. This cleanly separates the internal classes from public classes, and ensures that public students cannot access the internal site.

Coursera partners use internal classes for different reasons. On-campus sites can be highly customized to meet student needs — for instance, an instructor can upload class materials that are solely intended for on-campus students. Internal classes also allow course staff to more easily monitor forums and ensure that student questions are answered.
Instructor & student support

We’ve got your back

As you build and teach classes on Coursera, we’ll be there to help — every step of the way.

24/7 support

We’re committed to ensuring that technical issues don’t keep you from running a great class. To do that, we’ve built an intuitive reporting tool that helps solve student problems, and we make it easy for instructors to flag issues as well. We also guarantee 24/7 availability for resolving critical problems, and quick turnaround times for support requests.

Dedicated team

Our Course Operations team is dedicated to helping your class succeed. To do that, we pair each Coursera partner with a Course Ops liaison who can offer technical guidance, pedagogical support, information on best practices, and more. Our Course Ops team includes platform pros, A/V specialists, and student support superheroes.

Full documentation

To make sure you have all the resources you need to run a great class, we’ve put together meticulous — and clear — documentation about every aspect of our platform. Your students will also have access to a comprehensive Student Support Center with FAQs, technical guidance, information about Coursera policies and more.
Reaching students
A full toolkit for filling your classroom

The Coursera community includes nearly five million students, and classes on the platform often enroll 100,000 students or more. Here are a few of the ways Coursera can help you share your course with the world.

Social media
With over a million likes, +1’s, and followers, Coursera can connect you with a broad audience of students from across the world. On its social media channels, Coursera posts promotional videos from classes, student spotlights, and more.

Course catalog
On our course catalog, students can browse a list of upcoming courses, search by class name, university, or instructor, and filter courses by language and discipline. Students can also find classes that are eligible for Signature Track.

Email marketing
Coursera’s email newsletters are read by nearly a million users. These newsletters are customized for each user and give information about recommended courses, new platform features, blog posts, and more.
The student experience
From sign-up to certificate

Class begins
You’ve set your class to “active” and the learning begins! This day tends to see a huge spike in the number of visits to the course, as some students will be interested in sampling the lecture videos to determine whether they want to commit to the class.

Student discussion
In many Coursera classes, students take the initiative to form online or offline study groups. To date, Courserians have formed study groups in over 2,500 cities across the globe.

Signature Track deadline
Many universities allow their Coursera students to earn identity-verified Signature Track certificates. For more on Signature Track, click here.

Statements of accomplishment
Most universities choose to offer a Statement of Accomplishment to students who successfully complete their Coursera class. While not all students aim to submit all course assignments, many do; in a typical class of 40,000 students, around 1,500 students will likely earn a Statement of Accomplishment.
Signature Track
Identity-verified recognition for your students

Signature Track gives you the ability to grant your students identity-verified certificates of accomplishment. A student can then add this certificate to his or her resume, share it with an employer, or simply keep it as a recognition of successfully completing the course.

Identity verification
Students enrolled in Signature Track must verify their identity with a government-issued ID. Signature Track also verifies identity by creating a biometric profile of a student’s unique typing pattern and photo.

Shareable certificate
Upon passing their Signature Track course, a student will receive a verified electronic certificate that can be shared with employers, educational institutions, or others through a unique, secure URL.

Financial aid
Coursera Financial Aid is a special program to give Coursera students in all economic circumstances the chance to participate in Signature Track. Financial aid has helped thousands of students earn verified certificates.
What comes after

Student takeaways

Just as students enroll in Coursera courses for a variety of reasons, students leave their Coursera class changed in different ways.

Name: Mahmud Angrini
From: Aleppo, Syria
Coursera record: 19 Statements of Accomplishment; 6 Signature Track certificates

Mahmud Angrini is a medical doctor from Syria. With the conflagration in Syria, Mahmud lost everything — his job, his plans for a new laboratory, and a scholarship from the Syrian Ministry of Higher Education that would have enabled him to study for a PhD in France.

“What I can assure you is that Coursera changed my life.”

Living as a refugee — “sad, depressed, bored, and isolated,” as he describes it — Mahmud discovered Coursera. As his English language skills improved, Mahmud continued to enroll in new courses, eventually amassing 25 statements of accomplishment and verified certificates. Spurred by his newfound knowledge, Mahmud recently took the TOEFL test — scoring a 600 — and is now pursuing a new PhD scholarship.

Name: Daniel
Age: 17
Coursera record: 6 Statements of Accomplishment

Daniel is a 17-year-old who has severe autism. Over the past year, Daniel has also completed six Coursera courses. As Daniel’s father, Michael, writes: “By the time we discovered Coursera, we were well into the groove of teaching Dan at home....Dan is eager to go to school, but is unable to sit still quietly in a classroom...Coursera seemed like a possible bridge between home schooling and what Dan called ‘going to a real school,’ but it turned out to be much more.” According to Michael, on Coursera, Daniel also experienced “a dramatic decrease in his sense of isolation.” During an in-person webcast for the University of Pennsylvania’s Modern Poetry course, Daniel had a “moment of stardom,” as Michael puts it, reading aloud a two-word poem for an audience of hundreds of people.

“It is impossible to overstate the happiness Coursera has brought to our son.”