Guide to Free or Low-Cost Study Materials for ECEs and UExcel® Exams

First let us point out that “supported independent study” is not a new concept at Excelsior College. We have always stressed to exam takers that they are acting as their own teacher, and should expect to spend as much time studying for an exam as they would spend in the classroom and on homework for the corresponding college course. The free content guides (available at getcollegecredit.excelsior.edu) that include content outlines, recommended/required resources, and sample questions, have always been thorough and well correlated. But you may be looking for more — perhaps a coherent course for self-study, lectures on specific topics, or audio or visual materials that fit your learning style better than print materials alone.

This document identifies Web-based learning materials (not just “test prep”) for almost all the current Excelsior College® Examinations (ECEs) and UExcel® exam offerings, reviewed for appropriateness by EC staff and faculty. Keep in mind, though, that none of these resources were designed by Excelsior, nor are they guaranteed to match the exam content outlines completely. They are just another tool in your study kit. Please help us add more tools by sending links for additional resources you discover to OER@excelsior.edu. We will check them out and decide whether they should be added to this document. You should use the same e-mail address for any questions you may have about using these resources. Whenever you’re ready to begin studying for your next exam, check getcollegecredit.excelsior.edu for the latest version of this document. We plan to update it as new resources and new exams come out.

Some Words About the Importance of Textbooks

Although the recommended textbooks and practice exams are not included in the cost calculations for the “Bachelor’s degree for $10K” degree programs, we highly recommend that you budget to include these valuable resources in your educational plan. All questions on the exams are referenced to specific pages in the recommended textbooks, and it may be challenging to demonstrate the level of knowledge required to pass an ECE or UExcel exam unless you have used college-level textbooks or have significant practical and theory-based experience in the field of study. If you can obtain the recommended textbook(s) and use their electronic supplements (for example, a correlated Web site or CD-ROM), you may not even need the other resources listed here. Most of the textbooks used for the ECEs and UExcel exams have online components (for example, MyStatsLab associated with a Statistics textbook). Some of these are noted in the exam directory below. While products like MyStatsLab are designed for students working with a classroom instructor, they have much valuable material that you can use independently. Excelsior has worked with its Pearson partners to ensure that student access to Web resources is part of the package whenever a Pearson textbook that has these resources is recommended for an ECE or UExcel exam.

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If you qualify for financial aid, you may be able to get help with textbook purchases. Or lower your textbook costs with some of the following techniques:

1. **Buy used textbooks.** The Excelsior College and UExcel bookstores often sell used textbooks, or you can go to the MyExcelsiorCommunity used book exchange or try an online service to purchase them. It’s best to purchase the recommended edition of the textbook, but some subjects don’t change much. For example, you could study using an older edition of a Calculus textbook, but the field of Labor Relations changes frequently because of legal and regulatory issues, so you would want the current edition for that subject.

2. **Choose the e-text version** if one is offered by the Bookstore. This will usually save you money, and it sometimes links you up with really good online study materials. It may also be possible to rent a textbook for just the time you’ll be studying for the exam.

3. **Use a different, but still college-level, textbook** that you can buy for less or borrow. You will have to locate topics in the exam content outline for yourself, but you will have a quality reference. Such textbooks may be available through a library in your community or via interlibrary loan through the Excelsior College Library, as well.

4. **Investigate** companies that offer free or low-cost textbooks. Flat World Knowledge (flatworldknowledge.com) is a prominent example of a company that provides quality college-level e-textbooks. At the Saylor Foundation Web site, this specific link will take you to a chart that shows whether an e-textbook is included in each of their courses: [http://www.saylor.org/content-matrix](http://www.saylor.org/content-matrix)

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**Choosing Open Educational Resources (OER)**

The OER movement was started by some prominent US educational institutions, among them MIT and Carnegie-Mellon University. The catalogues of available courses have grown rapidly with many other institutions, from small community colleges to prestigious research universities, supporting the effort. Most sites for university-based OER can be searched through [ocwconsortium.org](http://ocwconsortium.org) and/or [oercommons.org](http://oercommons.org).

Sites that specialize in Web courses designed by college professors under contract with the Web site sponsor, rather than in Web versions of existing college courses, include [www.saylor.org](http://www.saylor.org), [www.hippocampus.org](http://www.hippocampus.org) and [www.opencourselibrary.org](http://www.opencourselibrary.org) (abbreviated below as OCL).

We have included specific courses that cover material for one or more ECEs or UExcel exams from the above sites in the listing below. It’s worth checking these sites frequently to see if new courses have been added that may be more appropriate or may cover an exam topic not currently listed.

In addition, sites like Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.com](http://www.khanacademy.com)) and iTunes U feature relatively brief lessons on very specific topics rather than full courses. Full courses are also available on iTunesU, but the sheer quantity of offerings makes it challenging to locate them. We have chosen a few for this listing.

**Other Resources, Both Low-Cost and Pricey**

Wonderful course-like materials are available for purchase from such companies as The Teaching Company ([www.thegreatcourses.com](http://www.thegreatcourses.com)) and The Annenberg Learner ([www.learner.org](http://www.learner.org)). Rosetta Stone ([www.rosettastone.com](http://www.rosettastone.com)) and the less-known but cheaper Transparent Language ([www.transparent.com](http://www.transparent.com)) sell excellent Spanish courses. Their cost may be prohibitive unless they are on sale at a discount, but guess what: libraries sometimes purchase these materials and make them available for loan, and some of the Annenberg video series can be viewed online for free through [www.learner.org/resources](http://www.learner.org/resources). You only have to purchase them if you need a videocassette, CD-ROM, or DVD. Relevant Annenberg online resources are listed in the directory below.
How the Directory Is Organized

Each exam is listed, alphabetically by title. A *star by the title indicates that the exam carries upper-level credit like a 300 or 400-level course, so it will be especially important to focus on theoretical knowledge, applications, and problem solving. On the next lines, a variety of resources are listed. Offerings sponsored by Excelsior College (such as Smarthinking or the Online Writing Lab) will be listed first. You should access these through the MyResources tab in your MyExcelsior account. These are followed by offerings from the Saylor Foundation, Hippocampus, Khan Academy, and Annenberg. Materials from these providers are likely to be the most user friendly. Other listings indicate the institution or organization and course title that you can search for on one of the OER Web sites (ocwconsortium.org or oercommons.org). In a few cases, a specific URL is listed for a less common site. You will need a free iTunes account to access the iTunesU offerings.

Once you have selected a resource, be sure to keep your ECE or UExcel content guide close at hand, to ensure that you are covering all the material and using the textbooks appropriately. The content guide and recommended texts are the authority on what will be on the exam.

### *ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY*

- Saylor: Abnormal Behavior
- Annenberg: The World of Abnormal Psychology
- Liberty University: Psych 430 Abnormal Psychology on iTunesU

### ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

- Smarthinking
- Khan Academy
- Harrisburg Area Community College: Anatomy & Physiology on iTunesU

UC Berkeley: Integrative Biology lectures: [http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5C6CB80EEA1D6A28](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5C6CB80EEA1D6A28)

### CALCULUS

- Smarthinking
- Khan Academy
- Hippocampus: General Calculus I
- Saylor: Single Variable Calculus I (good material, but does not cover the entire UExcel exam content)
- MIT: Calculus Revisited
- OCL: Calculus I
- Temple University: Calculus on the Web

### COLLEGE WRITING

- Smarthinking
- EC Online Writing Lab (OWL)
- Saylor: English Composition I

### *BIOETHICS*

- Annenberg: Ethics in America and Ethics in America II for good case preparation
- MIT: Bioethics Spring 2009 and Dilemmas in Biomedical Ethics: Playing God or Doing Good Spring 2005

### *CULTURAL DIVERSITY*

- (recommended Marger text has a companion Web site)
- MIT: Anthropology: Identity and Difference, Spring 2010

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**EARTH SCIENCE**

Annenberg: Earth Revealed


**ENGLISH COMPOSITION**

(remember, this exam includes writing about literature; refer to the English Composition content guide for specific information about the literature covered by the exam)

Smarthinking

EC Online Writing Lab (OWL)

OCL: English Composition I and English Composition II

OCL: Introduction to Literature

MIT: Writing About Literature

**FOUNDATIONS OF GERONTOLOGY**

(recommended Hooyman text comes with MySocKit)

Annenberg: Growing Old in a New Age

Liberty University:
PSYC 336 Gerontology on iTunesU

Johns Hopkins School of Public Health:
Health Issues for Aging Populations

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

New Jersey Institute of Technology:
Human Resources Management

MIT: Strategic HR Management Spring 2003

**INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

(recommended DeVito text has a MyCommunicationsLab and companion Web site – no OER found)

**INTRODUCTION TO MICROECONOMICS**

Smarthinking

Saylor: Microeconomics

Khan Academy

MIT: Principles of Microeconomics

OCL: Microeconomics

**INTRODUCTION TO MACROECONOMICS**

Smarthinking

Saylor: Macroeconomics

Khan Academy

MIT: Principles of Macroeconomics

OCL: Macroeconomics

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INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC
(note, the exam has sections on popular and non-western music; be sure you study resources in these areas, not just western classical music)

Saylor: Introduction to Music
MIT: Fundamentals of Music
or Introduction to Western Music
OCL: Music Appreciation
Open Yale Courses: Listening to Music at http://oyc.yale.edu/music
UMass Boston: Universe of Music Fall 2007

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
(note, the exam has sections on eastern philosophy/religion; be sure you study resources in these areas, not just western philosophy)

Saylor: Introduction to Philosophy
MIT: Classics in Western Philosophy
University of Notre Dame: Introduction to Philosophy
OCL: Introduction to Philosophy
Oxford University: General Philosophy http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/podcasts/general_philosophy

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY
Saylor: Introduction to Psychology
Hippocampus: Psychology
MIT: Introduction to Psychology
OCL: General Psychology
Open Yale Courses: Introduction to Psychology, http://oyc.yale.edu/psychology

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
(recommended Macionis text comes with MySocKit)
Notre Dame: Understanding Societies

* JUVENILE DELINQUENCY
(recommended Siegel text has a companion Web site)
UC Berkeley: Legal Studies 163 Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice on iTunesU

* LABOR RELATIONS
(recommended Holley text has a companion Web site)
Harrisburg Area Community College: Labor Relations (200-level course)

LIFE SPAN DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
Annenberg: Seasons of Life
Saylor: Lifespan Development (300-level course)
Harrisburg Area Community College: Life Cycle Development on iTunesU
Tufts: Human Growth and Development
UC Berkeley: Developmental Psychology webcast.berkeley.edu
OCL: Lifespan Psychology

* LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
University of Michigan: Individualized Reading Instruction in the Elementary Grades

MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING
Smarthinking
See also listings for Financial Accounting, which will often cover this area as well

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**MICROBIOLOGY**

Annenberg: Unseen Life on Earth
Saylor: Microbiology (300-level course)
Harrisburg Area Community College: Microbiology on iTunesU
MIT: Systems Microbiology Fall 2006
Tufts: Microbiology

**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

Saylor: Organizational Behavior
New Jersey Institute of Technology: Organizational Behavior

**PATHOPHYSIOLOGY**

Saylor: Pathobiology
Khan Academy
Liberty University: NURS215 Pathophysiology, iTunesU
MIT: Principles of Human Disease
Tufts: Pathophysiology of Infectious Disease

**PHYSICS**

Smarthinking
Saylor: Intro. to Mechanics and Intro. to Electromagnetism
Khan Academy
Hippocampus: General Physics I
MIT: Physics I: Classical Mechanics and Physics II: Electricity and Magnetism
Carnegie Mellon: Physics

**POLITICAL SCIENCE**

(because the UExcel exam represents a hybrid of US political science and international relations, you will likely need more than one Web course to match the entire content outline)

Saylor: Intro. to Politics
UCLA: Political Science: Politics & Strategy
MIT: Introduction to Comparative Politics Fall 2006
Notre Dame: Introduction to International Relations

**PSYCHOLOGY OF ADULTHOOD & AGING**

(recommended Cavanaugh text has a companion Web site)

Annenberg: Growing Old in a New Age
see also Foundations of Gerontology, above

**RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

Saylor: Research Methods
UC Berkeley: Research and Data Analysis in Psychology, webcast.berkeley.edu

**SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Saylor: Social Psychology
Notre Dame: Introduction to Social Psychology
MIT: Social Psychology

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### SPANISH LANGUAGE

(recommended Zayas-Bazán text has a companion Web site)

- Annenberg: Destinos and Nuevos Destinos
- Open University: Portales Beginners’ Spanish: Perspectivas portenas at iTunesU
- [http://www.wordchamp.com](http://www.wordchamp.com)
- [http://www.studyspanish.com](http://www.studyspanish.com)

Harrisburg Area Community College: Spanish 101 on iTunesU (you will need to look elsewhere for Spanish 102, which would also be covered by the exam)

MIT: Spanish I and II

### STATISTICS

(recommended Sullivan text has MyStatLab)

- Smarthinking
- Annenberg: Against All Odds
- Saylor: Introduction to Statistics
- Hippocampus: Statistics for Social Sciences
- Harrisburg Area Community College: Introduction to Statistics on iTunesU
- UC Berkeley: Intro. to Stat on iTunesU
- OCL: Intro. to Statistics

### *WORLD CONFLICTS SINCE 1900*

(recommended Nye text has MyPoliSciKit)

- Saylor: World War II Introduction, History of Europe 1800 to Present, War and American Society
- Khan Academy (a few specific episodes)

### WORLD POPULATION

- Johns Hopkins School of Public Health: Principles of Population Change