

## Canada's Online Learning "Guru" Offers Top 10 Predictions for 2013

"This is the year online learning takes centre stage. I see 2013 as the year when online learning moves from being an interesting sidebar, operating on the fringes of an institution's core, to becoming central to a college or university's operation."

Dr. Tony Bates, Research Associate  
Contact North | Contact Nord

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[THUNDER BAY] – Contact North | Contact Nord Research Associate and online learning expert, Dr. Tony Bates, has [released his fourth annual top 10 predictions](#) for how the landscape of online learning in Canada will change in 2013.

According to Bates, online learning's move to the mainstream will be largely powered by the growth of hybrid learning, which involves the re-design of courses to marry the best of online and campus-based teaching. And, as hybrid learning pushes online education to centre stage, we will see more and more institutions incorporating online learning into their long-term institutional strategy.

From free online textbooks for students; to the continued proliferation of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) like those we've already seen from the University of Toronto, Stanford and MIT; to which countries to watch including Mexico and India, Bates anticipates that 2013 will be a transformative year for online learning in Canada and around the world.

"In online learning, the only thing you can really be certain of is uncertainty," says Bates. "A major multinational player like Apple, Google or Facebook could jump into the online learning market and, in partnership with some elite universities, take a major share of the for-credit online market."

Above all, Bates urges Canadians to "expect the unexpected" when it comes to online learning in 2013. He cites factors such as the privatization of post-secondary education in the USA, and the possibility of major power shortages/outages making online delivery increasingly unreliable, as having the potential to be major game changers.

Dr. Tony Bates is the author of eleven books in the field of online learning and distance education. He has provided consulting services specializing in training in the planning and management of online learning and distance education, working with over 40

organizations in 25 countries. His blog, *E-learning and Distance Education Resources*, receives over 20,000 visits a month.

Bates is a Research Associate with Contact North | Contact Nord, Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network. His [2013 Outlook for Online Learning](#) is available on the [Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty & Instructors](#).

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**About Contact North | Contact Nord – Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network**

Contact North | Contact Nord is Ontario's distance education and training network with 112 local online learning centres that span the more than one million square kilometres that make up Ontario. The network partners with Ontario's 24 public colleges and 20 public universities and over 250 literacy and training providers to help Ontarians in small, rural, and remote areas, including Aboriginal and Francophone communities participate in education and training opportunities in their own communities.

Since it was established in 1986, Contact North | Contact Nord has generated and supported more than 315,000 registrations.

Contact North | Contact Nord is a not-for-profit corporation headquartered in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and is funded by the Government of Ontario.