

PETR-101: Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here

I Introduction

“Congratulations! You've already taken the first step in your journey toward the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering at Bow Valley Tech. Now it's our turn.”

This is the opening paragraph every learner in this program will read in a letter being sent to them soon. It will be a confirmation that they have been registered in “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here”, a core-requirement course that will orientate them to the program and give them the tools they need to succeed in the program. Wherever in the world our learners may be, they will want more out of this course than a stern warning that they must obtain a passing grade to be allowed to continue with their degree studies. That's why the Faculty of Engineering is committed to showing our learners the advantages and the long-term benefits that “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” provides them on their journey toward a solid academic credential and a prosperous energy sector career.

II Course Overview

“Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” is a 16-hour credit course that introduces the learner to the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering, and also determines how capable and committed the learner is to accomplishing the objectives of the program. The first module of the course will familiarise the learner with the online course environment, with fellow students, and with the faculty and staff members associated with the program. In the second module, the learner will gain a grounding in the courses that constitute the core and elective requirements of the program, as well as in the policies and procedures in place at Bow Valley Tech and specifically within the Faculty of Engineering. The learner will complete the third module by developing and articulating a career vision that derives from the academic experience the program will provide, while the fourth module will consist of a discussion and group project drawing from the two program tracks in place for completing the degree. Finally, the learner will integrate the preceding topics of discussion into a final essay that will serve as a summative assessment of the learner's readiness to complete the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering.

III Learner Profile

Our learners come from across Alberta and from all over the globe. As part of their efforts to enter and advance in their careers in the energy sector, our learners have determined that an academic credential pertaining specifically to oil and gas engineering and international oilfield operations will offer them the best chance of meeting their personal and professional objectives. To that end, they have compared the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering not only to engineering programs available at other Canadian universities, but to programs from the world's leading colleges and universities. Our learners choose the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering because it's the only program designed to meet the operational needs of the energy industry with a specialised, rigorous, and internationally recognised academic curriculum, and online learning now gives our program a global reach and scope. “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” is the first, most important step toward helping our learners succeed in Calgary and around the world.

IV Decision-Making Factors

Although the successful completion of “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” is a prerequisite for proceeding with the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering program, this course is

intended to be a positive growth experience for the learners, and the key to reinforcing this experience will be to address a number of critical learner needs before and during the course. One of the most direct benefits to an online delivery model is the ability to bring Bow Valley Tech to the learner—by putting the course resources and the feedback mechanism in an online environment, both the learner's distance from the institution and the learner's existing work schedule cease to be obstacles for introducing the program to the learner. The online delivery model also addresses the learner's need to succeed in post-secondary education by providing challenging, time-sensitive, yet achievable learning activities that draw from research resources that are but a mouse-click away. As well, the course curriculum is designed to engage and to stimulate learners on an intellectual level, allowing them to recognise patterns and develop learning strategies that will benefit them for the duration of their time in the program. Most importantly, “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” will give the learners a vitally important head-start in corresponding, socialising, and bonding with their colleagues in the program, creating an environment of camaraderie and support that will provide the learners with an interpersonal support system throughout their involvement with the program.

V Marketing Strategy

The success of “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” as a core subject will ultimately depend on how many learners would take the course as an elective subject, and there are a number of incentives and tactics that would make this outcome feasible. The most obvious starting point would be to brand the course as a leading-edge tool for learners to become acquainted with Bow Valley Tech and with the degree program from anywhere in the world, emphasising the convenience and flexibility of the online learning environment and the up-to-the-minute availability of course materials and updates. From there, the learners could easily be reminded of the cross-functional and highly transferable nature of the online learning, research, and presentation skills they would develop and then apply both during and after the course. Moreover, by touching on the similarities and detailing the differences between a formalised online learning environment and the garden-variety Internet chat client, it would be relatively simple to fix in the learners' minds that “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” combines the reach of the World-Wide Web with the power that arises from the knowledge that Bow Valley Tech would be able to deliver to them from start to finish. In essence, the connection we need to make in the learners' minds is that by bridging the gap between themselves and between Bow Valley Tech and their colleagues, the learners will on completing the course take the first step in bridging the gap between their present situation and their future career objectives.

VI Conclusions

The success of our learners at Bow Valley Tech depends on their ability and their willingness to learn. “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here” is the tool the Faculty of Engineering has developed to give our students in the Bachelor of Science of Oil and Gas Engineering the chance to succeed in their studies and in their careers. By accounting for where our learners started their journey toward professional excellence, and by considering how our learners decide on their goals and their priorities, we were able to develop a marketing strategy for the course that puts an emphasis on the flexibility and the usefulness to the learners that an online learning environment makes possible. Education in the twenty-first century is no longer so much a sprint as it is a relay; with “Oil and Gas Engineering Starts Here”, we at Bow Valley Tech are passing the baton to our learners and giving them the strength to make the final turn toward the finish line.