



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

## **Saskatchewan Polytechnic offers free online course in applied math**

*Self-paced study lets students anywhere, any time review and improve their math skills*

**May 12, 2015** – Starting this month, Saskatchewan Polytechnic will offer a free online course in applied trades math. The self-paced, non-credit course focuses on mathematical concepts commonly used in the skilled trades and apprenticeship programs.

Known as a “MOOC,” or “Massive Open Online Course,” the course is open to anyone (over the age of 13) who has access to a computer or mobile device and the Internet. MOOCs are a relatively new learning innovation that have attracted public attention since 2012, when post-secondary institutions such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology started developing and delivering these highly accessible courses.

“Applied Trade Math MOOC is a useful, interactive tool for students who are heading into the skilled trades or an apprenticeship program and who want to brush up on their math skills,” says Dalton Mervold, a program head in Sask Polytech’s School of Transportation. Mervold developed the course in partnership with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission. “We expect that people who may have forgotten some of the mathematical concepts they learned in high school will also enrol in the course.”

Sask Polytech’s Applied Trade Math MOOC is geared to individuals who want to review and improve upon their math skills. Its seven modules cover addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, fractions and decimals, percentages, measurement, basic algebra and geometry, and money skills. Optional pre-tests for each module let students assess gaps in their knowledge, while optional tests at the end of each module let them measure what they’ve learned.

“We’ve designed the course to provide immediate feedback,” says Dennis Johnson, dean of Sask Polytech’s School of Construction and School of Transportation. “We think Applied Trade Math MOOC will be a useful resource not only for teachers seeking supplementary questions and answers for their students, but also for employers looking for training material,” says Johnson. He notes that the course is Sask Polytech’s first MOOC and that the polytechnic will likely offer more MOOCs in the future.

Applied Trade Math MOOC begins this week and runs until August 28. Students can enrol any time until then and have until August 28 to complete the course. The amount of time they spend on the course is entirely dependent on their math abilities. There are no prerequisites for the course.

Applied Trade Math MOOC is delivered on the Desire2Learn Open Courses platform. Students can register for the course at <https://opencourses.desire2learn.com/cat/course/applied-trade-math-7324/>. Subsequent 16-week sessions of the course will be offered in the fall and winter.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic serves 26,000 distinct students through applied learning opportunities at campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and through extensive distance education opportunities. Programs serve every economic and public service sector. As a polytechnic, the organization provides the depth of learning appropriate to employer and student need, including certificate, diploma and degree programs, and apprenticeship training. Saskatchewan Polytechnic engages in applied research, drawing on faculty expertise to support innovation by employers, and providing students the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills.

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For more information, contact:

Daphne May, Saskatchewan Polytechnic Communications and Marketing  
daphne.may@saskpolytech.ca  
306-659-3799 (office)  
306-229-2842 (cell)

Information about Saskatchewan Polytechnic can be found at [www.saskpolytech.ca](http://www.saskpolytech.ca).