To be inserted into a web page:: something like a wikipage

It’s Time for Students to Take Control of Their Education!

# Introduction

There’s a giant problem looming over the state of Washington, and it seems that our State legislature doesn’t even know how to address it, let alone fix it! The driving core of our state’s economy is a thriving and vibrant tech based work force, and we, as students, are responsible for innovating the technologies that will drive that economy into the future. Yet, we are shackled by an educational system that persists in an archaic state of segregating our educational structures from industry. In order for the future work force of Washington State to avoid the fate of Midwestern coal economies, the obsoletion of our primary work forces skill set, we need to shift our educational emphasis in higher learning towards generating tools and resources that aid the continuing educational needs of our highly dynamic industries. Fortunately, we need not lament the thought of seeing our hard earned skill sets becoming obsolete before we reach retirement age as there is **a solution** within our grasp. By shifting the financial resources that Washington State current invests in privately licensed Learning Management Systems (LMS) towards the cultivation of open licensed, and publicly developed, LMSs. Such open LMS projects would be free to focus on creating educational tools that allow students, and industry professionals alike, to create the platforms that educators are demanding for, and would allow them to keep up with the pace of change in industry.

# There Exists a Solution

As aspiring students in the Sciences, Technologies, Engineering, and Maths (STEM), we have already acquired the necessary skills to start addressing the needs of our future selves. This means we need to start applying the lessons from lectures and homework towards the task of developing open licensed alternatives to services, such as Canvas, that address and solve the problems of protecting user IP, student and educator privacy concerns, and multiplatform compatibility.

## Protecting user IP

There is an abundance of innovation in academia that is focused on solving the issue of keeping up with industry but not becoming so incredibly bloated that students cannot finish their programs. Unfortunately, these innovations are not made easily accessible to the public as no one works for free, and those innovators driving these efforts are just like everybody else in that they are incentive driven. Without a means to ensure that an individuals IP is protected, and credit for their work is properly allocated, there can be no open license LMS.

To address this issue, we need to develop a social media like system that allows people to share and cite thoughts and ideas centered around academic innovation that allows people to create clear and insiteful demonstrations of educational concepts, without forcing them to reveal the underlying IP.

## Privacy to students and educators

No one wants to participate in a system where any failure or shortcoming is made public. We must provide a means for students and educators to store their tools, resources, personal performance, and thoughts on the performance of others in a user controlled way. This again will resemble social media, but it will offer greater filtration tools for users to seek out and study the works of others without compromising that security. This means tighter restrictions on what information is available by default on a user’s profile, as well as a deemphasis on the person owning that profile, in order to promote a healthy academic discourse on the tools and innovations being shared.

## It works on all the devices!!

As silly as it sounds to imitate a meme in the description of this feature. The platform needs to be able to function on Windows, Linux, MacOS, Android, Chromium. The base functionality of the platform doesn’t need to be expansive at first, which is the entire reason for making it open source, so the implementation of a very diverse array of operating environments is very manageable.

# Conclusion

We have seen the consequences of not respecting the potential harms of an obsolete work force, and without beating a dead horse we must also consider that as the rate of change in technology is increasing to become faster than our current notion of change might allow us to accept. If we respect those two notions, then we must also respect the fact that the time for action is now. Don’t wait to start contributing to the safety of our common future, you have the tools and the expertise to make a positive impact now.

You can start [here](#_There_Exists_a)!

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