

**CCL-EAR COMMITTEE REVIEW**  
**INTELECOM *Online Resources Network***  
**September 2012**

*INTELECOM Online Resources Network* is a streaming video collection that provides unlimited 24/7 access to more than 3,500 closed captioned video clips covering topics in Adult Education, Business, Oceanography, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, Health and Environmental Sciences. The video content can be embedded into course management systems such as Blackboard and can be accessed by faculty and students easily online.

**OVERALL RECOMMENDATION for COMMUNITY COLLEGES: 2, 2, 2**

#1 --- Not recommended

#2 --- Recommended with reservations as noted

#3 --- Recommended

#4 --- Outstanding offer

**RATINGS for SPECIFIC ASPECTS of the DATABASE:**

The following features were examined and rated on a four point scale (1=Poor; 2= Needs Improvement; 3=Good; 4=Excellent):

**DATABASE CONTENT/FORMAT: 2, 2, 2**

Consider functionality, appropriateness of format, database content, adequacy of coverage (retrospective, current), and value to the California Community Colleges as a whole.

*INTELECOM Online Resources Network* is a hosted digital repository of academic video clips. These clips can be used by instructors to support online and face-to-face instruction.

INTELECOM began in Southern California in the 1960's and was created by colleges to develop videos to support college credit television courses. The videos were self-created using local content experts. The content in this database is produced and licensed by INTELECOM. The database does not support streaming videos from popular education collections like Films for the Humanities & Sciences, Dateline, PBS or BBC. The INTELECOM produced videos are short independent video clips designed and developed for faculty as learning objects used to support specific curriculum.

Subscribers to the *Full Collection* have access to object-level video clips in Adult Education, Business, Oceanography, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, Health, and Environmental Sciences. Biology content can be purchased separately and at a discount with the purchase of the *Full Collection*. Most clips are 3-5 minutes but the clip length does vary from under 1 minute to around 30 minutes. The Adult Basic Education Clips averaged the longest at 25 minutes. The majority of these videos are full-length episodes of original dramas designed for specific levels of ESL. Longer clips can be found most often in business and the sciences, and do illustrate key topics by providing visuals as well as narration. For example, "Models of the Atom" is a 13:14 minute video with narrations, graphs and computer simulations. Reviewers noted with some frustration that in the social sciences, the majority of the clips appear to be short excerpts from what seems like a longer commentary or lectures by identified faculty

experts, many from California institutions of higher learning, but there are no references or links to the full video.

One unique feature to this database is the social networking options. Faculty members can provide feedback on videos by posting comments and rating clips with a star system.

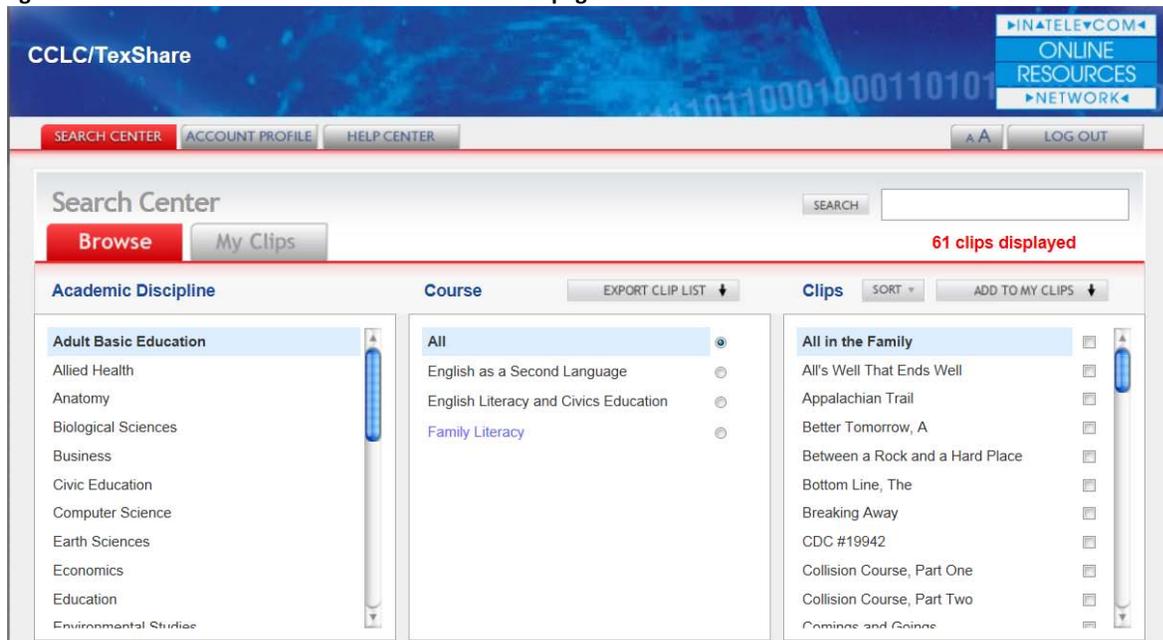
Videos can be streamed to a desktop computer or mobile devices. All clips are delivered via streaming video in both .flv and H.264/MP4 formats for iOS compatibility. The database works on Windows and Macintosh computers and is compatible with Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox and Chrome. Each INTELECOM video clip has an available HTML code that allows easy embedding in content management systems. The help section has an informative video with instructions on how to access and use the embed code.

Although the audience for these videos will ultimately be students, the database content was compiled to serve the needs of faculty. Institutional subscriptions do allow students to access the videos but those using the database for general research will be disappointed. There is not a lot of “stand alone” value to these clips for student research. Faculty, on the other hand, can use these short clips to address specific points in their course content. This database is more of a media services or distance learning resource than a research database. Faculty input should be a priority when considering a subscription as faculty will be the primary users. They should review the content to determine the adequacy of coverage and instructional value in their individual disciplines.

## SEARCH INTERFACE: 2, 2, 2

Consider the functionality and ease of use of the interface. Is it intuitive or is an excessive amount of training required? Are any crucial features missing from the search interface?

Figure 1 INTELECOM Online Resources Network search page



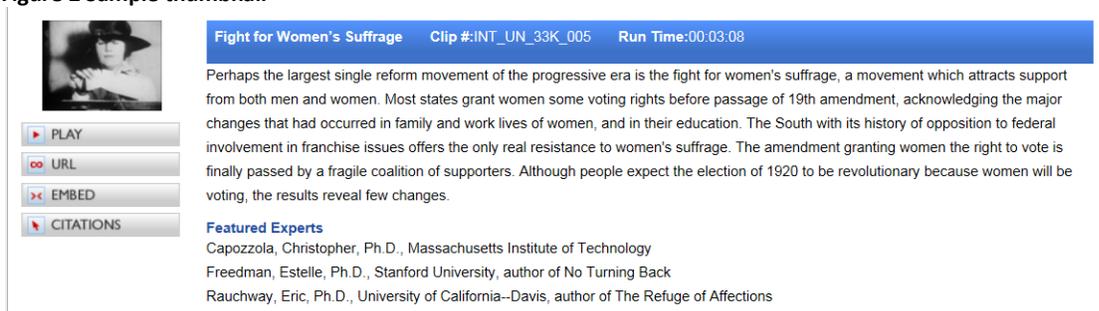
In evaluating the search interface, it is important to keep in mind the original purpose of the *Online Resources Network*. It is a repository of video clips that will be most useful to instructors who are looking within their disciplines for very specific learning objects to incorporate into online courses or class presentations. It was not designed as an in-depth research tool for students and hence does not provide the functionality familiar to most librarians responsible for purchasing library research databases.

Logging in brings the user to the Search Center where the Browse feature is prominently displayed (figure 1). Users must scroll through the first column and click to highlight a discipline. Once a discipline is selected, a list of courses associated with that discipline automatically appears in the second column along with a list of video clips related to those courses in the third column. Highlighting a particular course in column two will further narrow the results in column three. Video clip titles appear in alphabetical order, but these can be resorted to display “Highest Rated,” “Most Discussed,” or “Most Viewed.” Users can export clip lists (including discipline, course, clip number, clip title, clip topic, description, featured experts, and time period) to Excel by clicking on the radio button located next to a course or save clips to their own “My Clips” account for later use.

Simple keyword searching is available in the search box at the top right hand corner of the Search Center. There is no spell check or advanced search option. Use of Boolean operators or parentheses will result in an error message. Users can access particular clips quickly by typing in a specific clip number, clip title, or name of an expert featured on the clip. Simple, topic specific words or phrases also yield good results. However, searchers interested in broad subject areas should confine themselves to the browse option as vast differences in results occur. In browse, there are 391 video clips associated with the Political Science discipline yet a keyword search on the phrase “political science” only yields 24 clips. The course, “Women in American History” elicits 30 video clips in browse mode, but a keyword search on that same phrase results in only 1 clip. A keyword search on “women’s history” only retrieves 7.

Clip titles are not always descriptive of the content. Browsers can highlight a title which will bring up a thumbnail at the bottom of the screen providing a brief overview of the clip, running time, and expert credentials (figure 2). Options to play, copy the URL, embed, or view a citation appear below the clip. Reviewers especially liked the “featured experts” information but were puzzled by the absence on the thumbnail of a production release date or reference to the original source of the clip. The citation generator does, in fact, include a publication year but does not reflect proper MLA, APA, or Chicago style as advertised.

Figure 2 Sample thumbnail



The screenshot shows a video player interface. At the top, a blue header bar contains the title "Fight for Women's Suffrage", the clip ID "Clip #:INT\_UN\_33K\_005", and the run time "Run Time:00:03:08". Below the header is a small thumbnail image of a woman. To the left of the main text area are four buttons: "PLAY", "URL", "EMBED", and "CITATIONS". The main text area contains a paragraph of text: "Perhaps the largest single reform movement of the progressive era is the fight for women's suffrage, a movement which attracts support from both men and women. Most states grant women some voting rights before passage of 19th amendment, acknowledging the major changes that had occurred in family and work lives of women, and in their education. The South with its history of opposition to federal involvement in franchise issues offers the only real resistance to women's suffrage. The amendment granting women the right to vote is finally passed by a fragile coalition of supporters. Although people expect the election of 1920 to be revolutionary because women will be voting, the results reveal few changes." Below the text is a section titled "Featured Experts" with three entries: "Capozzola, Christopher, Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology", "Freedman, Estelle, Ph.D., Stanford University, author of No Turning Back", and "Rauchway, Eric, Ph.D., University of California--Davis, author of The Refuge of Affections".

Clicking “play” from the thumbnail immediately launches the video player (figure 3). Closed captioning is easily accessible but it can be frustrating to view. On the small screen, users must move back and forth from the image to the text below the screen, and on the full screen it is sometimes difficult to read the text on top of black and white images. Sound quality and video are generally good, but images suffer some blurriness in full screen mode. Authenticated users, including students, with a “My Clips” account can save clips to a personal, designated folder, or post ratings and comments viewable by all other authenticated INTELECOM subscribers. Once posted, comments cannot be deleted. Icons at the top right corner of the clip information screen (see figure 3) indicate the number of views for a particular video and the number of ratings or comments that have been posted. In browse mode, users have the option to play the previous or next clip. Reviewers were disappointed that this feature simply takes the user to the next clip in the alphabetical title list rather than a continuation of the topic (e.g. under the subject of Earth Sciences, “The Big Bang” video clip leads to “Biogenous Sediments.”).

Figure 3 Expanded search result

The screenshot shows a video player interface on the left and a 'Clip Information' panel on the right. The video player displays a black and white historical photograph of a large crowd of people, with a narrator box at the bottom stating: "[ Narrator ] PERHAPS THE LARGEST SINGLE REFORM MOVEMENT". Below the player are buttons for 'ADD TO MY CLIPS', 'URL', 'EMBED', 'CITATIONS', and 'RETURN TO SEARCH CENTER'. The 'Clip Information' panel includes a thumbnail of a woman, the title 'Fight for Women's Suffrage', a run time of 00:03:08, and a clip ID of INT\_UN\_33K\_005. It lists the academic discipline as History, the course as 'Women in American History', and the topic as 'Rise of Progressivism in the United States, The'. The time period is 1890-1920. A detailed description follows, and a list of featured experts is provided, including Christopher Capozzola, Estelle Freedman, and Eric Rauchway. At the bottom of the panel, it prompts users to log in to rate or comment.

Librarians might hope for a more visually exciting Search Center page and more functionality, but in truth, this is a repository rather than a student-friendly research database. In its current state, the search interface has the necessary capability to direct teaching faculty straight to their disciplines, courses, and relevant clips. On the other hand, student researchers, who think more in terms of topics, may very likely have difficulty determining where their topic fits into a broad discipline and rather generic course titles. The rudimentary keyword search function and absence of an advanced search option may further frustrate student researchers.

### **USER SUPPORT SERVICES: 3, 3, 3**

What types of customer and technical support are available for end users and library administrators?

Although help is not context sensitive, the “Help Center” tab is clearly visible from every screen of the database. Once in the Help Center, users can view concise video tutorials on how to use the database search features, build video clip folders, and export and embed videos. There is also the option to download a PDF User Guide. The FAQ section provides an email address and toll free number for technical support and the “Support” tab takes the user to an online technical support request form. Although this was not included in the FAQ, free MARC records are available for all video clips in AACR2 format. A sample may be found at <http://www.intelecomonline.net/pdf/MARCsample.pdf>. According to the vendor, INTELECOM also offers free training and orientation webinars for all customers.

### **COST: 3, 3, 3**

If cost is available, does it seem reasonable in terms of comparable products?

Cost for the database is determined by FTE. Institutions can purchase a site license for the *Full Collection* annually or for a three year period. Discounts are available for the Biology products with the purchase of the *Full Collection*. The Mathematics collection is now included in the price of the Full Collection. Institutions will want to determine how much interest online instructors have in integrating object-level video clips into their courses. If interest is high, this specialized product fills the need at about half the price of the *Films on Demand Master Collection*, reviewed by CCL-EAR earlier in 2012. Although both products supply closed captioned, streaming video segments, there are substantial differences in content, depth, and number of clips. Reviewers strongly suggest consulting the literature and performing side-by-side comparisons during the trial period prior to making a decision to purchase.

### **AVAILABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICE: 3, 3, 3**

Is access/connection to product reliable and stable? Is response time adequate? Is product accessible to users with disabilities?

All video content in the database is closed-captioned. Sound and picture quality are good except for the noted slight blurriness of the images at full screen mode. The database is easily accessible 24/7 from on and off campus with one exception: as of this review, “logging out” takes the user to INTELECOM’s homepage rather than back to the subscribing library’s website. Although a username/password login is visible on INTELECOM’s page, it is no longer associated with the particular subscribing library, and the user’s credentials are not recognized. Users who want to re-enter the database have to know to go back to their library’s link (e.g., on the library website, which contains the unique site URL and/or proxy URL). The vendor is apparently working on resolving this issue.

### **OTHER REVIEWS OF THIS PRODUCT**

Bergman, B. J. Rev. of *INTELECOM Online Resources Network*. *CHOICE* (Nov. 2009): n.pag. *Choice Reviews Online*. Web. 25 Apr. 2012.

Chapman, Cheryl. "Faculty Can Design Media-Rich Online Courses." *Community College Week* (2009): 14. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Feb. 2012.

Cohen, Deborah. "Got Clips?" *Community College Week* (2008): 17-18. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Feb. 2012.