

[David Kernohan](#)

Open Education and MOOCs

Lisa Spiro

March 8, 2013

Twitter: #MOOC #NITLE

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Are MOOCs Incompatible with the Practices of Liberal Arts Colleges?

“Although MOOCs start off with huge numbers of enrolled participants, a small percentage do the assignments, and an even smaller percentage finish. The **retention rate** at the highly selective liberal arts schools, by any measure, is very high. Residential liberal arts education depends on the **ongoing interaction** of students with one another and with faculty. MOOCs encourage interaction of a different sort: through social media and chat rooms.”

Michael Roth, Pres. of Wesleyan

[“Why a Liberal Arts School Has Joined Coursera”](#)

[emphasis added]

Do MOOCs Have Promise for (Liberal) Education?: Two College Presidents Weigh In

“MOOC technology could enable even more than unparalleled access to top faculty and courses. I envision women in Riyadh and Islamabad taking literature and economics courses alongside students in Kansas City and Anchorage, engaged in discussions that are informed, impassioned and ultimately transformative...”

(H. Kim Bottomly, Wellesley College)

“Most of the participants... are middle to upper class — the same students currently taking advantage of higher education. And in the words of L. Rafael Reif... an M.I.T. degree will remain as it is today — ‘connected with bricks and mortar.’ MOOCs are on the margin.”

(William Durden, Dickinson College)



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/valeriebb/3006348550/>

Enter your ideas into the textbox...

**YOUR THOUGHTS: WHAT ARE KEY
FEATURES OF LIBERAL EDUCATION?**



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Enter your ideas into the textbox...

YOUR THOUGHTS: WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF “MOOC”?

What Respondents to NITLE's 2012 [OER Survey](#) Said About MOOCs

What impact do you think open initiatives such as MITx will have on liberal arts colleges?

| % | Response |
|-------|--|
| 38.1% | “they will extend educational opportunities to those outside the traditional education system” |
| 19% | “they will have little impact” |
| 19%: | “they will allow liberal arts colleges to expand their course offerings.” |
| 14.3% | “they will enable liberal arts colleges to develop new business models” |
| 9.5% | “they will directly compete with liberal arts colleges” |

[Survey concluded in March of 2012]

Academic Leaders on Current Status of MOOCs in Higher Ed (*Changing Course*)

- 2.6% of colleges & universities currently have a MOOC; 9.4% say MOOCs are being planned
- 55.4% are undecided about MOOCs, 32.7% have no plans for one
- R1s are most likely to be offering (9.8%) or planning (21.4%) MOOCs
- 50.2% of those offering or planning MOOCs plan to partner with outside organization
- “Academic leaders remain unconvinced that MOOCs represent a sustainable method for offering online courses, but do believe they provide an important means for institutions to learn about online pedagogy.”

Core Questions/ Roadmap

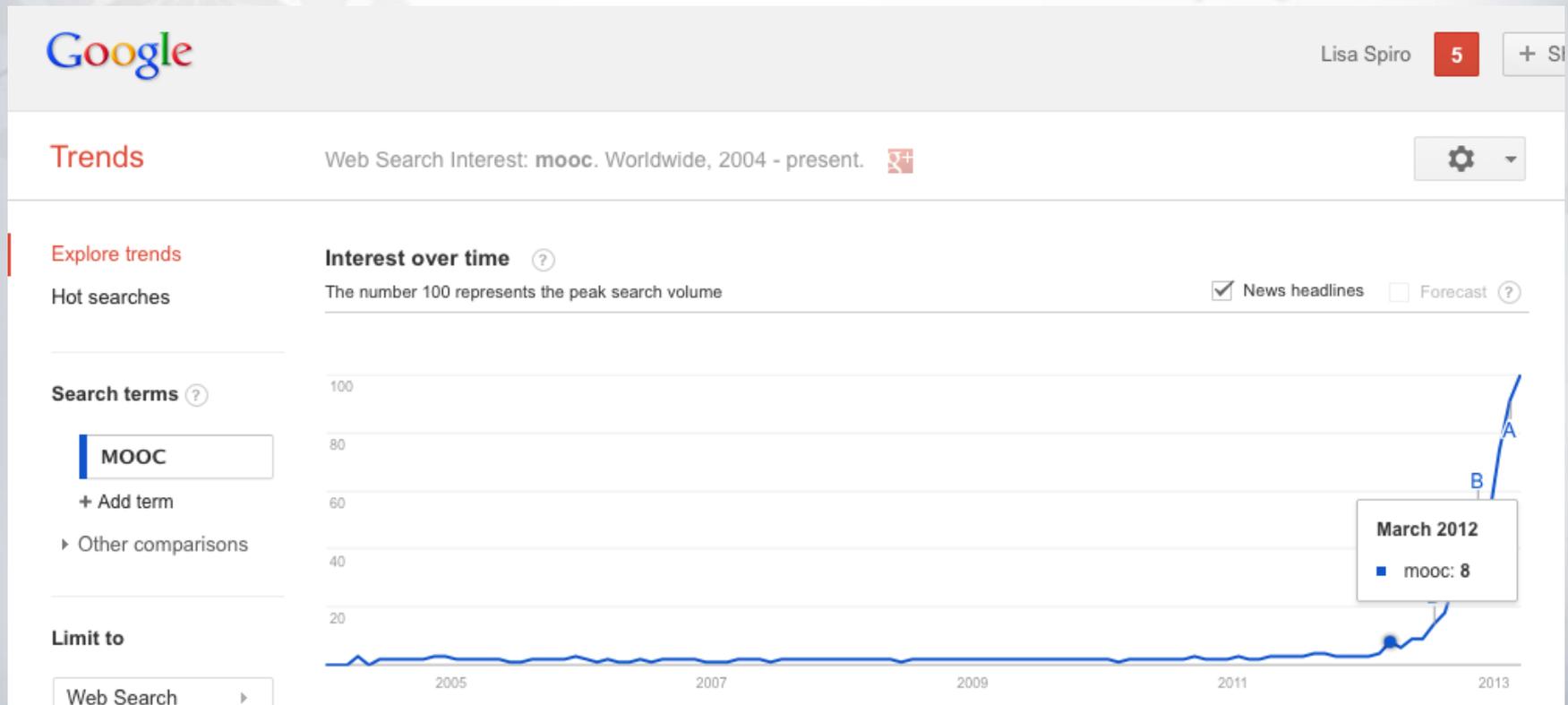
- A quick overview of MOOCs
- Should liberal arts colleges offer MOOCs?
 - What are potential goals?
 - What does it take?
 - Pros/cons
- How might liberal arts colleges integrate MOOCs into the education they provide? (LOOC?)

My Approach

Navigate the MOOC debates based on:

- Research for [NITLE Open Education](#) paper (with Bryan Alexander) & [“Opening Up Digital Humanities Education”](#)
- My collection of 683 Diigo [bookmarks](#) (to date)
- Presentations by:
 - Coursera’s Daphne Koller (3/7/13)
 - [Scott Rixner](#), an instructor of Coursera’s “An Introduction to Interactive Programming in Python” (3/7/13)
- Background conversations

MOOCs are a recent phenomena



<http://www.google.com/trends/explore#q=MOOC&cmpt=q>

...with a longer history

- 19th C America: self-culture movement (+ [public libraries](#))
- 1997: [genesis](#) of MERLOT
- 1999: [Connexions](#) launches
- 2001: MIT's OpenCourseWare Initiative [announced](#)
- 2007: David Wiley offers [Introduction to Open Education](#)
- 2008: "MOOC" coined (with help from [Bryan Alexander](#)); 1st MOOC, [Connectivism and Connective Knowledge](#) (CCK08), offered
- 2011: Stanford offers [3 open courses](#) [snowball [accelerates](#)]

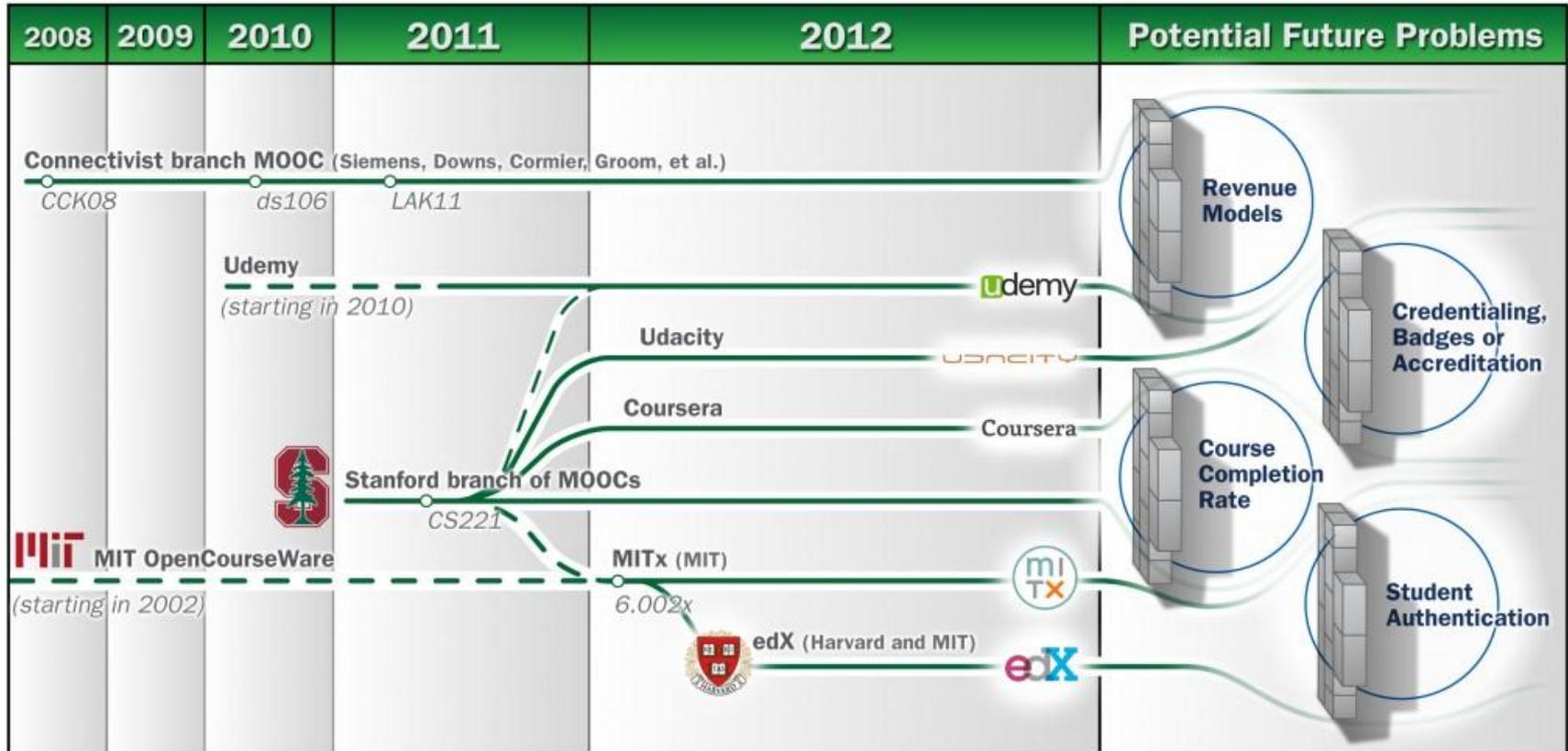
Types of MOOCs

- cMOOCs (Connectivist): ds106, cck11
“discursive communities creating knowledge together”

Key elements:

- Aggregate
 - Remix
 - Repurpose
 - Feed forward
- xMOOCs: Coursera, edX, Udacity, etc.
 - Guided by the instructor
 - More linear
 - Video + quizzes, exercises, forums

The Evolution of MOOCs



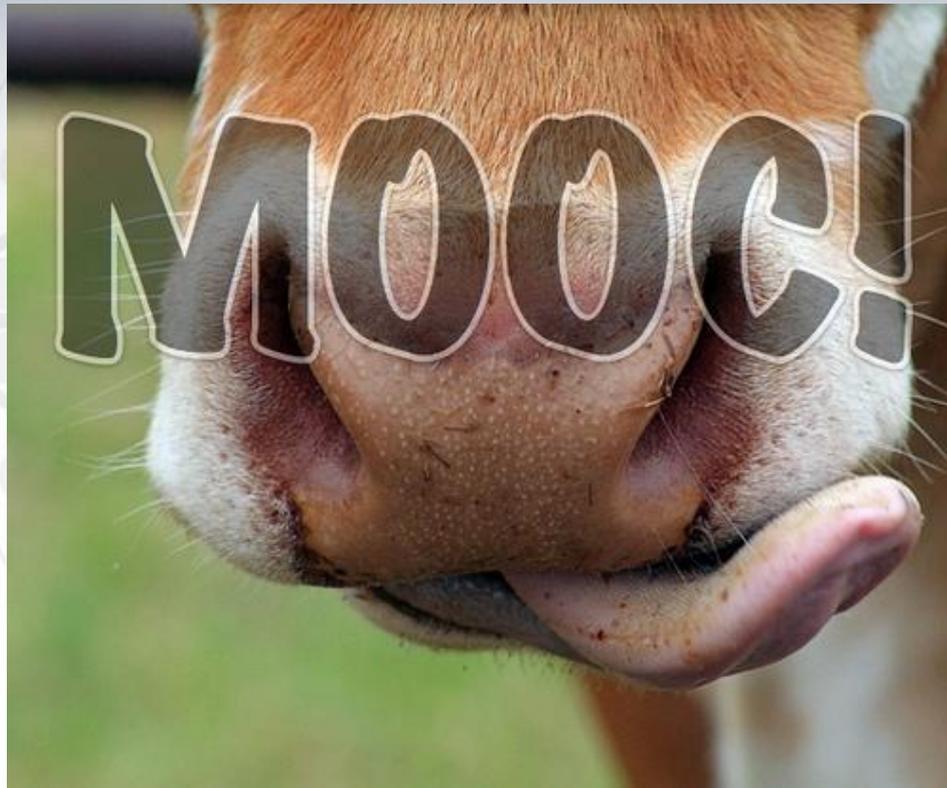
delta initiative
 changing the status quo

Should a college do a MOOC?

Alison Byerly's [Online Checklist](#)

- What are your goals?
 - Who are you trying to reach: on-campus students? Alumni? External audiences?
 - For what purpose: fill gaps? Reach new markets?
- Do the courses fit your “mission, model and market”?
 - Curriculum (liberal arts, professional, etc.)
 - Existing courses
 - What’s the competition? Can you partner?
- Do you have necessary resources: financial & staffing?

Cf [“Before You Jump on the Bandwagon”](#)



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ajc1/7566869868/>

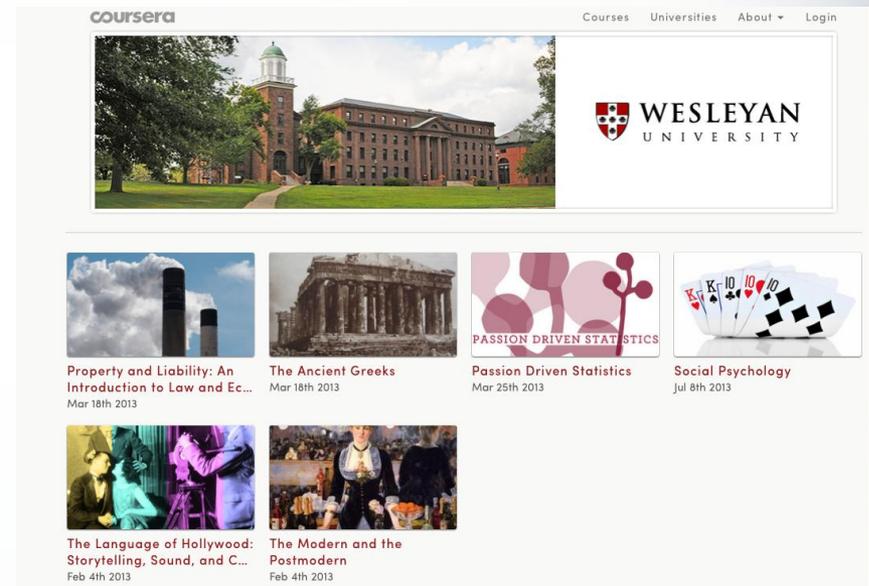
EVALUATING GOALS & MISSION

Why Wellesley Joined edX

- “bring a much-needed liberal arts perspective to the rapidly developing online learning environment” (Wellesley pres. [Kim Bottomly](#))
- Expand global access to high quality education
- Uphold Wellesley’s long-standing [mission](#) to support underserved students, particularly women
- Benefit alumnae & current students
- Foster pedagogical innovation on-campus and online
- Partner with other educational leaders
- Explore how to use technology in education (Wellesley’s [Andrew Shennan](#))

Why Wesleyan Joined Coursera

- To explore online education & how students learn in environment different from residential LACs
- To share Wesleyan's teaching excellence w/ the wider world
- To learn from the experiment of translating face to face to online classes



<https://www.coursera.org/wesleyan>

Impact at Wesleyan (and Beyond) to Date

- It sparked a campus-wide conversation on pedagogy & greater interest in flipping the classroom.
- Faculty embrace opportunity to reach a broad audience.
- Students are enthusiastic about the humanitarian vision.
- The scale of the course means that an active, diverse community of engaged learners emerges quickly.
- Student interns are exposed to a diverse community of course participants in forums.
- It's rewarding to see the MOOC bloom, with much community enthusiasm.

“more community than course”:

DS 106

DS106 Home About Spring 2013 at UMW Other Spring 2013 Courses Components

TED NELSON DS106 *
ETERNAL REVISION!
June 17, 1937 (age 74)
American sociologist, philosopher, and pioneer of information technology
* **Hypertext** is text displayed on a computer or other electronic device with references to other text
Alma mater: Swarthmore College, Harvard University, Keio University
• Institutions Project Xanadu •

#DS106
KEEP CALM AND MAKE A GIF

You have heard the rumors, are you?
The open course in digital storytelling...

How ds106 Changed My Life

Get Info

- ▶ What is ds106?
- ▶ A History Lesson
- ▶ Your ds106 Handbook
- ▶ Advice from Students

“The very essence of ds106 is that it is made of the same stuff that the web is made of, a distributed, open, decentralized connected network managed by participants in the space it inhabits.”

([Alan Levine](#))

DS 106 in Action

Jan 31
2013

10 WAYS YOU CAN BE PART OF DS106 WITHOUT ANY CRUDDY MOOC DROP OUT FEELING

<http://cogdogblog.com/19131>

(5) Create a New Daily Create You think our ideas are lame? You have something better? **Toss one in vis our suggestion box** and it should appear in the next weeks.

If you follow step (4) above, it just might lead to step (5). Ask Joe MacMahon:



Alan Levine @cogdog

17 Jan

Shhhh. My new #ds106 students maybe have not read the full details. They seem to think they have to do "every" daily create. Shhhhhh.



Joseph McMahon

@pragmanic

@cogdog "Make a Poster of an Action Movie Starring Julia Child."

12:19 AM - 17 Jan 13

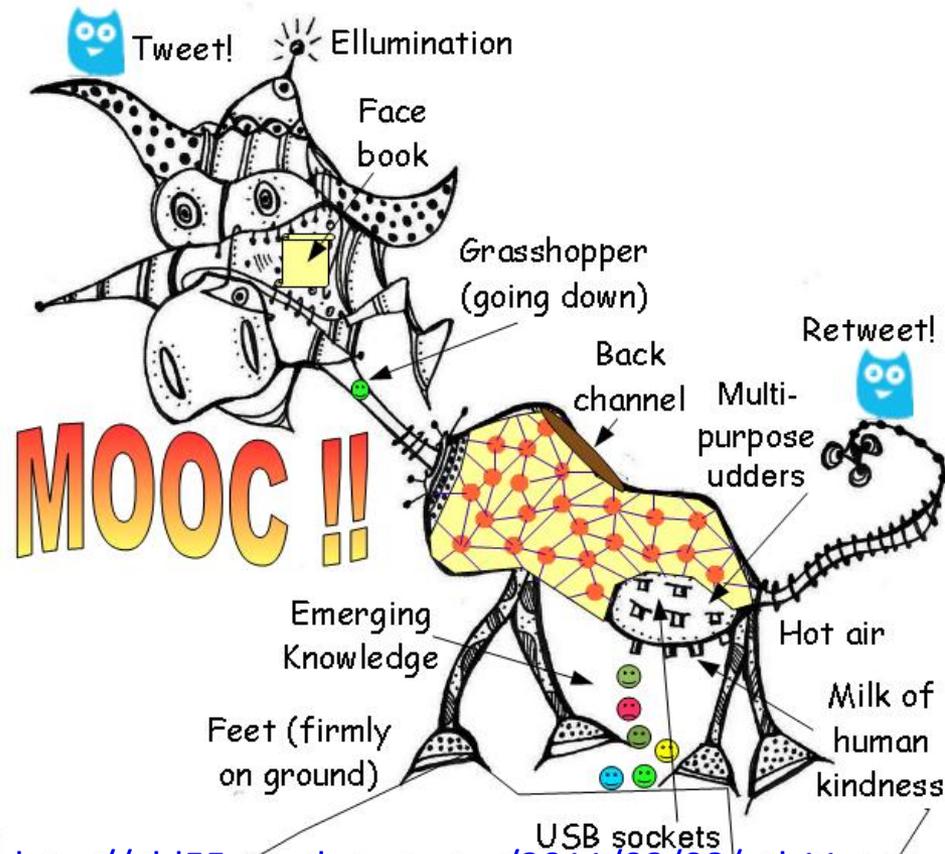
Design a poster of an action movie starring Julia Child

January 23, 2013

If you need bio material and open licensed media, [try the big pedia](#).

Upload your drawing or design as a photo to [flickr](#) and tag it [dailycreate](#) and [tdc381](#)





<http://gbl55.wordpress.com/2011/03/08/cck11-man-this-mooc-is-something-else/>

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO OFFER A MOOC?

MOOC Economics:

edX Business Model

Two models:

- "university self-service model"
 - Created without course production support from edX
 - edX claims first \$50,000 brought in by the course (\$10,000 for recurring course)
 - edX & university split revenue 50/50 after that
- "edX-supported model"
 - edX provides course production
 - edX charges \$250,000 for each new course, \$50,000 for recurring course
 - university gets 70% of revenue

MOOC Economics:

Coursera Business Model

- No cost for college/university to join
- Coursera offers universities 6-15% of gross revenue from each of their MOOCs
- Coursera gives universities 20 % of profits from "aggregate set of courses provided by the university"

Business Model Still Unclear: Potential MOOC Revenue Sources [Bonus Slide!]

Coursera:

- Certification
- Secure assessments
- Employee recruiting
- Screening students
- Tutoring or grading by humans
- Selling the platform to companies for their own training
- Sponsorships
- Tuition fees

edX:

- Partnerships with publishers
- Employee recruitment
- Charging for certificates
- Licensing MOOCs to other universities

MOOC Staffing:

The Case of Duke's Bioelectricity MOOC

- ~ 620 hours of effort for 8 week course
 - 420 by the instructor, 200 by TA & staff from Ctr for Instructional Technology & Office of Info Technology
- Instructor (& TA) created videos, responded to discussion board, monitored student activity, posted updates, attended meetings & addressed errors in content
- Created 22GB of data, 11.3 hours of finished video, 18 graded exercises
- Key: “Patience, flexibility and resilience”

What It's Like to Run a MOOC: Wesleyan

- Be prepared to do a lot of work, including:
 - Shooting & editing videos
 - Curating course resources
 - Participating in course forums
- Find a video style that works best for the professor.
- Faculty will need to rethink how they teach in this new mode.
- Involve students as interns to assist with the work.

Some Questions to Ponder in Considering Whether to Offer a MOOC

- How to assess learning
- IP/ copyright
- Recruiting faculty
- Business model
- Partnership opportunities
- What support services are needed
- How it will be viewed by accreditors
- Impacts on enrollment & enrollment management

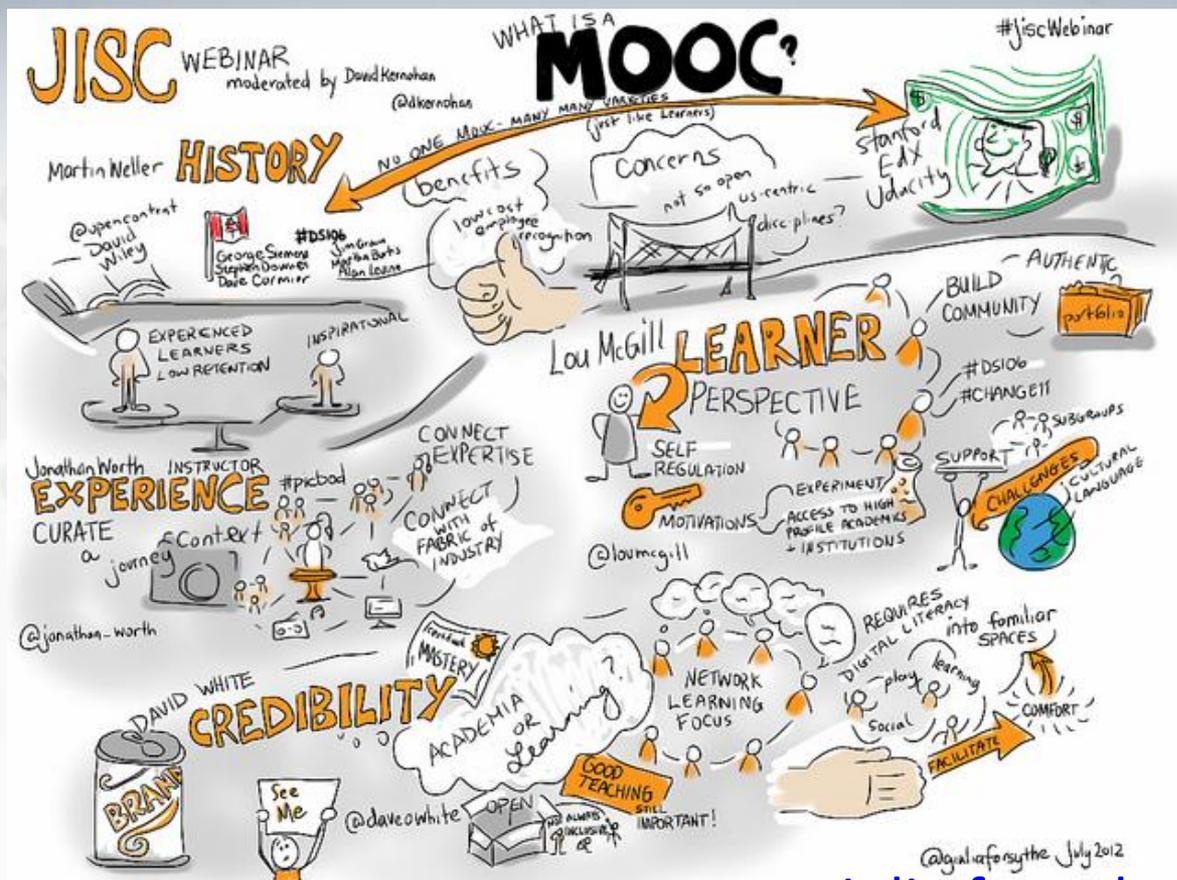
[*Massive Open Online Courses at Madison?*](#)



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/valeriebb/3006348550/>

Enter your ideas into the textbox...

**YOUR THOUGHTS: WHAT DO YOU
THINK OF THESE FACTORS? WHAT ELSE
SHOULD COLLEGES CONSIDER?**



giulia.forsythe

THE MOOC DEBATE:

- Expands access or elitist?
- Improves learning or replicates lecture?

Critique: Coursera Offers Education for the Elite

Getting to Know Coursera: Who is everyone?

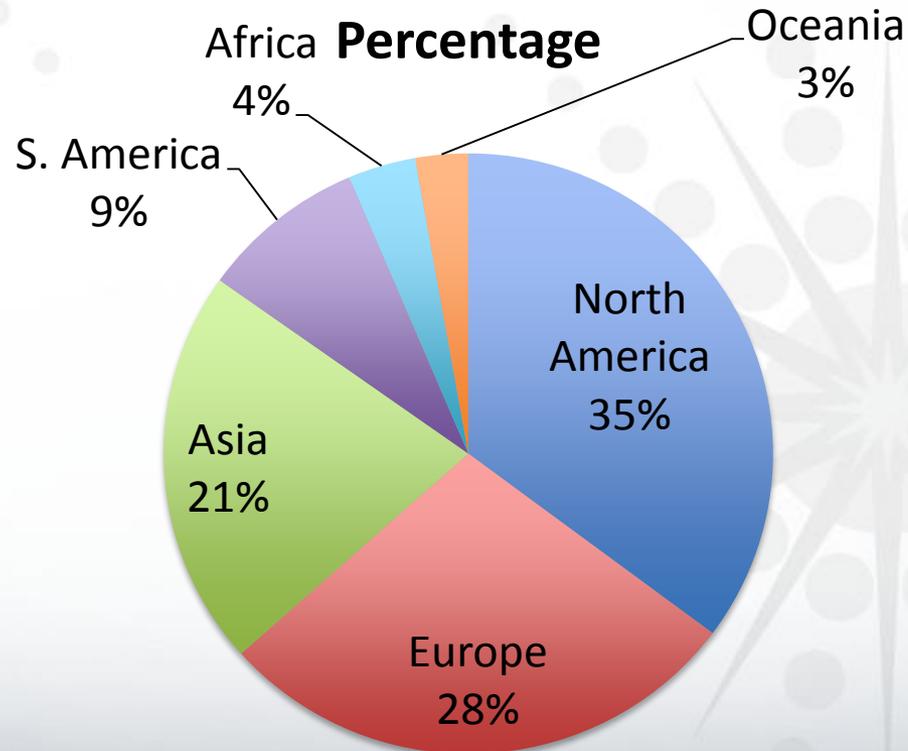
by Katie McEwen, graduate assistant

In our blog posts up to now, we've taken a descriptive approach to look at what Coursera does and how they do it. Today, we're going to turn our attention to a different aspect of the Coursera platform that, I would argue, is no less important: the question of access and exclusion.

- Students in MOOCs tend to be well-educated professionals from wealthy countries
 - Machine Learning: 50% of students were computer professionals
 - Computational Investing: only 27% of those completing the course are from non-OECD countries
- Taking a course requires access to computer, network, English proficiency, etc.

The Demographics of Coursera MOOCs: Educated, Global

- Over 80% have a B.A. or higher (5.4% have PhDs)
- Global group of students:



Coursera & edX's Global Partners

- Coursera plans to offer classes in French, Spanish, Chinese and Italian in addition to English
- 62 universities [partnered](#) with Coursera, including over 20 universities outside US:
 - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
 - Hebrew University of Jerusalem
 - Sapienza, University of Rome, Italy
 - University of Tokyo, Japan
- edX has 12 partners, including in Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland & Canada

Critique: MOOCs Use Bad Pedagogy

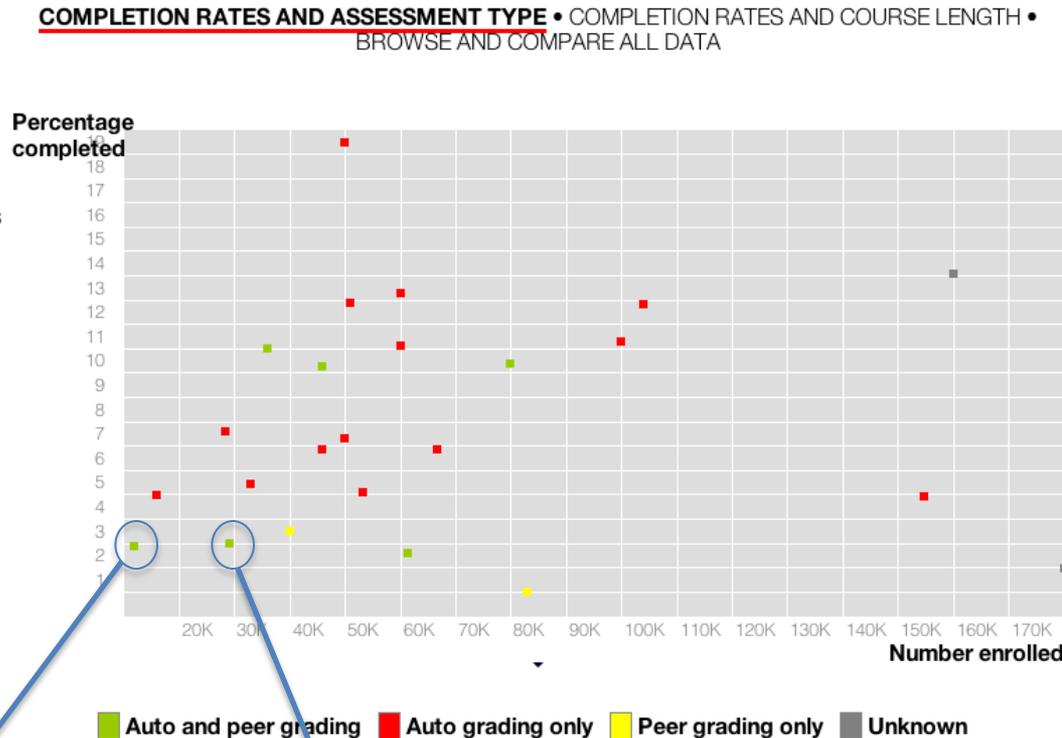
- Require high level of motivation & good preparation from students
- Are plagued by high drop-out rates
- Replicate the traditional lecture
- Don't offer the richness of face-to-face learning
- Face problems with assessment (automated & peer)
- Based on monologue, not dialogue

Completion Rates for MOOCs Are Low: .7% to 19.2% (typically less than 10%)

MOOC Completion Rates: The Data

While Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) may allow free education on an enormous scale, one of the biggest criticisms raised about MOOCs is that although thousands enrol for courses, a very small proportion actually complete the course. The release of information about enrollment and completion rates from MOOCs appears to be ad hoc at the moment - that is, official statistics are not published for every course. This data visualisation draws together information about enrollment numbers and completion rates from across online news stories and blogs.

- **How big is the typical MOOC?** - while an enrollment of 180,000 is often cited as the largest MOOC so far, 50,000 students enrolled is a much more typical MOOC size.
- **How many students complete courses?** - completion rates can approach 20%, although most MOOCs have completion rates of less than 10%.
- **What factors might affect completion rate?** - the way that the course is assessed may affect completion rates; the completion rates of courses which use automatic grading range from 4.6% to 19.2%, while the rates for courses which use peer grading range from 0.7% to 10.7%. This may present a greater challenge for teaching MOOCs in certain subjects.
- **Do more students drop out if courses are longer?** - there does not appear to be a negative correlation between course length and completion rate, which is interesting as you might expect fewer students to 'keep going' and complete longer courses.



Search

Filter by platform

- 19 Coursera
- 3 EdX
- 1 MITx
- 1 Udacity

Filter by university

- 1 Cal Tech
- 4 Duke University
- 1 Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de

Filter by assessment type

- 6 Auto and peer grading
- 14 Auto grading only
- 2 Peer grading only
- 2 Unknown

Duke Bioelectricity

Great, demanding HCI course

[Katy Jordan](#)

Do MOOCs Replicate Traditional Lecture-Based Courses?

- Not cMOOCs
- Even xMOOCs offer:
 - Micro-lectures, which you can view repeatedly
 - Mid-lecture quizzes to test comprehension
 - Online forums, sometimes w/ active participation of instructor
- They may also offer:
 - Projects, including group projects
 - Study groups, typically student-initiated
 - Peer assessments

What Coursera Says about Pedagogy

- Online learning can be as effective as face to face, and hybrid works even better.
- Interactivity (pausing & re-playing videos, quizzes) promotes learning.
- Immediate feedback & the ability to try again foster mastery learning.
- Peer assessment (with clear rubrics) works.
- MOOCs can work well in hybrid courses to promote active learning.

What Instructors Say: Learning Community Emerges in Discussion Forums

- Even if only a fraction of students participate, forums tend to be lively, active & diverse.
- Students help each other and learn through sharing.
- Participants (including instructors) are exposed to a range of perspectives.
- Jerks typically get shut down by other students.
- Example:
 - [Intro to Sociology](#): perspectives on lack of public restrooms for street vendors from NY, Hong Kong, Russia, India, etc.

What's in it for MOOC instructors?

- “a big part of its fascination is coming into contact with the much bigger world of talented and capable people such as yourselves who I would never meet in a traditional Duke class.” (Duke’s Roger Barr)
- “Within three weeks, I had more feedback on my sociological ideas than I’d had in my whole teaching career... I found that there’s no topic so sensitive that it can’t be discussed, civilly, in an international community.” (Princeton’s [Mitchell Duneier](#))

Some Other Concerns about MOOCs

- Assessment
- Credentialing
- Business models
- Cheating
- Managing scale
- Not necessarily open
- May lead to greater inequality
- Privatization of higher ed
- Overly hyped [hard to argue with this one]

My Questions

- How might we create more effective networked learning models?
 - Apply insights of learning science
 - Experiment & share results openly
- How might we make MOOCs more broadly accessible?
 - Digital Public Library of America equivalent for education?
 - Offer a wider range of courses?
 - [Create open architectures](#) for networked learning?
 - Engage more diverse group of MOOC creators/remixers?

Related Articles

Essay on what MOOCs are missing to truly transform higher education

Essay on a contradiction facing MOOCs and their university sponsors

Coursea doubles university partnerships

Essay on how MOOCs

Unlikely Pairing?

December 6, 2012 - 3:00am

By [Alexandra Tilsley](#)

The word massive – as in massive open online courses – seems inconsistent with one of the hallmarks of an education at a small liberal arts college. But for the liberal arts colleges that have partnered with MOOC providers, the size is part of the appeal.

“Our social psych course, for example, more than 20,000 people signed up right away. Meanwhile, most of our classes here have fewer than 20 students,” said Wesleyan President Michael Roth. “That’s an interesting idea.”

MOOCs IN THE LIBERAL ARTS CONTEXT

The Key Question

“How do we infuse the massive open online space with a responsive, collaborative and discussion-based learning experience—the kind of education that is truly transformative?”

([Andrew Shennan](#), provost & dean of Wellesley College)

3 Models for Networked Learning at Liberal Arts Colleges

- “Generative scholarship” / “[community of scholars](#)”
 - Visualizing Emancipation
 - History Harvest
- Blended learning/ flipped classroom
 - Bryn Mawr
 - Gettysburg
- Inter-institutional academic collaboration
 - Sunoikisis
 - Looking for Whitman

“Generative Scholarship”: Student Work at Richmond’s Digital Scholarship Lab

February 4, 2013

A More-Radical Online Revolution

By Edward L. Ayers



"generative scholarship": “It is scholarship built to generate, as it is used, new questions, evidence, conclusions, and audiences.”

History Harvest: A New Kind of MOOC?

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

Search this site, all UNL or for a person

N Department

UNL ▶ Arts and Sciences ▶

Department of History

The History Harvest

History Harvest is a University of Nebraska-Lincoln initiative that brings together history events in the community and the United States. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a rich history. Advanced our relationships with individual

The History Harvest

The History Harvest 2013

Professor William Thomas and Dr. Patrick Jones to host a History Harvest seminar via **National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education** in Georgetown, Texas on April 12.

The History Harvest is an innovative new authentic learning initiative in the Department of History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This

“The problem with MOOC’s is that they are largely one-way delivery.... they don’t appear to me to be grappling with the real questions, the hard questions, about how can we use technology like this to better serve our students. We need more models for MOOC’s, not fewer. And we need ones that particularly advance the humanities.” ([Will Thomas](#))

> Find out more at 4/12 [NITLE Seminar](#)

MOOCs May Enhance Learning in a Blended Environment

San Jose State University's [experiment](#) with blended course using edX's "Circuits & Electronics"

- Students worked w/ edX materials at home & came to class 2x/week to work problem sets & ask questions
- Students had median score 10-11 points higher on midterm exam
- Rate of students getting C or lower for course grade declined from ~40% to only [9%](#)
- Instructor [reported](#) greater student engagement & confidence

Blended Learning: MOOC Instructors Flipping Their On Campus Courses

- [Dr. Scott Rixner](#) (Rice, [“An Introduction to Interactive Programming in Python.”](#))
 - Students worked through Coursera material before class & were thus more prepared
 - Time freed up for projects, discussion
 - “I will never lecture in a classroom again”
- [Dr. Phillip Zelikow](#) (UVA, “The Modern World”)
 - Flipped his classroom: discussion sessions 1 day/week, “history lab” w/ primary documents the other
 - Zelikow: “I’ve been teaching courses like this for about 20 years now.. . This is the most powerful design.”

Exploring Blended Learning at Bryn Mawr

- Funded by Next Generation Learning Challenges grant “to study blended learning approaches to introductory STEM courses in a liberal arts setting”
- Involved 14 Bryn Mawr faculty (2011-2012)
- Blended = “students receive feedback on learning outside classroom through computer-based materials” (e.g. Open Learning Initiative materials)
- Key findings about blended learning:
 - “Faculty & students approve” (instant feedback, tracking learning, engaging multimedia, freed up classtime, learner centered)
 - It leads to better learning outcomes
 - Startup costs pose obstacle to adoption

Integrating MOOCs into Residential Learning at [Gettysburg](#)

- Tutorial:
 - Student took Stanford's "Machine Learning" as independent study, tutored & evaluated by Gettysburg prof
- Flipped classroom:
 - Profs for Comp Sci capstone course used online resources from Cornell & MIT
- Connected classrooms:
 - Class on Turkish politics collaborated w/ class in Turkey

Collaborative Classes:

Sunoikisis

Sunoikisis

A national consortium of Classics programs



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Call for Abstracts: Spring Symposium

2013 Spring Symposium Every December and April, the Center for Hellenic Studies (CHS) in Washington,.... [more]

Featured Articles

Upcoming Event

Join us online for a meeting about upcoming Sunoikisis events and current initiatives this Saturday, January 5 at 7:00pm (PST). We will be webcasting live from the American Philological Association meeting in Seattle, WA. Join our Google Hangout or watch the live stream on YouTube!

Subscribe

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Networked Pedagogy: Looking for Whitman



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LOOKING FOR
WHITMAN

The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman

A multi-campus experiment in digital pedagogy sponsored by the NEH Office of Digital Humanities

HOME COURSES PROJECTS DIRECTORIES ABOUT SUPPORT

Walt Whitman and the Levi's Ad Campaign: A Provocation, A Challenge, and an Invitation

Nov 11th, 2009 by Matthew Gold. No comments yet

This is the first in a series of posts on The Vault, a new conversational space in the Looking for Whitman project that is devoted to creating public conversations about Walt Whitman and his work.

Subscribe to our Feed via RSS

Who's Online Avatars

“experiment in multi-campus digital pedagogy”
([Jim Groom](#))

<http://lookingforwhitman.org/>

Liberal Arts Colleges Exploring Online Learning

- UMW's [Online Learning Initiative](#)
 - Create cohort group
 - Define values (community, interactivity, active learning, reflection, and self-directed learning)
 - Develop courses based on values
 - Assemble resources
- Trinity College's [discussion group](#)
- Other examples?



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/valeriebb/3006348550/>

Enter your ideas into the textbox...

**ARE THERE EXAMPLES OF NETWORKED
LEARNING AT YOUR CAMPUSES?**

Questions to Ponder

- How might liberal arts colleges compete with MOOCs? What unique value do they provide?
- How might liberal arts colleges use MOOCs to their advantage?
- What are possible futures of liberal education in the Internet Age?