"Online Courses: What Do They Mean for Departments?"

UW ADVANCE
Winter Quarterly Leadership Workshop

March 14, 2013

AGENDA

11:30 – 11:40	Welcome and Introductions
11:40 – 12:30	Panelists and Q&A
12:30 – 12:45	Grab Lunch
12:45 – 1:15	Small Group Discussion
1:15 – 1:30	Report Out

PRESENTATIONS
LARGE GROUP Q&A

Online Courses: What Do They Mean for Departments?

- Dan Grossman, Associate Professor, Computer Science and Engineering

- Jaime Olavarria, Associate Professor, Psychology

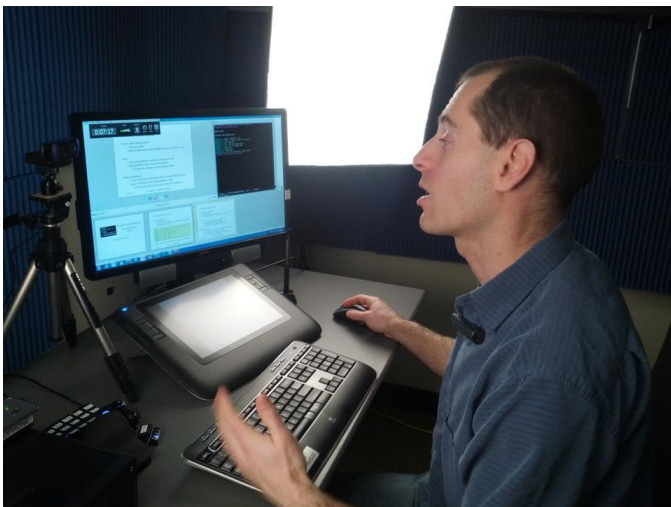- Reşat Kasaba, Director and Professor, Jackson School of International Studies

Pulling off MOOCs in CSE

Dan Grossman
ADVANCE Seminar

March 14, 2013

Background

- What's a MOOC?
  - Online, free, semi-synchronous, large
- My role: zero – "campus expert" in 9 months
  - Finishing my course now (*several* 100s of hours of work!)
  - Coordinate 5 courses in CSE (TA/faculty cadre ⟺ Coursera)

Plus 8 more faculty, 5 more TAs

Dan Grossman, MOOCs in CSE

University of Washington Center for Institutional Change

Two Comparisons

- Compared to conventional courses
  - Same or better: Homeworks, lectures, study groups, …
  - Worse: Design projects, exams, mentoring, …

- Compared to writing a textbook!!
  - Attrition ≠ failure
  - Worldwide impact of high-quality materials
  - Influence other educators
  - Better: videos, forums, graded homework

  "21st – century textbook plus social"

Dan Grossman,
MOOCs in CSE

Why? Faculty View

- I believe I have a superior course and want to have impact
  - 5-10x more students in 1 term than in last decade combined
  - Influence other educators
  - More fun and effective than writing a textbook
  - Fame (not fortune)

- Be part of academic change
  - Not read about it in the newspaper
  - No substitute for first-hand experience

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Why? Department/College/UW View

- Can have amazing impact
  - Scalable, worldwide leaders in engineering education
- "MOOCs" might [not] change how universities work in N years
  - We need experience
- Improve/leverage our reputation
- Feedback to improve conventional courses
  - New modalities (e.g., video, peer assessment)
  - Massive data
- Yes, this costs money, but remarkably little
  - Cost is time (cf. textbook)

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Next Steps

- Find your best, motivated faculty *without arm-twisting?*
  - Very public and time-intensive
- Need more central leadership and infrastructure?
  - (Note: PCE has its own model with more staff but $ needs)
  - For now, uhm, come talk to either PCE or me
- Yes, thorny questions remain…
  - Intellectual property (UW vs. faculty)
  - Placement, credit
  - State resources for free courses
  - Revenue model
  - Mortal [financial/existential] threat to universities?
  - … but do you want to wait until others are leading?

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Online Education

Educational quality

Faculty effort

Class size

Costs of online education

Olavarria J

Time Demands in Online Instruction[1]

J. Michael Spector*
Florida State University, USA

This article reports findings from a Mellon Foundation research project at Syracuse University with regard to the time demands placed on teachers and learners in online courses. This exploratory research was primarily a study of cases involving three online courses and one face-to-face course. The focus of the study was the effects of different forms of communication and collaboration on time invested by teachers and learners. The online courses made use of e-mail, threaded discussion forums, and online chat sessions; the face-to-face course used e-mail in addition to a course Web site and lectures. Learning outcomes and retention in the three online courses were similar to outcomes and retention in comparable face-to-face courses at this institution. Students invested slightly more time in online courses whereas faculty, all of whom were experienced online teachers, invested considerably more time in their online courses. An analysis of interviews with online teachers at other institutions confirms the finding that experienced online teachers invest significantly more time in online teaching than their counterparts in face-to-face settings.

Olavarria J

Institutions can consider different options in shaping a long-term strategy for achieving acceptable financial returns from e-learning

By **Stephen R. Ruth**

a report sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation examined the importance of online education at more than 1,000 universities in the United States.[1] The results, published in November 2004, seemed to indicate that two major problems that had complicated distance learning's progress for almost a decade had been solved.

First, the study found that students and administrators believe that the quality of e-learning now matches that of traditional teaching methods. According to the report,

- Three-fourths of academic leaders at public colleges and universities believe that online learning quality equals or surpasses face-to-face instruction.
- The larger the school, the more positive the belief in the quality of online learning compared to face-to-face instruction.

A second major finding was that universities provide distance learning to almost two million users, with a rate of increase of about 25 percent per year.[2]

These results should be good news for colleges and universities. The report seemed to downplay the "no significant difference" criticism.[3] Distance learning detractors had argued that it was always possible to find a small, statistically significant local example where distance learning was very successful and then extrapolate the results to a much wider population, concluding that no significant difference existed between traditionally taught and technology-enhanced courses without studying the larger population for potential differences in results. The Sloan report implies that the users and providers of distance learning no longer need to concern themselves with this criticism.

Too Good to Be True?

Greater acceptance and use of e-learning today and fewer reservations about its quality—it seems too good to be true. Jack Wilson, president of the University of Massachusetts, has frequently described the exciting challenge of e-learning in terms of its untapped

Olavarria J

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Conclusion

Currently in higher education, both on campus and online, we individualize faculty practice (that is, we allow individual faculty members great latitude in course development and delivery) and standardize the student learning experience (that is, we treat all students in a course as if their learning needs, interests, and abilities were the same). Instead, we need to do just the opposite: individualize student learning and standardize faculty practice. But with its connotations of words like *regulate*, *regiment*, and *homogenize*, the word *standardize* does not precisely capture what is required. What higher education needs is greater consistency in academic practice that builds on accumulated knowledge about improving quality and reducing costs.

Olavarria J

Some needs

- Adequate technologic infrastructure to support on-line learning needs
- Support for the development of faculty skills
- Monitoring of quality. Appropriate selection of personnel in charge (faculty, temporary, adjunct instructors, etc.)
- Faculty compensation for new teaching responsibilities (development of materials, supervision of adjunct staff, etc.)
- Recognition of faculty scholarly contribution toward merit and promotion
- Appropriate choice of courses to be taught online

Olavarria J

Jackson School Curriculum

Undergraduate Majors

- Asian Studies
- Canadian Studies
- Comparative Religion
- European Studies
- International Studies (General)
- Jewish Studies
- Latin American-Caribbean St.

Graduate Programs

- Ph.D.
- MA in International Studies (China, Comp. Religion, General IS, Japan, Korea, Middle East, Russia East Eur. Cent. Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia)
- Applied Global Studies (Fee-Based)

Resat Kesaba

- Incorporating online education into existing courses:
  - o Expand use of technology
  - o Hybrid courses
- Cooperation with other institutions
  - o Regional
  - o Overseas (joint degree and other initiatives)
- Participating in the College's online degree completion
- Fee-based online courses and degrees

Resat Kesaba

Issues and Questions

- Coordinating the departmental initiatives with the fee-based online degree and degree completion project.

- The effect of online courses on teaching load

- Assessing the equivalency of online and on-campus versions of courses.

- Facilitating inter-university cooperation

Resat Kesaba

LUNCH

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Questions to Consider

- What's the most challenging thing for departments when it comes to online courses?

- How might your department address those challenges?

- What's the most promising thing for departments when it comes to online courses?

SMALL GROUP REPORT OUT