MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

Journals and Blogs

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offer an online learning experience open to anyone who has access to the Internet. Courses are free for those not seeking credit or certification. According to Martin D. Snyder (Academe, Nov.-Dec. 2012), “The goal was and is laudable: to offer free, world-class education to anyone and everyone with Internet access.” These courses, often with massive, even worldwide, enrollments, are characterized by active learning, mainly peer-to-peer interactions, social communities, individualized learning, and new forms of assessment. Courses are proliferating. For an overview of what’s available, see three of the more popular MOOC platforms, each associated with top universities:

Coursera  [https://www.coursera.org/](https://www.coursera.org/) [1]
Edx  [https://www.edx.org/](https://www.edx.org/) [3]

Overview of Issues

See Wikipedia for a comprehensive overview of issues surrounding MOOC development [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massive_open_online_course](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massive_open_online_course) [4]. The site covers design approaches and assessment, information on the economics and business models of MOOCs, technology, potential benefits, challenges and criticisms, European development, links for further information, and over 100 references with Internet links.

**Tomorrow’s Professor Message #1237 “Much Ado about MOOCs”** by Martin D. Snyder, AAUP. From Academe, November-December 2012.

Snyder discusses the issues (e.g., credentialing), problems (e.g., fraud factor), and democratic potential for this new, much-lauded, educational enterprise.


**Online Learning Insights:** A place for learning about open, online education (OLI), founded by Debbie Morrison in 2012.

A blog with articles, research, and resources for education professionals engaged in, or learning about, open online learning.

Pedagogy

“A Tale of Two MOOCs @ Coursera: Divided by Pedagogy,” Debbie Morrison (Blog posting March 4, 2013). This article posits that the Web creates a different context for learning, one that requires different pedagogical methods. To illustrate this point, Morrison compares the learning strategies used in two different MOOCs, one that succeeded and one that failed. 


“The Massive Open Online Professor,” Stephen Carson and Jan Philipp Schmidt, from Academic Matters: The Journal of Higher Education, May 2012. Sets out the key elements of instruction characteristic of a MOOC, such as largely peer-to-peer interactions and new methods of recognizing learning. Concludes by discussing what it will be like to learn from these new approaches. 

http://www.academicmatters.ca/2012/05/the-massive-open-online-professor/ [8]

MOOCs Directory (site managed by AboutEdu, an Online Education Consumer Organization). This site provides “a simple central directory” of existing MOOCs, one list for higher education MOOCs, another for kindergarten-12th MOOCs, other MOOCs and resources, and links related to degrees/credentials for the workplace. 

http://www.MOOCs.co/ [9]

MOOCs at Michigan State University. This site offers an intro to MOOCs, Q & A, the MSU review and approval process for a MOOC, and links to MSU’s currently approved pilot MOOCs. 


These resources were compiled and annotated by Lois Rosen, Ph.D., Instructional Consultant for the Office of Faculty and Organizational Development, Michigan State University.