Are MOOCs Important? Why … and to Whom?

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Are MOOCs Important?

I would say …. YES!

And to Whom?

I would say …. EVERYONE!

And what are they impacting?

I would say …. EVERYTHING!

Now that we've got those bits out of the way, and with apologies for the hyperbole … let's explore **WHY**.

Is This Time Different?

Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) CIOs answer the question: *Is This Time Different?*

YES!

The **effect on residential universities** relative to previous experiences and events in this area **will be profound and long-term**

The Education Advisory Board report: State of the Union – Higher Education: Competitive Challenges to the Traditional Higher Education Model supports (actually spurred) this viewpoint from the CIC CIOs

Online – what we talk about?

Traditional classes augmented with *technology* elements

Blended – exactly what it says

Online classes – The Virtual U
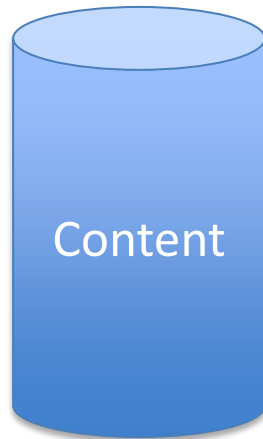
MOOC – Massive and Open; either one … or both?

And many, many things in between!

MOOCs and the Learning Ecosystem
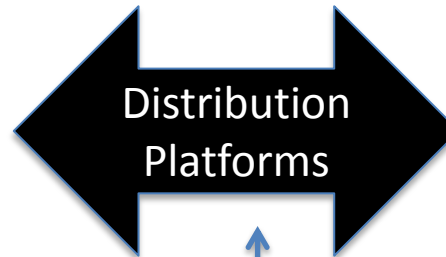
Content – Platforms – Analytics

Big Picture
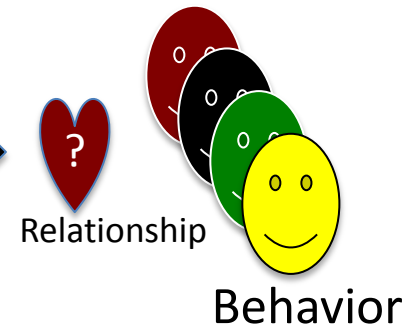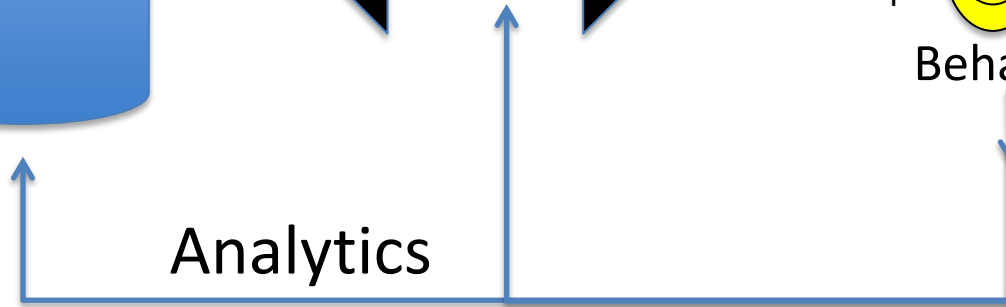
Provided by participating institutions

Provided by the MOOC Entity

Students

Content

Distribution Platforms

Relationship

Behavior

Analytics

Players on the Field

Other "Players"

MOOCs *(evolving)* Value Proposition

Access to education on a MASSIVE AND INTERNATIONAL scale

- Most current MOOC students are international and professionals, NOT current college students
- Balance could shift at any moment

Institutions involved are prestigious, faculty are renowned, topics are hand-picked

MOOCs are an experiment, but one quickly getting out of the lab and into the market

- MOOCs are 'viral'… but also becoming 'sticky'

MOOCs can extend/enhance/preserve the institution's reach, brand and reputation globally

What Remains to Be Seen

Business Model – Where is the money in this?

- VCs invested at the start only hoping to get the *viral and sticky*

- No standard model yet exists – do not believe it is all pre-planned; there is a great deal of 'serendipity' in this

Options include:

-Data mining – selling student data to potential employers

-Cross- or Up-selling

-Internet standard – ADVERTISING (eyeballs)

-Charging for certification

-Charging for assessment AND credit

-Spin-off/Licensing

-*Write in your idea here! Things are rapidly developing!*

Pedagogy

-Impact on the way faculty structure and deliver courses

-Self-directed students

-Concerns about completion rates

Issues to Consider

Intellectual Property

-Of the course itself – scholarly works policy impacts

-Of the materials used in the course – fair use claims

Identity and Credit

-It is all good until there is a value provided – then how do you ensure whoever earned it,   receives it (and vice versa)?

-Partnerships with testing centers and 'verification technology' companies

Issues to Consider

Open Courses, Certifications, Credits and Degrees
    -MOOCs are catalyzing exploration of alternative credentialing systems
    -How do MOOCs fit into the institution's degree programs?

What is the institutional capacity to deliver MOOCs?

Where do MOOCs fit into the institution's e-Learning strategy?

The Importance of Humanware

The Key Challenges

This **is not** about IT… *but it matters!*

> -IT is the mechanism enabling the disruption…

> -Sometimes IT is 'drafted' initially to lead the effort

> -The question looms: **Can IT get off the stage and backstage where it belongs?**

This **is** about a new approach to pedagogy

> -Faculty must understand this… and embrace it

> -Academic Administration must embrace… and encourage it

> -The entire online education 'disruptive event' is about how pedagogy will change (via technology)

> -**Here is a familiar IT term: Business Process Re-engineering**

Recommended Near-Term Actions
(from the Committee on Institutional Cooperation)

Engage purposefully in trials of MOOCs, adaptive learning systems and emerging technologies **to develop institutional understanding while formulating long-term strategy** for 'badges,' professional development, MOOCs, courses for credit and full degree programs

Carefully model and analyze emerging business models for revenue-generating, free and partnered courses that also incorporate costs for campus services and systems

Ramp up institutional capacities for online course production to support instructional design, media development, assessment and analytics

Develop IT system readiness to integrate with a range of education software that may need to link to campus information systems for rosters, identity and services in a legal, secure and policy-complacent way

Spectacularly Rapid Change!

Overheard recently on the Maryland campus: I'm looking for the PAUSE button because things keep happening and happening in this area! I am exhausted trying to keep up!

The Chronicle of Higher Education's 'micro-site' on "What You Need to Know about MOOCs"

http://chronicle.com/article/What-You-Need-to-Know-About/133475/

-This is an active, ever-changing, ever-evolving arena with many twists and turns. Use this website to help stay abreast of developments and track the history

-And check Inside Higher Education, EDUCAUSE and others for more

Op-Eds …

This will be a decade of significant change …

The 'parallel universe' of an online-age education will reach a point of sophistication and credibility where the degrees granted – *or whatever new word is invented to mean "evidence of your skills and knowledge"* – will be accepted and taken seriously by employers.

American colleges and universities will *start to feel real pain*.

Political pressure will continue to grow for credits earned in low-cost MOOCs to be transferable to traditional colleges.

Profit margins that colleges have traditionally enjoyed in providing more traditional education **will be cut into**.

Colleges with strong brand names and other sources of revenue **will emerge stronger than ever**, but **everyone else will scramble to survive** as vestigial players.

* Kevin Carey, Washington Monthly Magazine August 2012

Can Higher Ed Survive MOOCs? *(and online learning more broadly?)*

"MOOCs and online courses will raise the level of competition too high for some schools to survive"

"Online becomes so affordable that there is far less need to go to campus"

"Faculty are ultimately responsible for coping with the change in pedagogy brought about by disruptive technologies – *but 'denial' and 'wait-and-see' seem to be the predominant coping mechanisms*"

H.C. 'Hank' Lucas Jr., University of Maryland
And Coursera Course Instructor (Spring 2013)

More opinions – Are MOOCs Better?

There is a lot of discussion and debate about whether MOOCs and other forms of online teaching and learning offerings actually improve learning outcomes

"But along the way, a rancorous debate has emerged over whether such courses will lead to better learning, lower costs and higher graduation rates — or to the dismantling of public universities, downgraded or eliminated faculty jobs, and a second-class education for most students."

"The problem with this MOOC-as-labor-issue argument is that it has no place for students and learning," said Phil Hill, an education technology consultant. *"Our starting point ought to be what students need and whether this is an effective form of learning."*

-- from the New York Times, June 19, 2013, by Tamar Lewin

So does it matter if MOOCs are better …. Or not?
## *Allow a Tech-type to Opine …*

Whether it does or not… <u>*is academic* </u> - *and one might argue not necessarily relevant*

> *….. Because that is a decision for the market*

Clay Shirky *keynoted the 2012 EDUCAUSE Annual Conference and reminded us about the issue of 'quality' when it came to the music industry and the turn of the century debate about 'sound quality' vis-à-vis CDs vs. MP3s*

CDs were 'higher fidelity'… but MP3s were not *that much* less so, and were <u>vastly</u> more 'flexible' … and the market went there.

Brian D. Voss … Not speaking for EDUCAUSE or The University of Maryland
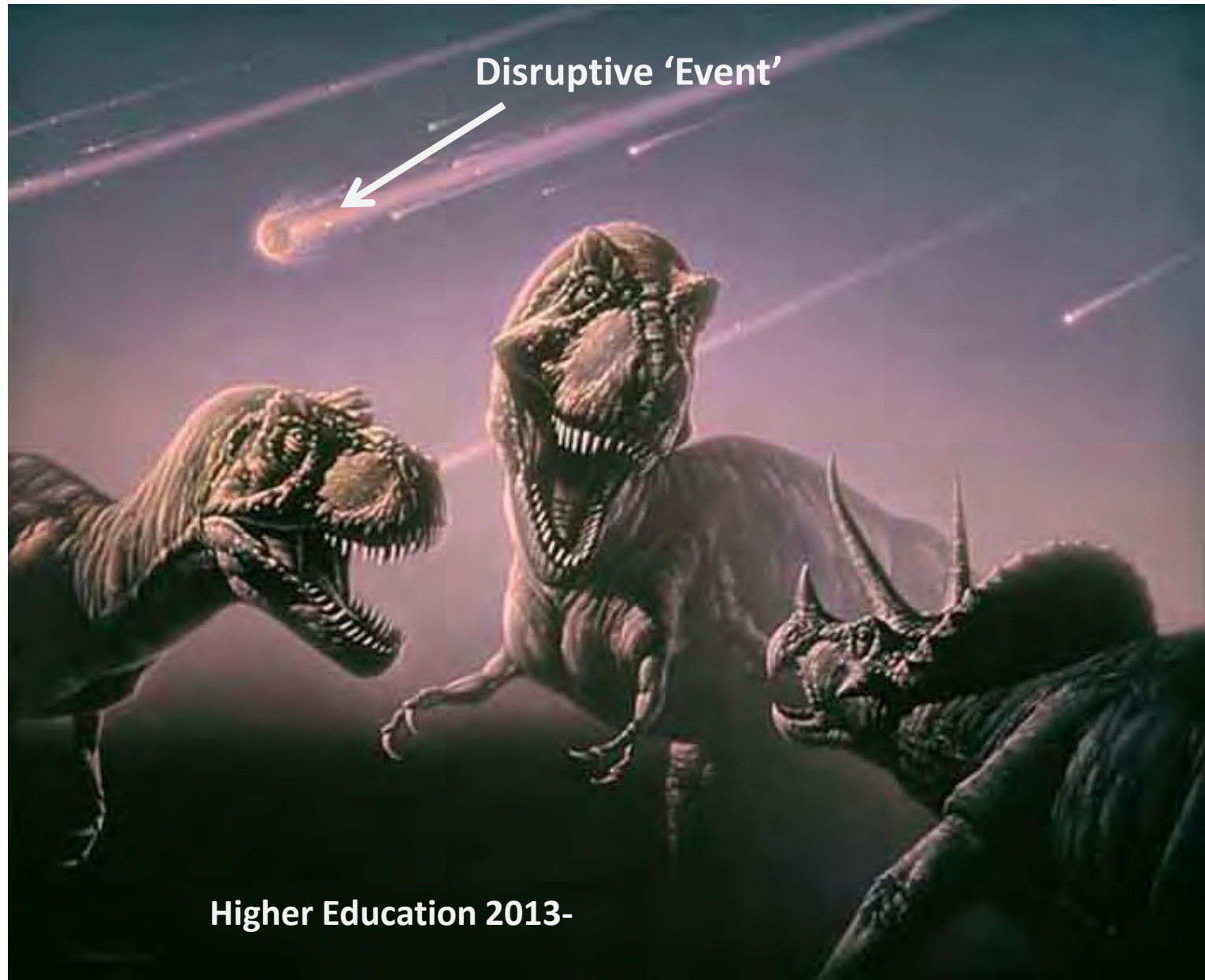
For Boards to Consider…

Accreditors

Tensions Exist

Increasingly, presidents and provosts are being 'pinched' between their **governing boards**' desire for quick address, rapid progress and visible actions – and **the faculty** who have many concerns and questions, feeling more deliberative and cautious

Institutions of different sizes, scopes, missions, locations and cultures are thrust out of historic 'market zones' onto the same playing field.

-For **public institutions** in several states, new questions are arising about roles and missions.

Accreditation entities are grappling with a wide variety of aspects, including questions of whether significant changes in pedagogy and delivery brought on by MOOCs as well as other online platforms and models impact both, existing and new program accreditation.

Questions for ~~Board~~ Accreditors Discussion

What is the urgency to 'get in the game' with accrediting MOOCs (and other forms of online offerings)?

How do (or could) MOOCs mesh with any current online offering our institutions may already have which are accredited?

Does offering or delivering MOOCs change or alter an institution's or program's mission and culture?

   -Ex. Are there fears about being less 'personal' in how content is taught and how faculty teach and interact with students?

How will MOOCs affect institutional costs and revenue?

   -Will they save or add to costs if MOOCs are offered for credit?

   -Will doing so reduce or increase an institution's revenue?

Questions for Board Discussion

(Accreditors)

How will the deployment of faculty be affected by MOOCs?

What are the concerns about the quality of education delivered?

-In the competitive landscape, how does quality weigh against access and demand?

What are the challenges facing institutions/programs with regard to course credit for MOOCs?

-Do they give credit for MOOCs we offer? *CAN* they give credit for MOOCs they offer?

-Do they provide credit for MOOCs taken from other institutions?

Questions for ~~Board~~ Accrediting Discussion

Are Boards and Administrations discussing the ramifications for program and institutional accreditation for any new online offerings?

    -What is the role of Accreditation entities in fostering those discussions?

Boards and Administrations are wrestling with the question RIGHT NOW about whether their institutions have an eLearning strategy and the role of MOOCs in those strategies.

    -What role do Accreditation entities want to play in shaping or focusing

     those discussions?

Boards and Administrations are wrestling with the question RIGHT NOW about how they are organizing for eLearning, including MOOCs.

    -I.e., the need for an "online and learning transformation "Czar/Czarina"

Boards and Administrations are wrestling with the question RIGHT NOW about how "IT-ready" their environments are – and if not what to do about it?

Q&A – Let's Discuss