MOOCs and Quality Assurance: Assessing the Connection Between Massive Open Technology and Learning

Focus Questions for Discussion

1. How does the type, branding and purpose of MOOC affect quality?
   a. Does quality matter more, less or the same for MOOCs intended for credit (leading to graduation), professional development or enrichment?
   b. How does the type of MOOC affect quality standards and expectations?
   c. Does the label of “course” skew our expectations (standards) for quality design?
   d. Is it appropriate to assume university brand is a guarantee for course quality?

2. How do the personal objectives of learners affect quality?
   a. What is the proper balance between process vs. outcome?
   b. Should MOOC students co-create course outcomes? Does that depend on the type of MOOC and whether it’s for credit or required for graduation?
   c. Do MOOCs require traditional outcomes as a condition of quality? Does that depend on whether the course is for credit or not?
   d. If the quality of a MOOC is determined by its learners and their connections with each other, why insist on course outcomes at all?

3. How does assessment strengthen or constrain the quality of MOOC?
   a. Do traditional assessments for online and F2F courses support MOOC learning?
   b. Should MOOC students be allowed to create their own assessments?
   c. Can peer critique serve as an appropriate form of assessment for credit (and can students petition a low grade based on peer assessment)?
   d. Should MOOC students seek to achieve program or institutional outcomes if they determine their own personal objectives (and is this true for all MOOCs)?

4. What is the role of instructional design in the quality of a MOOC?
   a. Should MOOCs incorporate best practice in pedagogy and learning design?
   b. Do MOOCs need different design standards than online and F2F courses?
   c. To what extent does the type and purpose of MOOC influence design?
   d. Do we apply the same design standards for all MOOCs or for a specific type?
5. Miscellaneous Questions
   
a. How much academic and technical support should we offer students in a free MOOC?

b. What types of formative assessment support learning in a MOOC?

c. If MOOCs require outcomes as a condition for credit (as part of the curriculum) how does the "course" differ from a non-massive online course? (are they same except for the numbers or types of students)?

d. Which benchmarks are appropriate to MOOCs or do we need to create new ones?