Embedding Open Education at universities: Issues to resolve

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Context

• Working Party of the Educational Technology Committee
• Advise the university about the broad range of issues arising from the Open Education movement
• Identify barriers in the current policy environment
Questions to Pursue

• What is ‘openness’?
• Why would you want to pursue it?
• What are the benefits to students, teachers and universities?
• Institutional and pedagogical issues
‘Openness’ at Universities

• Universities have a long tradition of freely sharing information and knowledge

• “Openness is a fundamental value underlying significant changes in society and is a prerequisite to changes institutions of higher education need to make in order to remain relevant to the society in which they exist”

• http://opendistanceteachingandlearning.wordpress.com/2012/07/09/openness-as-counter-narrative-omde/
Open Education

• Any approach to education that provides a level of openness
  – in learning materials
  – interaction with teachers and other learners, with assessment and/or qualifications
Elements of Open Education

• Open Content:
  – Open Educational Resources (OER) – learning objects
  – Open Courseware
  – Open Textbooks

• Open Courses:
  – combine Open Content with teacher presence
  – Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
Open Content

- Open Educational Resources (OER)
  - Learning Objects
    - individual graphics, animated graphic sequences, narrated animations, multimedia software, simulations, lecture notes, PowerPoint slides or lecture recordings
- Open Courseware
  - all materials for a course are freely available
  - a sequenced collection of OERs
- Open Textbooks
  - an openly licensed textbook offered online
Open Courses

• Complement open content
  – by adding learning tasks and teacher support

• Open courses can be richer
  – enrolled students can benefit from the experiences and worldviews of others

• Drawbacks
  – No income
  – Staff workloads can increase
MOOCs

• Massively Open Online Courses
• Originally
  – an open course offered in a distributed fashion across the internet
• Now
  – a course offered freely to the world through a brokerage
• In some cases, large numbers of students have enrolled
• ‘Graduates’ of MOOCs may receive certificates but not qualifications
Granularity

Learning objects are relatively self-contained and ‘granular’

Open courseware is holistic and less granular
Usefulness to Academics

Granularity

- MOOCs
- Open Courses
- Open Courseware
- Learning Objects

Usefulness

- Too restrictive
- More useful
Questions to Pursue

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Premises

• Lots of good quality content available on the Internet and lots of ways for learners to obtain access to that content

• Content delivery, *per se*, is decreasing in value in education
Rationale

• Students
  – Equity of access
  – Access to other world views

• Teachers
  – Access to resources (consumer)
  – Reputation (producer)
  – Facilitates pedagogical changes

• University
  – to contribute to broader good in the world
  – to enhance reputation and attract students
  – to generate income
  – to improve the efficiency of learning and teaching practice
  – to improve student learning outcomes
Consuming Open Content

• Teachers can spend more time
  – designing tasks for students to engage with
  – developing 21st century learning skills:
    • helping students communicate and collaborate
    • helping students find relevant and accurate information
    • helping students make meaningful connections

• The teacher helps students build their understanding
Institutional Drivers

• to contribute to broader good in the world
• to enhance reputation and attract students
• to generate income
• to improve the efficiency of learning and teaching practice
• to improve student learning outcomes

How does this apply to MOOCs?
Critique of the MOOC movement

• While access to MOOCs is open, the content within the MOOC may not be open
• A content-centred but largely teacher-free learning environment
• Updated, online version of the old-fashioned correspondence course
• Like the OUA model, without the fees. Anybody can enrol, and there are high dropout rates
Nature of Students

• Students in open courses need social, metacognitive and self-efficacy skills – they should already know how to learn
• Beginning students don’t have these skills
• A successful university graduate should be able to learn from a MOOC
Lessons to Learn

• OUA now includes tutor support in courses
• Open content relieves teachers of the need to deliver content
• Physical or virtual class time can be used to discuss concepts in detail and build understanding
  – The ‘flipped (or inverted) classroom’ model
• The teacher is a facilitator of learning
  – helping learners to develop graduate attributes such as creativity and critical thinking
Questions to Pursue

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If a University decides to embrace openness, what are the issues?

• Reputational risk
• Intellectual property
• Transnational education business models
Cost

Granularity

- MOOCs
- Open Courseware
- Learning Objects

Need for production teams and quality assurance services

Cost

- High Cost
- Low Cost
Intellectual Property

• Murdoch University owns copyright in ‘all course materials and teaching materials’
• You can’t make content you create open without university approval
• There is a cumbersome process to approve the release of content under Creative Commons
## Creative Commons Licenses

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<th>Term</th>
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| BY   | **Attribution**  
You let others use your copyrighted work on the condition that they give you credit. All CC licences contain this condition. |
| NC   | **Non-commercial**  
You let others use your work, but for *non-commercial* purposes only. |
| SA   | **Share-alike**  
You allow others to create and distribute derivative works based on your original, under the same conditions as you used. |
| ND   | **No-derivatives**  
You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform *only verbatim* copies of your work. |
Solutions

• Resolve the undefined ‘grey area’ between ‘teaching and course materials’ and ‘conventional scholarly [=research] output’.
• Release teaching content under a Creative Commons BY-NC-SA licence
Transnational Business Models

• The University licenses access to the Content of a unit to another entity
• Diametrically opposed to openness
• Option 1 - restrict the types of content which are opened up
  – Unworkable
• Option 2 - license certification rather than content
Recommendations

• Move towards open content
• Be cautious about open courses
  – Needs to be justified on pedagogical, reputational or financial grounds
• Wholesale adoption of the MOOC approach may be costly, with insufficient return on investment.
• Change the TNE business model to license qualifications not content
A Last Word

The MOOC ‘phenomenon’ has raised the profile of an educational reform agenda first advocated by Diana Laurillard in 1993 “Rethinking University Teaching”