In this interactive session you’ll collaboratively explore:

1. The wide range of MOOC definitions and purposes
2. Factors impacting quality
3. Quality standards

Your group discussion goal:

• Reach consensus on what constitutes quality learning for MOOCs

MOOC Classifications

By Definition

1. cMOOC
   • Classic connectivist pedagogy (i.e. networked or peer-to-peer learning)
   • Participants supplement or teach each other desired skills and knowledge
   • High use of social media and peer-to-peer communication tools

2. xMOOC
   • Emphasis on content and web-based delivery
   • Video lectures (studio quality) and limited instructor engagement
   • Behaviorist pedagogy, often with assessment by machine-readable exam

3. pMOOC
   • cMooc and xMooc hybrid model
   • Instructor manages overall learning experience
   • Projects and authentic assessments encourage learners to apply theory to practice, either individually or in groups

By Purpose

1. Individual enrichment through self-learning
2. Replacement of traditional face-to-face or online credit-bearing course either because everyone else is offering MOOCs or because of expected financial benefits
3. Special topic developed very rapidly in response to burning demand
4. Professional development (either credit or non-credit)
5. Introductory or exploratory orientation to topic, academic field, profession, etc.
6. Exploration of emerging innovations, strategies, techniques, etc.

Focus Questions and Thoughts for Small Group Discussion

1. How does the type, branding and purpose of MOOC affect quality?
   Thoughts from Martin Weller (MOOCs & Quality):
   
   *I’m tempted to suggest that above all MOOCs should hang a sign that declares “abandon all quality measures”, because most of the ones we have developed for...*
formal education don’t apply in MOOCs. We have developed a set of quality measures based on a specific relationship between the education provider and the student. That relationship is fundamentally altered in a MOOC, and so those of existing measures are not applicable.

2. How do the personal objectives of learners affect quality?
   Thoughts from Ulf-Daniel Ehlers, Ebba Ossiannilsson, & Alastair Creelman (MOOC Quality – What Have We Learned?)

   The notion of choice seems to be a very important aspect when it comes to quality of MOOCs. Are dropouts viewed as a sign of deficient quality or are they an expression of individual choice and actually designed into MOOCs?

3. How does assessment strengthen or constrain the quality of a MOOC?
   Thoughts from Stephen Downes (Quality of Massive Open Online Courses):

   The primary criticism of what I will address in this chapter is that success is process-defined rather than outcomes-defined. Without outcomes measurement we cannot measure success, we can’t focus our efforts toward that success, we can’t become more competitive and efficient, we can’t plan for change and improvement, and we can’t define what you want to accomplish as a result. All this is true, and yet there is no measure of outcome or success that can be derived from designer and user motivations, or even from the uses to which MOOCs are put. The only alternative is to identify what a successful MOOC ought to produce as output, without reference to existing (and frankly, very preliminary and very variable) usage.

4. What is the role of instructional design in the quality of a MOOC?
   Thoughts from Ron Legon (MOOCs and the Quality Question); retrieved from Inside Higher Ed: http://bit.ly/1buW6qT

   While MOOCs offer an array of exercises and activities, often quite well-designed, the exercises are usually machine-graded or self-assessed, devoid of contact with or feedback from an instructor. Some MOOCs have student discussion boards, but they are not monitored or guided by qualified instructors, and the task of keeping discussions relevant and shared information accurate is crowdsourced by the students themselves.

Resources

- **Blog** for this session: http://blogs.uoregon.edu/qualitymoocs/
- **Chico State Rubric for Online Instruction**: http://www.csuchico.edu/roi/the_rubric.shtml
- **MOOC Quality Project**: http://mooc.efquel.org/
- **Quality Matters**: https://www.qualitymatters.org/
- **Sloan-C Quality Scorecard**: http://sloanconsortium.org/quality_scoreboard_online_program