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Massive Open Online Courses and Mission: A Qualitative Study Regarding Matching MOOC Opportunity with Mission Statement

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MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES AND MISSION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

REGARDING MATCHING MOOC OPPORTUNITY WITH MISSION STATEMENT

by

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MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES AND MISSION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Since the first offering in 2008 (Fini, 2009; Liyanagunawardena, Adams & Williams, 2013), Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have been a phenomenon in higher education. While much research has been conducted on activities and experiences within these courses, little research from an administrative standpoint has been completed (Liyanagunawardena, et al., 2013). This qualitative case study examined the use of the mission statement in a committee's determination whether or not to implement a MOOC at a Jesuit institution of higher education in the United States. Interviews were conducted with committee members, transcribed, and analyzed. Analysis determined that the mission statement did play an integral role in the decision to create a MOOC at the institution. Three central themes emerged from studying the committee's deliberations: Mission-Centered, Jesuit Tradition and Access. These themes, which reflect directly upon the mission statement, would be useful to those who are concerned about the appropriateness of fit for a MOOC at their own institutions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are still in their infancy within the landscape of higher education. It is widely recognized that the first MOOC was offered in 2008 through the University of Manitoba (Fini, 2009, p. 2). The course was offered for credit to traditional students; it served as a prototype for MOOCs in that it was also offered, free of charge and non-credit, to anyone interested in taking the course (2009, p. 2). Since that initial course, new MOOCs have been created in rapid succession, often the results of partnerships between institutions of higher education. EdX, for example, was created from a partnership between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University (Breslow, Pritchard, DeBoer, Stump, Ho & Seaton, 2013).

MOOCs are defined by some common characteristics. Foremost, they are considered open enrollment. Philosophically, anyone on the planet with an Internet connection and interest in the subject is able to participate in the course (Green, 2012). The courses are genuinely massive in regards to student numbers, with some courses running into the tens of thousands of students (2012). MOOCs are typically offered free of charge with the caveat that they are also non-credit (2012).

MOOCs are a new phenomenon, and, until recently, higher education professionals found it difficult to escape the hype and commentary, making it challenging to uncover solid research (Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013). Although the fanfare has calmed and an empirical body of research is emerging, questions remain unanswered about this initiative (2013). Institutions considering MOOCs often find little clear information and data to aid them in navigating the phenomenon. Instead, committees and

individuals are required to sift through information, much of which is rhetoric, in order to make informed decisions.

As a whole, post-secondary education is currently facing financial challenges (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 544), changing student demographics (pp.464-471), and increased demands from stakeholders for accountability (p. 544). The opportunity to open a course at a free or greatly reduced charge to the masses who may eventually become paying students, has provided much temptation to struggling, or near struggling, institutions of higher education (Green, 2012). That many well-known and respected institutions have either formed MOOC consortiums or created MOOCs on their own encourages smaller, less affluent or well-known institutions to consider participating by creating their own MOOCs (2012).

Eagerness to join the movement might override the best interests of an institution (Cillay, 2013; Malesic, 2013). Many factors must be considered. Multiple aspects of higher education, e.g., technological capabilities, faculty and staff resources, marketing, and student enrollments, are affected by hosting a MOOC (Green, 2012). However, there is also concern that the institutions that opt out of participating might suffer from not drawing potential students from untapped markets (2012). Additionally, the allure of potentially increasing awareness of an institution or to cement institutional branding leads many institutions to consider creating a MOOC (2012).

It can be considered too soon to fully discern the impact of MOOCs because of the short timeline since their inception (Breslow et al., 2013; Fini, 2009; Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013). MOOCs might be a passing fad or they might become entrenched permanently on the landscape of higher education. They might be only a

benchmark to a larger innovation (Baggaley, 2013). Only a longer passage of time will determine the ultimate fate of MOOCs (2013). No matter the outcome, the popularity and spread of these courses warrant scrutiny not only from a pedagogical standpoint, but from an administrative perspective as well (Breslow et al., 2013; Liyanagunawardena, et al., 2013).

Few innovations have reached the hype that MOOCs have enjoyed in such a short time frame (Cillay, 2013; Green, 2012). There are many reasons for this. First, news on innovative creations moves quickly to a large number of professionals via the Internet (Baggaley, 2013). Likewise, classrooms have never been open to such a large number of people at one time. The fact that MOOCs are free or are offered at reduced rates to students, the flexibility of nonstop access to the course via the Internet, and the cachet of attending a course from prestigious and well-known institutions promote the large class sizes (Rhoads et al., 2013). Ostensibly, individuals all over the world who would otherwise not have access to a particular institution can attend and participate in courses (Green, 2012; Rhoads et al., 2013). There is a large audience of potential students who might someday pay tuition for traditional courses (Green, 2012). In many ways, MOOCs represent a brave new world of postsecondary education: one where quality curriculum and professor expertise is provided to the masses at a cost that is either nonexistent or minimal to the learner.

Within the increasing costs of higher education, the visual sticker price is tuition fees (Cohen & Kisker, 2012; p. 451). Tuition rates can greatly influence which institution, if any, a student wishes to attend. Institutions are increasingly aware of the tighter competition not only among their traditional rivals but other entities that were

once not considered to be vying for the attentions of those in the prospective student pool (Kamenetz, 2010, p. 54). MOOCs can potentially provide a gateway to institutions. For example, if a student enjoys a MOOC, he or she might decide to register for a course or recommend an institution to another potential student (Green, 2012). By providing a MOOC, an institution can appear cutting edge and dynamic. Indeed, some institutions are considering creating pathways between MOOCs and for-credit courses (Cooper & Sahami, 2013; Rhoads et al., 2013). For example, certificate programs are being considered an example of a feasible chute in the transition from MOOC to credit course.

All of the factors mentioned previously are the ideal outcomes. However, current evidence to support or refute these ideas is limited. Outcomes aside, the implementation of this new method can carry significant costs in institutions of higher education which already are frequently stretched to their fiscal and employee limits (Green, 2012; Rhoads, et al., 2013). Time spent reviewing and researching MOOCs can include untold hours of employee time and resources as well. There is a cost to everything when considering implementation of a new project, whether it concerns a traditional course or a MOOC (Cillay, 2013). However, before a MOOC can be created, administrative steps must be considered and utilized (Green, 2012). The institution must consider many logistics, including funding, physical space, employee resources and mission statement.

There is a multitude of information of various value placed on MOOCs. Bloggers post their opinions as do guest writers on academic news websites such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed* (Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013). Non-academic media such as *The New Yorker* have published articles on this phenomenon such as "Laptop U" by Nathan Heller in May 2013. On the surface, it appears that there

is substantial rhetoric about MOOCs. This is true, but for the majority of the written word, it is talk with limited substantive research to support the argument. The phenomenon, along with the accompanying data, is still so new that only recently have academic articles been written. Indeed, Liyanagunawardena et al., (2013) found only 45 academic papers published on MOOCs between 2008 and 2012 (p. 208).

From an administrative perspective, it seems there is even more limited information. The information found by this researcher thus far has focused primarily upon what goes on inside a MOOC that is already created, for example the research conducted by Breslow et al., (2013) and Kop, Fournier and Mak (2011). What this researcher has found missing from publications is conversation and research on the deliberation to create a MOOC. There is limited research on how these courses are funded and how funding was initially obtained, with only minor mention of these aspects in publications such as by Green (2012) and Liyanagunawardena et al., (2013). It appears the administrative sector has largely been ignored in this topic.

Although there is merit in all data retrieved from analyzing these courses, and that data (and its worth) grows daily, certain key points in the genesis of these courses are missing. For example, one might wonder how the discussion about whether or not to offer a MOOC came about within the institution. Another question might be about what factors were included in the decision-making process. One might wonder if the mission statement was considered and how it was incorporated (Green, 2012). One might ponder if the mission or its language was adapted to include MOOCs or if the proposed MOOC was adapted to the mission and its language (2012).

For a course or project to be implemented by an institution, it must adhere to the

mission statement (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). If there is no support for the mission

statement within the new initiative, it negates the standards by which the institution

operates. While many mission statements, especially those of public institutions, are

written to be inclusive and vague, other institutions, primarily private ones, have more

direct and well-defined mission statements (Morphew & Hartley, 2006).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit

institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the

discussion to create a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

Significance of the Study

At the time of writing, this study is one of the few works that examine an

institution's mission statement regarding the implementation of a MOOC. As earlier

stated, much academic research on the subject has focused on themes such as pedagogy,

student experiences, and retention. There is great value for such studies as professors and

administrative members want to know the benefit of the course offerings to their students.

For institutions to gain a better and more holistic understanding of the MOOC

phenomenon, other areas require examination as well. As each institution lives by its

respective mission statement, it can be considered essential that any new initiative fit

within that mission statement. The opportunity for this study arose when a Jesuit

institution began investigating the MOOC movement through the creation of a

committee. As a private, religious institution, the researcher understood that there were

certain aspects of the mission statement that could inhibit implementation of MOOC, as

well as content that could have affected how that MOOC would be offered and carried

out in accordance with the mission statement.

Research Questions

1. How does the creation of a massive open online course (MOOC) fit into the overall mission of the university?

2. What specific areas of the institution's mission statement influence the consideration of implementing a massive open online course (MOOC)?

Definition of Terms

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC): an online course that has open admission standards, is usually free of charge, and is non-credit (Green, 2012, p.2).

Mission Statement: "the physical, social, fiscal, and political contexts in which that institution exists" (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2008, p. 223).

Jesuit: A member of the Society of Jesus, a religious order within the Roman Catholic church (Coulter, Krason, Myers & Varacalli, 2007, p. 1002).

Private Institution: "An institution that is not created or operated by a federal, state, or local government entity" (Kaplin & Lee, 2007, p. 675). Private institutions can further be subdivided into private secular institutions and private religious institutions (2007).

Public Institution: "An institution that is created or operated by a state government, or, sometimes, by the federal government or a local government" (Kaplin & Lee, 2007, p. 675).

Religious Institution: "A private educational institution that is operated by a church or other sectarian organization or is otherwise formally affiliated with a church or sectarian organization" (Kaplin & Lee, 2007 p. 676).

Society of Jesus: "A Roman Catholic order of priests and brothers founded half a

millennium ago by the soldier-turned-mystic Ignatius Loyola" (Jesuit.org website,

n.d.)

Methodology

As there is limited qualitative research for the use of institutional mission

statements in decision-making exercises, this researcher relied on a case study method

with participants of a MOOC committee at a Jesuit institution of higher education. It was

determined this approach would best achieve the goals set forth by the researcher.

Qualitative research focuses more on the story rather than the results. Indeed, Creswell

(2014) stated, "In a qualitative project, the author will describe a research problem that

can be best understood by exploring a concept or phenomenon" (p. 110).   While

qualitative research cannot be quantified, the value of such an approach is in the relating

of the processes of the events that unfolded to give insight to others. Qualitative research

tends to be more holistic than quantitative research and the variables are not defined at

the onset of the study.

Within qualitative research, case studies are a design "in which the researcher

develops an in-depth analysis, process, of one or more individuals. They are bounded by

time and activity" (Creswell, 2014, p. 14). As this research examined the decision-

making process of a committee focused on a single subject and the distinct, individual

voices were to be maintained, a case study design was implemented.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument. In this study, the

researcher created her own interview questions instead of utilizing a survey or

questionnaire already in existence. Because the researcher is the instrument, there is

opportunity to create a design that is decidedly unique to the particular research. As the

instrument, it is the responsibility of the researcher to address any potential bias or

assumptions that may influence how she conducted the data collection and subsequent

analyses. In this study, a peer debriefer was used to offset researcher bias. The

researcher also kept field notes and observations of the interviews.

Organization of the Study

The design of the study was a series of interview questions that were asked to

members of the MOOC committee at a Jesuit institution of higher education in the

Midwest region of the United States. All members of the committee were invited to

participate in the study via email. After interviews were conducted by the researcher,

they were transcribed and coded to identify emerging themes. Identifiers were removed

to maintain the anonymity of participants.

Delimitations

Ellis and Levy (2009) defined delimitations as "the factors, constructs, and/or

variables that were intentionally left out of the study" (p. 332). Several delimitations

existed in this study. First, the study was conducted within one Jesuit institution of

higher education rather than incorporating multiple institutions. At the time of the

MOOC committee formation, at least two other Jesuit institutions in addition to

numerous other public and private institutions had implemented MOOCs. Second,

although there is much rhetoric and research about MOOCs, and the researcher

acknowledged that a large population of individuals could provide insight, a selective

group of individuals who participated on one committee were the study participants.

Third, this group of individuals consisted of predominantly white women with terminal

degrees who held upper-level administrative positions at the institution studied.

Questions that could reflect gender bias or perception were not included in the interview

as the researcher determined that there existed much similarity among participants.

A significant portion of academic research about MOOCs was also not included

in the literature review in this paper. The researcher found that much published MOOC

research focused on the goings-on within the MOOCs themselves. Student

demographics, pedagogy and retention were common themes found within the research

as many in higher education are primarily interested in what is occurring within those

courses. The researcher was focused on the administrative side of higher education, and

she excluded information that was not useful to the purpose of this study.

Limitations

Ellis and Levy (2009) posited that "a limitation is an uncontrollable threat to the

internal validity of a study" (p. 332). There were several limitations in this study.

Participation in this study by all committee members completing an interview would have

provided a more complete vision of how mission played into the group's decision.

However, even with input from all individuals involved, this researcher believes there

still would have been some bias. Although the committee members represented most of

the institution's schools and colleges, as well as administration, bias was likely present as

some participants were hand-picked by the president of the institution. There was also

concern over the number of individuals who participated on the committee. Nine

individuals is a reasonable number for participants on a committee. However, only four

of the nine committee members participated in this investigation also limits the

usefulness of results.

The materials tied together coherently, and while there were definite relationships, the researcher discovered no true outliers in the content of the responses. Perhaps more in-depth and comprehensive interviews would give rise to differing opinions. It is possible that the participants were too similar. The themes of Jesuit Values and Ignatian Pedagogy, research and outreach to potential students and marginalized populations in this study were related both to one another and referred directly back to the institution's mission statement. Additionally, the concept of risk as used by the participants referred directly back to the mission statement as well.

Researcher bias was also a potential limitation. As the instrument in qualitative research, the researcher holds biases that can greatly affect outcomes. Although measures to reduce bias were utilized, there is always a certain amount of risk for bias in this form of research. Additionally, the researcher was familiar with not only Jesuit Tradition but the institution itself, having attended as a student and serving presently as an employee. Several members of the committee were also known personally by the researcher and this might have swayed some of their responses.

Finally, the focus of this particular study was quite narrow. There are only 28 Jesuit institutions in the United States, so the potential for wider interest was limited. A potential reader might scan the title, see the word "Jesuit," and move along, believing that the topic is of limited appeal. However, given both the circumstances of limited information on MOOCs as well as the opportunity to study the internal considerations of a MOOC committee, this study provided a unique and fairly timely examination of the administrative perspective of the MOOC movement.

Summary

This small scale case study was created to explore the perceptions and perspectives of an intimate group of individuals who participated in a committee to provide recommendations of whether or not to offer a MOOC at a Jesuit institution of higher education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There is a dearth of academic and empirical research regarding mission statements in both higher education (Morphew & Hartley, 2006;Scott, 2006) and MOOCs (Breslow et al., 2013; Green, 2012; and Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013). That there is limited research on MOOCs reflects the short existence of the phenomenon. The reason that mission statements have historically been limited as research topics is seldom addressed (Firmin & Merrick Gilson, 2010). Indeed, the majority of research articles found by this researcher were written in distinct time periods: the 1970-1980s, and then again from the mid-2000s to present. One might assume that research on mission statements fluctuates with the contemporary interests and driving forces of a particular time. Scott (2006) and Morphew and Hartley (2006) made known that little formal research had been conducted on mission statements. Firmin and Merrick Gilson (2010) also noted "surprisingly, there is a relative paucity of research data reported in the literature regarding higher education mission statements" (p. 62).

Morphew and Hartley (2006) stated little empirical research has been done on mission statements, and those who have conducted such research view mission statements as vague or unrealistic in their goals. They argued that instead of being used as guides for decision-making, mission statements are often written in a malleable fashion. The statements appear more capable of adapting to new concepts and open to initiatives than is realistically possible for the institutions. Morphew and Hartley (2006), Velcoff and Ferrari (2006), and Davis, Ruhe, Lee and Rajadhyaksha (2007) emphasized that clear mission statements halt competing missions or the misuse of missions and can

be used to identify and adhere to institutional priorities. Meacham (2008) promoted the mission statement's use to create or expand programs during strong fiscal years, as well as to determine that which to terminate or downsize in times of leaner budgets. Meacham also pointed out that the role of the mission statement varies from institution to institution.

Recent research focused on content of mission statements rather than implementation and adherence. Woodrow (2006), Firmin and Merrick Gilson (2010), and Ferrari and Velcoff (2006), for example, relied on quantitative methods for their studies on mission statements. Notably, the content of mission statements found online provided much of the data for Firmin and Merrick Gilson (2010) and Woodrow (2006). As stated previously, most research regarding mission statements has consisted of the content of the statements and in seeking trends of frequency and use of particular words. Those words were then used to compare and contrast institutions based on their Carnegie Classification. Additional research into why certain words were included or omitted was limited. Comparisons of themes and repeated content in mission statements of Catholic institutions were subjected to frequency analysis.

In the brief time of their existence, MOOCs have sparked debate and inspired replication among institutions in higher education (Cillay, 2013; Green, 2012). The phenomenon is still novel enough that, while research is being published, much of the potential impact of MOOCs remains speculative (Breslow et al., 2013; Green, 2012; Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013). Liyanagunawardena et al. (2013) wrote "most research has investigated the learner perspective, with a significant minor focus on the institutional threats and opportunities" (p. 217). Although Liyanagunawardena et al. (2013)

recognized the limitations of previous MOOC research, they, too, omitted areas of exploration and discovery. The authors, in their discussion, addressed the lack of ethical aspects and examining demographics, but their focus was still heavily upon the student. . Rhoads, Berdan and Toven-Lindsey (2013) did the same when they examined the democratic potential of the online courses. Liyanagunawardena et al. (2013) did note "neither the creator/facilitator perspective nor the technological aspects are being widely researched" (p. 219), but they, too, neglected to recognize other factors such as administration, institutional type, institutional mission, and vision statements.

The Mission Statement

A mission statement is a formal, written declaration that creates the backbone and purpose of an institution. The mission statement can address the history, current state and focus of an institution. According to Lattuca and Stark (2009), "a mission is a statement about an institution's identity or vision of itself, articulated to provide its members with a sense of institutional goals and shared purpose," (p. 69). In his study of exploring the mission statements of Christian institutions, Woodrow (2006) categorized the components of mission statements: history, educational philosophy, constituency, institutional strength, uniqueness, statement brevity, precise words, statements that endure and breadth and communication.

The mission statement is the document members of an institution refer to and reflect upon in decision-making processes, such as when creating a strategic plan or designing a new program (Firmin & Merrick Gilson, 2010; Morphew & Hartley, 2006). Meacham (2008) found that mission statements can be utilized as a tool to promote conversation between stakeholders to create and encourage shared goals and mission-

centered activities. For example, in one study by Peck and Stick (2008), the researchers found the mission did influence daily actions of faculty at a Jesuit institution. Scott (2006) provided a historical analysis of mission statement in higher education and noted the institutional mission exists before the mission statement. He added that the mission statement sanctifies the mission of the institution in written form. Following Scott's thoughts, one could suggest all involved in an institution should actually embrace the mission statement as it is an extension of the particular institution's holistic mission.

Morphew and Hartley (2006) found mission statements of public institutions to be more similar to those of other public institution rather than private institutions. For example, they found a community college's mission statement more similar to a land grant institution than the mission statement of a baccalaureate public college to the mission statement of a baccalaureate private college. Davis et al. (2007) found mission statements for religious schools had more words (248.5 versus 111) than mission statements for public institutions (Davis et al., 2007, p. 102). The researchers also found that focus on character traits is higher in religious mission statements. They asserted "it appears that mission does in fact drive the behavior of organizational participants" (p. 109). Abelman and Dalessandro (2008) noted "intellectual development and the education of the whole person, service leadership and citizenship, are typically included in the mission statements of Catholic schools" (p. 224).

By definition, an institution's mission statement must be considered when determining whether to implement any new program, including MOOCs (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). Religious institutions move one step further in their mission statements than their secular counterparts (Davis et al., 2007). Francesco Cesareo (2007), President

of Assumption College, indirectly defined an institution's mission statement by insisting that "the identity of the institution should be the very lifeblood of everything that takes place there" (Cesareo, 2007, para. 1) including hiring processes, curriculum development and creation of programs. Woodrow's (2006) sentiments mirrored Cesareo's in that the mission must be personal and provide the opportunity for personal growth, both intellectually and spiritually. By actively making decisions under the guidance of the mission statement, an institution is reinforcing the nature of its very existence: that which makes it unique and justifies its place in the higher education landscape (2006).

However, some researchers have found that although mission statements are universal among higher education institutions, there has not been much empirical research to support how useful and practical mission statements are in the daily activities of an institution or how it is portrayed to individuals outside. Abelman and Dalessandro (2008) noted

> Although the focus and substance of institutional mission and vision at Catholic schools have been assessed and analyzed, little attention has been paid to the manner in which this information is actually communicated to stakeholders, within and outside the academic community" (p. 224).

Ferrari and Velcoff (2006) noted that "given the changes occurring at religious institutions of higher education, research into how present mission statements at faith-based institutions, such as Catholic universities, reflect their traditions seem important for institutional and academic curriculum development and evaluation" (p. 255).

Mission statements are not static. Scott (2006) found that the missions of institutions and their accompanying mission statements have changed over time to mirror

contemporary public sentiment. He emphasized the central and most consistent theme over time in mission statements was the concept of service: how the institution provides service to the community as well as the types of service provided. That mission statements do change over time demonstrates that the services that are perceived as necessary by the populace evolve and the institutions respond to that evolution by adjusting the manner and variety of those services.

Private, Religious Higher Education

Although many mission statements might appear interchangeable and most share common language, the sectors of higher education that have religious foundations influence and define the mission statement. For example, there are 28 Jesuit universities in the United States. Although their mission statements may vary, they are bound by Jesuit and Catholic ideals such as "intellectual development and the education of the whole person, service, leadership and citizenship" (Abelman & Dalessondro, 2008, p. 224), and those ideals are found in their respective mission statements. When obligated to such beliefs, a Jesuit institution may consider the addition of a new program in a manner that might be more restrictive than at a secular, private or public institution. According to the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU), "Our primary mission is the education and formation of our students for the sake of the kind of persons they become and their wide influence for good in society in their lives, professions, and service." (AJCU, 2010). For example, when considering the implementation of a MOOC, a Jesuit university could ask, "How can a MOOC be used as a tool for justice?" or, "How would the implementation of a MOOC be used to serve others?" Questions such as these would underline the mission of the institution.

Catholic and Jesuit Higher Education

According to the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, all Catholic institutions of higher education are expected to strive to follow *Ex Corde Eccelisiae*, a papal constitution promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1991. Currently, 262 institutions are considered Catholic institutions of higher education (Accunetorg, n.d.). Those institutions are bound to the Papal constitution, which, among other rules, states the Roman Catholic Church is the interpreter of scripture and tradition and that non-Catholic faculty should not outnumber Catholic faculty (Peck & Stick, 2008, p. 201). Peck and Stick (2008) also noted that adherence to *Ex Corde Eccelisiae* has not inspired uniform observance from these institutions as the contents have been interpreted differently among the various institutions and the religious orders that sponsor them.

Within the realm of American Catholic higher education, 28 institutions are run by the Society of Jesus, commonly known as the Jesuits. Founded in 1534 by Ignatius of Loyola, the Jesuits began "the first teaching order of the church" (Bergman, 2011, p. 21). The Society of Jesus holds certain tenants, called charisms, which they bring out not only in their ministries, but also in the education they provide. Among those charisms are *cura personalis,* which is defined as care of the whole person; *magis,* which means "more" in Latin; service to others, and finding God in all things (Ewelt, 2012, pp. 136-137). These charisms are driving forces in the formation of a Jesuit education and are so embedded into the Jesuit philosophy that their existence is entwined in the actions and processes of the Society of Jesus. In fact, the identification of being an entity of the Society of Jesus is laid out within all the mission statements of all 28 Jesuit institutions of higher education (Currie, 2011, p. 354).

MOOC Overview

The term "MOOC" may be fairly new, but various modes of distance learning outside of the traditional classroom setting have been offered for decades. Distance education is not a new concept, and it has adopted multiple manifestations over time. Correspondence courses, courses available over television, and later internet courses reflect the changing technology and the delivery of courses to non-traditional students. These modes of education have been offered by all tiers within higher education, from Ivy League institutions to community colleges to for-profit entities. Increased access has mirrored the larger movement of higher education in its quest to increase accessibility to students who were historically prevented from obtaining a higher education.

There are proponents of a radical transformation in higher education. Anya Kamenetz ((2010), in her book, *DIYU: Edupunks, Edupreners, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education*, identified that higher education is in a state of flux and encouraged, among other alternative resources, independent online learning. Kamenetz supported multiple paths to success, focused on life-long learning, and learning for its own means to an end. In her book, *Whatever Happened to the Faculty?,* Burgan (2006) wrote that for-profit institutions followed a similar argument with the advent of their online course offerings in the 1990s. She stated that the for-profit institution, the University of Phoenix, fashioned itself as a respondent to deficits in traditional higher education. By opening courses online and attracting non-traditional students who were underrepresented, for-profit institutions have created a niche that addressed untapped student markets and course delivery (Burgan, 2006).

Despite that various forms of educational delivery exist, distance learning has

traditionally been considered subpar to the traditional classroom and carried concerns

about the level of student motivation and self-guidance required to succeed in that

learning format (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). That the online education movement was

spearheaded primarily by proprietary schools in the 1990s also led to some incredulous

beliefs by some in higher education. There was similar hype surrounding the rise of

online courses to that of MOOCs-traditional institutions did not want to be left behind in

the movement and occasionally made unwise financial decisions in the pursuit of creating

online courses (Burgan, 2006). The first MOOC offered was taught by George Siemens

and Stephen Downes through the University of Manitoba in 2008 (Fini, 2009;

Liyanagunawardena, Adams & Williams, 2013). While not the first open online course

(Fini, 2009), CCK08 was open to both students who took the course for credit as well as

those who took the course for free and without credit.

MOOC Considerations

Although research on the influence of mission statements on the creation and

implementation of MOOCs may be limited, researchers have begun to consider potential

impacts of MOOCs on learning. Rhoads, Berdan and Toven-Lindsey (2013) expressed

concern over the potential anti-democratic manifestations that could be created by

MOOCs. Factors, such as accessibility to technology and the nature of courses offered,

may limit the reality of the open access concept when applied to real-life use. The

authors noted the nature of open courseware can promote democracy, but there are also

opportunities to thwart democratic opportunity. There are some who appear too

enthusiastic yet not fully informed about who, exactly, has access to MOOCs. For

example, Kamenetz (2010) operated on the assumption that students have access to

appropriate technology as well as the technological savvy to succeed in online educational efforts.

Other researchers and commentators have expressed concern over the longevity of MOOCs. Concerns include the fear that the hype over MOOCs might overshadow pragmatic decision making for administrators and point to previous technological innovations of the past decade that have yet to fulfill their potential. For example, open courseware has been available for over a decade (Downes, 2007) and is still in limited use in higher education. Downes (2007) encouraged Open Educational Resources (OERs) to exist only as a portion of higher education offerings, not as a replacement for the traditional classroom. Downes' argument could be a considered applicable to the MOOC movement as well.

Cillay (2013) reported that the creation and implementation of a MOOC is an intensive process among all factors considered, including human resource requirements and time. Funding for MOOCs thus far has consisted of either specific ear-marked funding in the form of special consortiums such as Coursera, edX and Udacity, or by reallocating existing budgets (2013). The creation and maintenance of a MOOC is expensive. Institutions who decided to participate in edX faced a price tag of around $50,000 for a single course offering and $250,000 to create one course (2013). While participation in the courses was initially free, some MOOC projects have either started or are considering implementing fees for students. MOOCs as they are designed now are not sustainable. Downes (2007) stated that OERs are only sustainable if they are the cheaper option, but it is still not cost-free.

There are also concerns within the courses. Cooper and Sahami (2013) expressed

concerns about plagiarism, which they stated appears more frequently in online courses.
In their research on learner connections and collaborations in MOOCs, Kop, Fournier and
Mak (2011) described issues they found with the pedagogy of MOOCs they examined
that included incoherent structure where students found it difficult to evaluate as there
were no set objectives by the faculty.

Another concern should also be the low completion rates in MOOCs, which
frequently hover in the single digits (Breslow et al., 2013; Liyanagunawardena et al.,
2013). This includes the partnership of Harvard and MIT's first MOOC, which
experienced "less than 5% of the students who signed up at any one time completing the
course" (Breslow et al., 2013). One must ask if it is enough to solely offer a MOOC or if
additional language in the mission statement would provoke the institution to do more to
promote retention and success. When considering the creation of MOOCs, the
participating parties must address if it is enough to simply offer the opportunity,
according to the language of the mission statement and ensuing institutional philosophy.

Regardless of structure and delivery, courses offered should reflect the mission
statement of an institution (Morphew & Hartley, 2006). Because of the ease to transform
the material to an electronic format, math and science courses are the predominant
disciplines found in MOOC programs (Rhoads et al., 2013). Although courses based in
the humanities are not excluded, these offerings are limited (2013). This provides
opportunity for religious and liberal arts institutions to find a niche in the MOOC
landscape. By creating courses in the humanities (especially theology and philosophy),
these institutions can fulfill their obligation to their mission statements while capitalizing
on a new way to reach a new group of students. Ignatian pedagogy, part of which

encompasses the act of "engaging students by incorporating methods of active reflection on personal behaviors" (Peck & Stick, 2008, p. 218), is central in mission statements and traditions at Jesuit institutions. As an essential piece of what it means to provide a Jesuit education, the pedagogy and ideology must be addressed and accommodated in the discussion of MOOCs at these institutions.

Summary

MOOCs have given researchers in higher education a new realm to explore. Suddenly, these courses appear possible to many institutions, many of which are grappling for both a corner of a potentially rising market and fiscal security. Popularity, however, does not equal success, nor does it necessarily reflect the mission of an institution. MOOCs have the capacity to inspire institutions into pursuing new avenues of education and pushing new boundaries. However, they are still a new enough phenomenon that institutions have the opportunity to carefully craft them into vehicles to promote their missions and strategic planning.

The issue at hand, however, is whether and how the members of a singular Jesuit institution in the Midwest considered the institution's mission statement while pursuing this new method of course delivery. The specific intent of this study was to explore how the discussion of creating a MOOC fits into the overall mission of the Jesuit institution being examined and to address what specific areas of the institution's mission statement influenced the consideration of implementing a MOOC. It has been argued that it is always in the institution's best interest to consider the mission statement when contemplating new programs as it should be utilized as the formative guide for all institutional decisions. Firmin and Merrick Gilson (2010) noted "a key unknown, of

course, is how mission statements…reflect what actually occurs on a daily basis" (p. 67).

This study was important because it provided an opportunity to observe how the mission

statement was being used in a committee's considerations at a Jesuit institution while

developing a MOOC.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The available research regarding MOOCS and mission statements uncovered little about how the process of decision making transpires. For example, the literature may indicate how individuals perceive the institution's mission statement, but sources seldom explain how, or why, individuals came to that perception. Studying how a conclusion has been reached, especially when dealing with a topic as dynamic and controversial as MOOCs, is important. Developing issues and ideas that sway decisions is essential in understanding (a) how academic professionals feel about MOOCs and (b) how they move through the process of determining adoption and implementation.

The purpose of this study was to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the discussion to create a MOOC. The end result of the decision to create a MOOC will provide ample quantitative data after a time. The approach used by this committee might help other institutions that are considering implementation of MOOCs.

Human beings hold assumptions that there is no more to see beyond what is familiar and understood. Holliday (2002), however, argued that "all scenarios, even the most familiar, should be seen as strange, with layers of mystery that are always beyond the control of the researcher, which need always to be discovered" (p.4).

Research Questions

1. How does the creation of a massive open online course (MOOC) fit into the overall mission of the university?

2. What specific areas of the institution's Mission Statement influence the consideration of implementing a massive open online course (MOOC)?

The determination to use a qualitative research method is explained at length in the following section.

Method

I determined the most appropriate research method for this study was qualitative research and more specifically, a case study model. The point of this study was to examine how a group of individuals facing a task guided themselves and one another to a conclusion. Primarily, the research questions required personal insight and views of the participants. In order to achieve these results, a series of interview questions were created. Focusing on specific experience, rather than a holistic approach, a case study approach provided opportunity to approach all individuals involved.

I sought to elicit personal thoughts, views, and experiences of the participants as they reflected on their participation on this specific committee. I relied on qualitative research as (a) the sample was small, (b) demographic information could be masked, and (c) the sample was purposely selected by the institution's president. I assumed the sample population would be rather homogenous as the president most likely considered factors such as age, education, motivation, professional background, and current employment status as well as personality and goodness of fit into this group. The small sample size and homogeneity would prevent meaningful results using a survey. I believed that through semi-structured interviews, participants would be more willing to share personal insights and opinions. The depth and breadth of the interviews provided an opportunity to closely examine the functioning nature of that particular committee,

focusing on the collective dynamics as well as progression towards the committee's mutual decision.

The Institutional Review Board at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Appendix A) and the institution where research was conducted (Appendix B) approved this study.

Description of Participants/Sample

The participants were individual employees who participated on the MOOC Advisory Committee at a Jesuit institution. Participants were selected because of their familiarity with the MOOC phenomenon beyond casual interest. In gaining access to the agendas, handouts and meeting minutes, as well as prior conversation, I was able to (a) discern that this group of individuals had spent a significant amount of time reviewing available information, (b) possess artifacts to inform interviews, and (c) justify graduate case study. A total of nine individuals participated in the committee. Four members of the committee participated in this study.

The research site was one of 28 Jesuit institutions in the United States. The particular institution is approximately 135 years old and centrally located near the downtown area of a mid-sized city in the Midwest. The institution has a total enrollment of 7,700 students in its nine colleges and schools. The institution is comprehensive: housing the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, and a graduate school. There are also professional schools, including law, medicine, dentistry, and nursing programs. The largest portion of the student population is the traditional undergraduate but the non-traditional adult students are the most rapidly growing sector. The Carnegie Classification System lists the institution as private, not-for-profit and medium-sized (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Website, n.d.). The institution

identifies itself as regional, with the goal of nationwide recognition through its online

offerings. The institution is aggressively pursuing this goal as a focus on online

programs has increased significantly over the past several years. This goal is also fueled

by the success of existing online programs, which consist primarily of those at the

graduate level.

Table 1

Participants

Interview	Pseudonym	Gender	Degree Attained	Position
1	Participant A	F	Terminal	Senior Administration
2	Participant B	F	Master's	Senior Administration
3	Participant C	F	Terminal	Senior Administration
4	Participant D	F	Terminal	Senior Administration

Instrumentation

As with all qualitative research, I served as the instrument. The interview questions

were as follows:

1.   What were some of the reasons the MOOC committee was created?

2.   How were members of the committee selected?

3.   What role did the Mission Statement play in developments of guidelines

       for the committee?

4.   How much individual research did you do on the MOOC movement?

5.   What, if any, benefits could a MOOC contribute to the university's Mission?

6.   What, if any, potential conflict did you see in the creation of a MOOC with the

content of the Mission Statement? What was the potential conflict?

7.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the most

influential?

8.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the least

 influential?

9.   What components of the Mission Statement do you believe will be most

instrumental when the president and the board review your recommendation?

The interview protocol is also listed in Appendix C.

Variables/The Researcher's Role

I attended a Jesuit university and earned a B.A. in psychology. After receiving

my degree, I spent 16 months as a domestic violence victim advocate. I then worked five

years as an instructor in Adult Basic Education (teaching literacy, GED, and ESL classes)

and spent nearly six years working in the office of that department as volunteer

coordinator and assisted the director in a variety of functions. During my career, I gained

numerous interviewing skills with victims of domestic violence and their children, Adult

Basic Education students, and potential volunteers and instructors. Those skills included

conducting social histories, creating action plans, and conducting structured oral

interviews.

I had to be mindful of my own experiences at a Jesuit institution, both as an

undergraduate and as a current employee working in an online program. I attempted to

address and overcome assumptions held about how this study would evolve and what this

study revealed. I knew several participants before the interviews, had already established

professional rapport with them, and had shared an interest in this topic with one

participant on several occasions. I had to be mindful of the level of comfort established, especially as I knew many of the participants and the institution's culture and could anticipate, with some accuracy, the content of their responses. While conducting and transcribing the interviews, I consciously strove to maintain a detachment to the individual speaking so that I could focus more on what was said and not the relationship. Additionally, I practiced bracketing, where I took notes and recorded thoughts before and after each interview. I also utilized one peer debriefer who was familiar with the institution and its culture.

An additional note made during the interview process was that I was familiar with Ignatian pedagogy, philosophy, and language. In order to compensate for the familiarity, I asked questions that would require further clarification or the individuals' interpretations of the meanings of words or phrases to increase inclusivity for potential readers and to also clarify that both parties had the same assumptions of the terms.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection consisted of individual interviews of the committee participants following a semi-structured format. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Each interview consisted of ten questions. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format. The participants were provided both the list of questions and the institution's mission statement for review prior to the interview. With the permission of the participants, I audio-recorded the interviews and took notes during the interviews as well. To respect the participants' work schedules, the interviews remained mainly focused on the pre-written questions. The interviews began with greetings typical of individuals who know one another, followed by a brief explanation of the nature of the

interview. Interviews were conducted in the respective offices of the participants to ensure privacy and to help prevent any potential interruptions. The MOOC committee members were invited to participate in the study via email (Appendix D). Those who did not respond to the first email were sent a reminder (Appendix E) two weeks after the initial message. No further contact was sought after the second participant recruitment message.

Data Analysis Plan

Analysis was completed by incorporating a coding procedure, identifying common themes and patterns. The first step involved transcribing the interviews. Transcription included all words, including those that showed hesitation or thought. This was done to indicate that the hesitation or thought process was evident in the language portion of the interview. After transcribing the interviews, I read and re-read the writings to process the conversations.

The second step was the coding portion of the data analysis. I coded the repeating concepts I had noticed during my readings. Themes were color-coded and the concepts were highlighted in the words and phrases directly onto printed copies of the transcripts. Hash marks tracked the number of times the key words or phrases appeared. These hash marks produced themes, which were regrouped on another document. After searching for the repeating themes, I focused on the areas that were not highlighted to see if there were some themes that were not addressed. The list of codes is in Appendix F.

Assumptions/Verification

A primary assumption about this particular research project was that the committee would favorably view the creation of a MOOC. The institution was actively

pursuing online programs and it is one of the largest areas of growth in the institution. The institution had already been following online learning trends and this was reinforced with the increase in online participation and with the popularity of the programs offered online. Within the current dynamic climate of higher education, the institution also experienced increased perceptions of competition with not only other Jesuit institutions but with other higher education institutions in the region.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations included the guarantee and assurance that all participants would remain anonymous. Additionally, participants were invited to review their transcribed responses to help ensure accuracy and authenticity. I was responsible for not causing duress during the interview. I explained that participants could halt the interview at any time for any reason they deemed necessary.

Summary

There were several limitations in this study. Although the committee members represented all schools and colleges as well as administration, bias was already present when the participants were hand-picked by the president. There was also concern over the number of individuals who participated on the committee. Nine individuals is a good number for participants on a committee. However, having information from only nine potential participants may limit a generalizable result from this study.

Additionally, the focus of this particular study was quite narrow. There are only 28 Jesuit institutions in the United States, so the potential for wider interest was limited. A potential reader may scan the title, see the word "Jesuit," and move along, believing that the topic is of limited appeal.

Additional research could expand beyond this group to other individuals who are stakeholders in the university as well, including members from administration, faculty, staff, students and alumni. Interviewing other stakeholders could help identify common themes and beliefs about MOOCs in the particular institution.

Chapter 4: Findings

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the discussion regarding the creation of a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

Description of Participants

The participants were four individual employees at the Jesuit institution who participated on the MOOC Advisory Committee. The committee of nine was formed to discuss the feasibility of a MOOC at the institution, something that had not been done up to this point. Committee members were selected because of their familiarity with the MOOC phenomenon beyond casual interest. Work of the committee included discussions about MOOCs, investigating the positives and negatives, debating whether or not a MOOC met the institution's goals and mission. In gaining access to the agendas of this committee's meetings, handouts and meeting minutes, as well as prior conversation, I was able to discern that this group of individuals (a) had spent a significant amount of time reviewing available information, (b) possessed artifacts to inform interviews, and (c) justified a graduate case study in the topic. A total of nine individuals participated in the committee. Two members left the university for other employment opportunities at the time of data collection; one member had retired. Of the six remaining committee participants, four individuals granted interviews.

The four participants were Caucasian females with advanced degrees and held upper-level administrative positions. Three of the four participants held terminal degrees: two had a Ph.D. and one had an Ed.D. The fourth participant did not hold a terminal

degree, but did have a Master's degree (M.Ed.). Two participants had previously held faculty positions while the other two worked in solely administrative positions. All four were long term employees of the institution, averaging over five years of continuous employment. Two participants had earned at least one degree at the institution.

Research Questions

Two research questions were identified for this case study:

How does the creation of a massive open online course (MOOC) fit into the overall mission of the university?

What specific areas of the institution's Mission Statement influence the consideration of implementing a massive open online course (MOOC)?

The subsequent interview questions were as follows:

1.   What were some of the reasons the MOOC committee was created?

2.   How were members of the committee selected?

3.   What role did the Mission Statement play in developments of guidelines for the committee?

4.   How much individual research did you do on the MOOC movement?

5.   What, if any, benefits could a MOOC contribute to the university's Mission?

6.   What, if any, potential conflict did you see in the creation of a MOOC with the content of the Mission Statement? What was the potential conflict?

7.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the most influential?

8.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the least influential?

9.   What components of the Mission Statement do you believe will be most

10.   instrumental when the president and the board review your recommendation?

Overview of Themes and Subthemes

When the interviews were coded, three major themes emerged from the material. Table 2 outlines the themes and subthemes, which are explored at greater length later in this chapter.

Table 2

Themes and Subthemes

Mission-Centered	Jesuit Tradition	Access
Holistic Mission	Research and Discernment	Marketing and Institution Branding Tools
Commitment to Institution	Existing for Students and *Cura Personalis*	Reaching out to the Marginalized
Commitment to Resources	Jesuit, but not necessarily Catholic	Enrollment Considerations
Committee Representation	Course Outcomes	Commitment to Alumni
Appropriateness of Fit	MOOC and online learning as a manifestation of Jesuit tradition	

A total of 14 subthemes were found in the participant responses.

The first theme, mission-centered, encompassed the role that not only the mission statement, but the overall mission of the institution, played in the decision making process. The second theme, Jesuit tradition, focused on the Jesuit foundation, legacy and identity of the institution. The final theme, access, revealed the opportunity for the institution to increase awareness of the institution as well as provide an opportunity for those who might otherwise be unserved. These three themes were not independent of one another; instead, they occasionally overlapped.

Each of the three major themes was further divided into subthemes. Again, the subthemes, although distinct, did have relationships between not only one another but with the three major themes as well. No theme or subtheme was considered independent of the others. The theme of Mission-Centered contained (a) the holistic mission, (b) commitment to the institution, (c) commitment to resources, (d) committee representation and (e) the appropriateness of fit for a potential MOOC. The theme of Jesuit tradition consisted of (a) research and discernment; (b) existing for students and *cura personalis*; (c) Jesuit, but not necessarily Catholic identity; (d) course outcomes, and (e) MOOC and online learning as a manifestation of Jesuit tradition. The theme of Access was composed of the subthemes of (a) marketing and institutional branding tools, (b) reaching out to the marginalized, (c) enrollment considerations, and (d) commitment to alumni.

Theme 1: Mission-Centered

The four participants shared that the institution's mission did play a huge role in the determination of outcomes to be suggested by the committee. Five subthemes were found: holistic mission, commitment to the institution, commitment to resources, committee representation and appropriateness of fit for a potential MOOC.

Participant A shared that while mission was considered, she did not remember an obvious reflection of the mission as the committee progressed through their meetings. She stated, "The mission was clearly in our minds, but I don't remember that it was, you know, like here is the mission, how does that fit into this?" Participant B said, "It wasn't tied so much to the mission statement as much as the mission holistically. We didn't want to compromise who we are as a university. We certainly didn't want to compromise our mission." Participant C said, "I would say probably 40 to 60 percent, two-thirds of our focus was on the mission." Participant D added, "We talked a lot about mission and so if we were to decide to get into the MOOC business, we talked a lot about what role mission plays in that."

Subtheme: Holistic Mission

The concept of holistic mission expands beyond the contents of the institution's mission statement. Holistic mission supplants the contents and further envelopes the institution's identity and history. As Participant B explained, the focus of the committee moved past the mission statement and considered the mission in full, embracing both the stated and unstated components of the institution's existence and purpose. Participant B shared that, "We wanted assistance for the students, we wanted it to be a quality experience, we wanted it to reflect well on the university and we certainly want our alumni who are participating to feel like it was rich and rewarding for them." Participant D shared that conversations between Jesuit institutions to create a consortium are currently being held so that the institutions may unite in spreading Ignatian pedagogy and the holistic mission of Jesuit education.

Subtheme: Commitment to the Institution

Commitment to the institution was a primary concern for the committee members. Participant C shared: "We debated what was of value to the university" regarding the creation of a MOOC. Participant B noted that "the motivation was, it really was for us, to evaluate the prospects out there and do our own research to determine if there was a place for us in the MOOC market" She added that the committee wanted the implementation of a MOOC "to reflect well on the university. . . we didn't want to compromise who we are as a university." Participant D replied "we really wanted to identify what should [institution's] response to that be, so what should [institution] do about this. . . how do we orchestrate this for the university?" Participant B added the MOOC initiative was "very much aligned with our mission…I think there is a real commitment by everyone I've worked with to do it the (institution) way…to make it as rich an experience as possible and to hold ourselves accountable."

Subtheme: Commitment to Resources

Commitment to resources held by the institution was considered by the committee. Participant B shared that the institution, like so many others in higher education, is bound to limited financial resources. Accompanying those limited financial resources are the limited resources of faculty and staff, technology, marketing and course development. Existing programs need further investment, as do capital expenditures and employee benefits. Participant B stated: "If it was going to require us to invest a lot into MOOC development. . . knowing that the outcomes were not going to necessarily give us a good return on that investment. . . we probably would not have proceeded." Participant C stated she believed the MOOC initiative at the institution would die from budget

considerations. She stated: "It is not a strategic initiative; it's not up there as a strategic initiative." She added that "we weren't going to make net revenue on this as far as transcripting, giving credit away, we'd be losing tuition revenue." Participant B stated

> We can do this and we can meet the alumni MOOC need. We can manage the resources because again we are not expecting huge numbers. We can kind of test the waters of our technology to see how does it work in this kind of environment. I mean, I'm really happy we're moving forward with it, but had we not really been focused on who we were targeting for student enrollment, I don't think we would have proceeded.

Subtheme: Committee Representation

The makeup of the committee was a composite of various programs and departments across the institution. This was reflected in the membership of the committee. When it was determined to create a committee, it was also determined that the committee represented all potential areas that would be influenced as well as identifying what potential needs students who participate in the MOOC might have.

All four participants cited representation from across the institution during the process of determining committee membership. Individuals were invited to participate in the committee through the President's office selection included representatives from alumni relations, the Registrar's office, Deans from various schools, Information Technology, program directors from online programs, admissions, and enrollment services. Participant A shared that "members were selected to be representative of a large group within the university . . . to look at all the facets of MOOCs and the marketplace." Participant B stated: "We wanted to have a good representation from those

who had a stake in whether or not we would do MOOCs and how we would do those."
She added that one member asked to be part of the group as she had participated in a few
MOOCs. Participant D stated that, in inviting individuals from around the university to
participate on the committee, "I don't think anybody said no. It's a topic people are
really interested in."

Subtheme: Appropriateness of Fit

One major reason for the creation of the MOOC committee at this institution was
to determine overall fit or suitability of participating in the MOOC movement. The
genesis of this effort began as a presidential initiative to provide insight and
recommendations as to whether the university should create a MOOC. As information
about MOOCs was limited, the committee was created to address these concerns.

Participant A indicated that "all the big ivory league schools were doing it and
Georgetown was thinking about it and Santa Clara had already launched a MOOC, so I
think, the President wanted us to identify whether or not this is a good idea." Participant
B stated the motivation for the committee was to conduct research to determine whether
to enter the market Participant D suggested the creation of the committee stemmed from
the desire to identify the institution's stance on the new phenomenon. She said the
institution asked, "Should we offer MOOCs, how do we orchestrate that for the
university?" She also mentioned the need for success in the marketplace and noted the
example of another institution that had created a MOOC to much "fanfare," only to have
it fail miserably because "people couldn't get access to it, the course materials weren't
ready; there was a variety of things" that resulted because the creators "didn't follow their
own best practices that they were teaching in the course," which was about how to teach

online classes. Participant C offered a specific perspective and stated that she "got involved because they were thinking that the investment, the return on the investment for the MOOC, was going to be future enrollments." Beyond the pragmatic approach of possible enrollment growth, she added that she thought "it was something we should do that is true to our mission and only a Jesuit university could deliver."

Theme 2: Jesuit Tradition

The theme of Jesuit Tradition was emphasized by all members. While the presence of Jesuits, their traditions and charisms were not surprising, the volume of interview content dedicated to this philosophy was unexpected. The responses demonstrated holistic and internalized understanding of the Jesuit philosophy and history. This was apparent throughout all interviews. Participants appeared very cognizant of the institution's identity as a Jesuit entity, and their responses to questions, as well as their shared evolution of the MOOC to be developed, edified their own devotion to the philosophy.

Participant A stated "once we had decided that it [a MOOC] was a good way to go that it would be in the sense of doing something with our Jesuit values and how that might look." Participant C also noted, "I would suggest that we were very focused on being Jesuit and delivering to others and serving others and meeting the needs." Participant D added, "One of the key reasons why we wanted to explore MOOCs is to make a (institution), Jesuit education available to our people."

Subtheme: Research and Discernment

The subtheme of research and subsequent discernment was interwoven throughout the interviews. That the members of the committee took several months to

come to a decision reflects the exercise of discernment. Participants spent much time reading articles about MOOCs, several enrolled in MOOC courses, and some conducted several interviews with other institutions about their MOOC experiences. The committee wanted to create as an informed decision as possible before they offered a final recommendation. Because of the methodical deliberations, a few of the members spoke of a sense of feeling that their actions had caused the institution to tardily enter the MOOC market Participant B noted "my sense is things have sort of quieted down a little bit regarding MOOCs." She did add "as we did the research, we came to the conclusion that this was probably not the 'thing' but it was likely going to be a precursor to this continuing evolution of online education and learning experiences."

All participants mentioned that a graduate student created a 30-plus page summary on MOOCs that included (a) information such as which institutions had held a MOOC, (b) what the trends showed, and (c) any notable situations that highlighted the pros and cons of adopting a MOOC. Participant A mentioned the committee contacted other Jesuit institutions to see what their positions were on the topic, as well as what their recommendations were in pursuing a MOOC.

Subtheme: Existing for Students and Cura Personalis

The belief that the institution exists for students was imperative during the committee's discussions. The institution prides itself on this philosophy and the members agreed that there was a great divide between this tenet and what could be offered in a MOOC. Participant D noted "I think the only conflict is that if it truly were massive and open, we aren't really delivering that high touch learning environment that (the institution) prides itself on." She added that "MOOCs do not do that."

Participant B, while not stating Jesuit tradition or Jesuit values in this response, provided in detail certain central aspects of the philosophy:

The MOOC environment doesn't lend itself to the personal care of students; we weren't ready to walk away from that. We wanted to provide some degree, not the degree you would get, the personal attention you would get from onsite or even online courses, but we still were cognizant that we needed to be willing to help students who need help through this process.

The phrase "care of the students" reflects directly upon the charism of *cura personalis,* which is translated as "care of the whole person" from Latin (Ewelt, 2012, p. 136). Participant C further elaborated on this concept as the committee determined what type of course to offer as the institution's first MOOC. She shared that "I think it was looking at the whole person and really looking at how do we meet the needs of society" that drove the decision. Participant B noted if the committee did struggle with a concept, it was the impersonal nature of a MOOC. She said the committee pondered how the institution could "create this type of learning experience and still care for those individual students." She added, "We had to navigate that a little bit and look at a MOOC for what it is…it isn't intended to be this highly personal experience." The ultimate challenge was to adapt the MOOC concept that was more aligned to the Jesuit tradition by incorporating Ignatian values into the course created by the institution

Subtheme: Jesuit, but not necessarily Catholic identity

When asked what part of the mission statement was least influential in determining whether or not to offer a MOOC at this institution, two committee members shared that the portions identifying the institution as Catholic was least influential for

them. Participant A shared that "I think it's important or it was to the people around the table to be open and not too prescriptive on the Catholicism.   Not to say that it isn't part of the Jesuit values, but not it's religious part." This subtheme might be simply a response to the topic of conversation. It might also be reflective of a larger struggle that Catholic institutions of higher education are currently facing. A sense of inclusiveness is sometimes felt with the word "Catholic" that does not align with certain aspects of Jesuit philosophy. Participant D appeared a little more ambivalent, sharing if she had to "pick one" piece of the Mission Statement that was least influential, it would be Catholic, sharing that "our first MOOC is probably going to be more about being Jesuit than about being Catholic."

Subtheme: Course Outcomes

Concern over course outcomes was also expressed by committee members. The primary concern was determining which outcomes should be employed. While the committee members agreed MOOCs offer the opportunity for learning as well as dissemination of materials, there was concern over how effectively those materials would be shared and taught. Participant D stated "getting learning materials, making them accessible to people is one thing but facilitating the learning is. . . something the MOOCs have not done well." Participant C shared concerns over the manner and how effectively students participate in MOOCs. She expressed concern that while MOOCs serve a purpose, there are no credentials tied to the courses. She shared that during hiring processes, "you still look for credentials, and all you have are MOOCs, how do I even know you sat in it? There's nothing to tell me that you did this successfully or signifies that you were there."

Participant C also noted the apparent lack of goals in MOOCs, citing that lack as the reason for such a high lack of persistence. She shared that "a non-persistence rate is due to the fact that what the faculty might be teaching is not the goal of the student." The committee attempted to circumvent this situation by offering course options to the alumni audience, who then voted on the topics offered. The institution decided to move forward with the most popular choice.

Subtheme: MOOC and online learning as a manifestation of Jesuit tradition.

Participant B likened the modern online program and MOOC movement to the history of the Society of Jesus in that it "enables students who might not otherwise have the opportunity" to experience a Jesuit and institution-specific education. Instead of physically approaching the marginalized, online learning in all its forms can enable Jesuits to still "go out and provide. . . both intellectual and spiritual formation." She added this process was a "modern day version" of what the Jesuits have been doing all along. Participants C and D stated they saw no conflict between the creating a MOOC with the content of the mission statement.

Theme 3: Access

Three participants addressed increased access to potential students as a theme attached to Jesuit tradition and values. Participant A mentioned a MOOC course created around mission could be utilized not only for "our own" students but those others across the nation and the world. Participant D shared "one of the things as they (MOOCs) got started was about it can help reach underserved populations, give them access. . . getting access to the knowledge. . . definitely a part of our mission." Participant B agreed, adding that a MOOC would provide access to individuals who would not otherwise have

access to the institution's brand of education.

Subtheme: Marketing and Institution Branding and Tools

All participants noted creating a MOOC would help brand the institution as innovative and would potentially increase public visibility as well. When asked about the perceived motivation for the board and president to pursue a MOOC, Participant A stated she believed "it was more a decision driven by marketing, branding and bottom line issues." Participant C noted a MOOC could boost future enrollments depending upon how it is marketed. Participant D noted "one of the key reasons why we wanted to explore MOOCs is to make a (institution), Jesuit education to people."

Subtheme: Reaching out to the Marginalized

All participants noted that MOOCs have the ability to reach marginalized populations who do not have access to traditional postsecondary education. This is some cause for excitement, especially among Jesuit institutions, as MOOCs could be utilized in Jesuit missions around the world. Participant D stated "it's increasing access for a more diverse student population. . . one of the things as MOOCs got started was about how it can help reach underserved populations, give them access even though they might not be getting the credit hours."

However, in order for MOOCs to benefit marginalized individuals, those individuals must have access to the technology required for such course offerings. Participant C expressed concern about the further marginalization of individuals who have barriers to receiving an online education. Examples of those individuals include those who do not have ready access to computers or online resources because of physical or temporal limitations, stating

I don't know if our goal in delivering MOOCs is isolating those folks from access

but is providing access to those who otherwise would not have it so it is

somewhere in the middle rather than really trying to get to the truly marginalized.

She added that

Because it's a MOOC and its online, you still have to have access to online so

you are not really going to the marginalized because it's online….you know, I still

didn't feel like we were doing anything to completely serve the marginalized as far

as that part of our mission.

Subtheme: Enrollment Considerations

Initially, the institution was interested in potential growth of new student

enrollments through MOOCs. However, as the committee discovered, while the potential

exists, there is little research to support that idea. One participant shared she was invited

to participate on the committee because of the interest in potential future enrollments that

may arise from the MOOC. Participant C shared that towards the end of the committee's

work "I didn't see it as an opportunity to enroll new students based upon the information,

the research, that we had been provided." She added, "It wasn't going to be a situation

where it was going to benefit us in the long run from an enrollment vantage point."

Subtheme: Commitment to Alumni

Ultimately, the committee decided to target alumni as the pool of potential

participants in the first MOOC offered by the institution. Participant A noted, "We felt

alumni don't always get the benefit of continuing education through their alma mater and

that may be something they might enjoy doing." She reported that in previous

communications, alumni had expressed interest in participating in this effort with Alumni

Relations. Because of this interest and that it provided the opportunity to embark in the MOOC market in a more selective and targeted way, the committee decided to use the alumni as their first MOOC audience.

The committee also saw potential rewards for opening the MOOC solely to alumni. Participant B noted that the alumni have "a vested interest" in the institution and that the institution can use this for feedback on the course. Participant D echoed this sentiment as well, adding, "alumni would be our target audience to start because of less risk, they are believers in [institution], they have some affinity for [institution] so it would likely give us focused feedback when we ask for feedback on the MOOC." Participant B also noted she thought the alumni relations department would track any increases in alumni donations or alumni referrals as a result of the MOOC.

Summary

The participants of the MOOC committee provided information that emerged as themes outlined in this chapter. Within each theme and subtheme, a delicate balance between blindly following the mission and acknowledging limitations was adopted by the group. For example, the opportunity to increase access and Jesuit tradition was tempered by the reality of resource restrictions. Ultimately, the group of people found itself focused on the traditions and history of the institution, as well as the contents of the mission statement. The decision-making processes were slow and deliberate and elicited genuine considerations regarding the identity of the institution.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the discussion to create a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

Research Questions

1. How does the creation of a massive open online course (MOOC) fit into the overall mission of the university?

2. What specific areas of the institution's mission statement influence the consideration of implementing a massive open online course (MOOC)?

Summary of Findings

This case study consisted of semi-structured interviews with four individuals who participated in a MOOC proposed development committee at a Jesuit institution of higher education in the Midwest United States. During data analysis, three major themes emerged: Mission-centered, Jesuit Tradition and Access. Those themes created umbrellas for 14 subthemes.

The findings suggested the participants were in general agreement with one another based on the content of their responses. Based on their answers, the respondents appeared to agree the mission statement of the institution was a major, if not the most prominent, factor in determining whether the institution should begin offering a MOOC. Additional analogous sentiment was found as the members described the influence of Jesuit Tradition (one of the three major themes) as well as the decision to open the course to alumni. No true outliers were discovered during this study.

Discussion

At least three discoveries in this study merit further discussion. First, the distinction of Jesuit versus Catholic. Second, the committee's decision to create and adapt a MOOC to best suit student needs. Third, the decision to focus on alumni as the target audience. Responses outlined the process of one committee at a Jesuit institution of higher education's determination of whether or not to create and offer a MOOC. It emerged that while the mission may have been considered holistically, certain facets proved more dominant than others during the discussion. The subtheme of Jesuit, but not necessarily Catholic, exemplifies this distinction. Although not overtly stated, the evolution of the committee's actions does reflect the institution's mission statement.

A specific audience of students and their needs was identified and exemplified the group's decision to not follow in the typical MOOC tradition, but to customize it to best suit not only the institution's mission but the institution's limitations such as budget and other resources. One notion that was noted during the interviews was that while an institution may pursue a popular phenomenon, there is no requirement that what is created become a carbon copy. The participants repeatedly cited the committee's concern about faithfulness to the mission, even if it meant adapting a project to that concern, did not necessarily mean a new initiative be abandoned simply because its original form did not meet the proscribed requirements by the committee. The fact that this committee took time to research MOOCs and relate their findings back to the particular mission and resources of the institution represents discernment, which is a Jesuit tradition. The committee did not want to jeopardize the institution's mission or reputation in the pursuit to quickly follow what was a popular initiative among well-

known and well-respected higher education institutions. Instead, they took time to review as many aspects as they could. The committee consisted of members from across the institution. Work was done to identify an audience and even before the audience was identified, alumni members had expressed interest in re-bonding with their alma mater. The deliberate progress of the committee's decisions reflected that they made true consideration of the many facets involved in making such a dramatic decision.

The third part of discussion centered on the targeted audience of alumni. The mission's statement about students was stretched beyond the traditional definition. The overall sentiment was that once one is a student at a Jesuit institution, or at least at this Jesuit institution, one is always a student, and the mission statement is interpreted to encompass these individuals and currently enrolled students.

One could argue that the committee's position to keep the MOOC student population limited to alumni may reduce the pool of potential students. However, potential benefits of opening the MOOC only to alumni may outweigh any potential future student enrollments. A MOOC might be used as a tool to re-engage alumni to their alma mater. Results of that renewed connection could result in increased alumni support, which would enhance endowments and possible referral of other students to the institution. The opportunity for alumni to meet and work with one another creates new connections that could lead to new relationships, networking opportunities, careers, professional positions, and a physical presence at sporting and alumni events. As for a new pool of students, these alumni often have children and other family members as well as friends and students who may absorb the alumni's renewed dedication and interest to their alma mater and decide to apply to and attend the institution. Alumni members may

find themselves considering a return to the classroom and consider graduate and professional programs offered by the institution.

The decisions made by the committee were not made to "cash in" on a new phenomenon. Instead, deliberate action was discussed to ensure some measure of control while participating in a new initiative that had limited research and even less proof of financial profit and enrollment growth. As Participant C stated, "We're doing something nice." There was no guarantee of return on investment and, while cautious, the committee decided to experience the MOOC phenomenon on a level that best suited the institution and its mission. Participant B mused that the committee came to believe that MOOCs were not going to be the next profitable educational venture; they did recognize that it was quite likely a foundation of that venture, and they would soon be gathering evidence from the MOOC to help them navigate their way.

Implications

The conclusions of this study indicated the institution's mission statement was a driving force in determining whether or not to recommend the creation of a MOOC. For other Jesuit institutions, the results of this study could be used to create a comparison within their own institutions. Additionally, as is typical in Ignatian pedagogy, readers could reflect upon the results and use this work as a springboard for their own research. Others could also use the purpose of this study in their own committees as a tool to help guide them through the process of considering new programs.

Overall, the primary focus of this work was the utilization of an institutional mission statement when making decisions like developing a new online massive course offering at no cost to the student. I would hope that a stakeholder in an institution,

private or public, would see this as a work on how an institution's mission statement can be used in decision-making and then consider how the mission statement is used in their institutions. The pressures present in higher education today may result in decisions without discerning the content of the institutional mission statement. Oftentimes, various stakeholders and decision-makers are not familiar with the institution's mission statement. Perhaps the results of this study will inspire individuals to learn more about institutions' mission statements. It is important first to know the mission statement, but it is also essential to know why it is written.

Future Research

Additional research could expand at this institution to other individuals who are stakeholders in the institution including members from administration, faculty, staff, students and alumni. Adding specific mission-based questions to post-course surveys might provide student insight into their perceptions of the mission statement in relation to the course overall, its contents, and its delivery. Responses could then be compared to the intentions of the MOOC committee course designers and instructor. Evaluating alumni experiences in the MOOC would also provide valuable data, thus greatly influencing future MOOCs at the institution. Interviewing other stakeholders could help identify common themes and beliefs about MOOCs in the particular institution.

Conclusion

The results of this case study suggested there is a connection between an institution's mission statement and the consideration of whether or not to adopt a new project or program like a MOOC. Although mission statements are not typical areas of research within higher education, studies such as this one can be conducted internally to

ensure that best practices are followed when members of an institution are tasked with identifying suitability in embarking on a new project or program. Results from such research can assist stakeholders in identifying what portions of the mission statement are utilized in the decision making process as well as for data to help draft future mission statements.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter from the University of Nebraska

Nebraska

UNIVERSITY OF
Lincoln

May 27, 2014

Tara Waln-Lewellyn
Department of Educational Administration
Barbara LaCost
Department of Educational Administration

IRB Number: 20140514421 EX
Project ID: 14421
Project Title: MOOCs and Mission Statements: How One Committee Matched MOOC Opportunity with the Institution Mission Statement

Dear Tara:

This letter is to officially notify you of the certification of exemption of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as Exempt Category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Exemption Determination: 05/27/2014.

1. Since your informed consent form will appear electronically, please include the IRB approval number (IRB#20140514421 EX) in the electronic document. Please email a copy of the document to me, with the number included, for our records. If you need to make changes to the informed consent document, please submit the revised document to the IRB for review and approval prior to using it.

2. Once you have secured approval from ███████████, please forward a copy of their approval to me for our records.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:
* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman, CIP
for the IRB

Appendix B IRB Approval Letter from ██████ University

June 12, 2014

Tara Waln-Lewellyn, B.A.

RE:
IRB #:   14-17107
TITLE: MOOC'S AND MISSION STATEMENTS: HOW ONE COMMITTEE
              MATCHED MOOC OPPORTUNITY WITH THE INSTITUTION MISSION
              STATEMENT

Dear Ms. Waln-Lewellyn

Thank you for submitting the above mentioned proposal to the Institutional Review Board office for review. This project has been determined to be exempt from Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects as per 45CFR46.101 (b) 2. All listed investigators have completed the required CITI HIPAA training. The project and exemption is approved is for a 3 year period.

The approval includes the following:

1. Application for Review of Exempt Status (per 45CFR46.101 (b) 2/3): Survey, Interviews and Observation signed June 11, 2014
2. Email Invitation (initial and follow-up)

Continued approval is conditional upon your compliance with the following requirements:
1. Compliance with the   IRB policies and procedures
2. Problems must be reported using the Reporting Form for Reportable New Information. Problems requiring report can be found in the IRB Policy 134 "Reportable New Information"
3. All protocol amendments and changes to approved research must be submitted to the IRB and not be implemented until approved by the IRB. Please use the modification form when submitting changes to protocol or consent documents.
4. This study cannot continue after the expiration date, which is June 11, 2017.
5. You are required to submit a renewal/termination prior to this date. If you wish to continue the project, the renewal must be in the IRB office on week prior to the expiration date.

Social Behavioral · Institutional Review Board ●

If you should have questions during the course of this project, please call the IRB office at (   )
and one of the administrators will assist you, or you may email the office at

Sincerely,

Director, Institutional Review Board

The   is fully accredited by the Association for the Accreditation of
Human Research Protections Program, Inc. ® (AAHRPP)

has an Assurance on file with the Department of Health and Human
Services: Assurance Identification No.   , the expiration date: July 6, 2016
IRB Registration Numbers: IRB #1Biomedical IRB #   (Expiration July 13,
2015); IRB #2 Social Behavioral IRB #   (Expiration July 13, 2015)

has an Assurance on file with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
Assurance Identification No.   , the expiration date July 6, 2016
 IRB Registration Numbers: Registration/Identification No.IRB

Appendix C Interview Protocol

1.   What were some of the reasons the MOOC committee was created?

2.   How were members of the committee selected?

3.   What role did the Mission Statement play in developments of guidelines

        for the committee?

4.   How much individual research did you do on the MOOC movement?

5.   What, if any, benefits could a MOOC contribute to the university's Mission ?

6.   What, if any, potential conflict did you see in the creation of a MOOC with the

        content of the Mission Statement? What was the potential conflict?

7.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the most

        influential?

8.   What components of the Mission Statement did you find to be the least

         influential?

9.   What components of the Mission Statement do you believe will be most

        instrumental when the president and the board review your recommendation?

Appendix D Participant Recruitment Email

Dear ██████ University MOOC Committee Member,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research project I am undertaking in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the M.A. degree from the Educational Administration Program at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. The aggregate data gathered will be reported in a Master's thesis.

This project is titled "MOOCs and Mission Statements: How One Committee Matched MOOC Opportunity with the Institution Mission Statement" (University of Nebraska at Lincoln: IRB#20140514421 EX, ██████ University IRB#14-17107). The purpose of this study is to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the discussion to create a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

Data collection will consist of individual interviews of the committee participants conducted by the principal investigator following a semi-structured format. The interviews will be audio-recorded with the permission of the individual participant and then transcribed verbatim by the principal investigator. Each interview will consist of 10 questions. The participants will be provided both the list of questions and the institution's mission statement for review prior to the interview. The interview process will take approximately 90-120 minutes and will consist of only one session.

All data analysis and transcription will be conducted solely by the principal investigator. All records will be transcribed and coded immediately after each interview. Data will be maintained in a password protected, encrypted file. Notes and audio recordings will be locked in a file cabinet in the principal investigator's home office. All data will be destroyed after the conclusion of the research.

Informed consent will be implied by your acceptance via email of this invitation.

If you are interested in learning more about this project, please contact me at TaraWaln-Lewellyn@creighton.edu or at (402) 541-8977. You may also contact my advisor Dr. Barbara LaCost, Associate Professor of Educational Administration, at 402-472-0988 or at blascost1@unl.edu. Sometimes participants have questions or concerns about their rights. In that case, please contact the UNL Research Compliance Services office at 402-472-6965.

It is important to know that this e-mail is not to tell you to join this project. Your participation is voluntary. Whether or not you participate in this project will have no effect on your relationship with the researcher, ██████ University, or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

You do not have to respond if you are not interested participating in this project. If you do not respond, you may receive one reminder e-mail which you can simply disregard.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Tara Waln-Lewellyn

Appendix E Reminder Email

Dear ▓▓▓▓▓ University MOOC Committee Member,

A few weeks ago, I wrote to invite you to participate in a research project I am undertaking in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the M.A. degree from the Educational Administration Program at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. The aggregate data gathered will be reported in a Master's thesis. I am sending this message as a second and final invitation to participate in this project.

This project is titled "MOOCs and Mission Statements: How One Committee Matched MOOC Opportunity with the Institution Mission Statement." (University of Nebraska at Lincoln: IRB#20140514421 EX, ▓▓▓▓▓ University IRB#14-17107). The purpose of this study is to explore how members of a committee at a Jesuit institution incorporated components of the institution's Mission Statement in the discussion to create a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

Data collection will consist of individual interviews of the committee participants conducted by the principal investigator following a semi-structured format. The interviews will be audio-recorded with the permission of the individual participant and then transcribed verbatim by the principal investigator. Each interview will consist of 10 questions. The participants will be provided both the list of questions and the institution's mission statement for review prior to the interview. The interview process will take approximately 90-120 minutes and will consist of only one session.

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If you are interested in learning more about this project, please contact me at TaraWaln-Lewellyn@creighton.edu or at (402) 541-8977. You may also contact my advisor Dr. Barbara LaCost, Associate Professor of Educational Administration, at 402-472-0988 or at blascost1@unl.edu. Sometimes participants have questions or concerns about their rights. In that case, please contact the UNL Research Compliance Services office at 402-472-6965.

It is important to know that this e-mail is not to tell you to join this project. Your participation is voluntary. Whether or not you participate in this project will have no effect on your relationship with the researcher, ▓▓▓▓▓ University, or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

You do not have to respond if you are not interested participating in this project and I will seek no further contact.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Tara Waln-Lewellyn

Appendix F List of Codes

List of Codes

Theme One: Mission-Centered
       Data collected from: A, B, C, D
       Subthemes:
              Holistic Mission   B,D
              Commitment to Institution   B, C, D
              Commitment to Resources   B, C
              Committee Representation   A, B, C, D
              Appropriateness of Fit   A, B, C, D

Theme Two: Jesuit Tradition
       Data collected from: A, B, C, D
       Subthemes:
              Research and Discernment   A, B, C, D
              Existing for Students and *Cura Personalis*   B, C, D
              Jesuit, but not necessarily Catholic   A, D
              Course Outcomes   C, D
              MOOC \ as a Manifestation of Jesuit Tradition B, C, D

Theme Three: Access
       Data collected from: A, B, C, D
       Subthemes:
              Marketing and Institution Branding Tools   A, B, C, D
              Reaching out to the Marginalized   A, B, C, D
              Enrollment Considerations   C
              Commitment to Alumni   A, B, D