

FSI Coursera Presentation

• Overview

• Introductions

- I'll be talking about who is taking Illinois Coursera courses, and offer a few observations about relating some institutional goals for participating in Coursera to our audience.
- Jason will then talk about design implications for MOOCs, in light of our audience and goals.

• When you put college courses online for free, who will come and take them?

data is from three courses, organic chem, microeconomics, sustainability. We conducted surveys at the beginning and at the end of courses.

- you will attract a well educated audience. Average number of years of school was 16, consistent across all three courses. For the total population of the three courses as a whole, 77% have a college degree. Over 30% have a master's degree. 8% have a PhD.
- you will attract an international audience. There was some variance depending on the course, anywhere from 60-80% of the audience will be located outside the United States.
 - The audience is fairly widely dispersed. If you look at the top 10 countries, the US will have more students than the next 4-5 put together.
 - We were surprised that we didn't get more people from China, given their population. Not sure what to make of that.
- Mean age for our audience is 34, which is younger than the world average age of those 18 & older of 41. Given that so many people in our audience already have college degrees, one would expect the population to be older than our campus population.
- Our courses overall are trending male 53.5 to 46.5, but we see quite a bit of variation from course to course. Our sustainability course was nearly 60% female, while the microecon course was over 60% male.

• Motivations

- Most courserians take courses to extend or broaden knowledge (65%), or out of curiosity in the topic (61%). Contrast that with a 2010 survey where 80% of college students (*our audience*) pursue higher education to improve their job prospects as their #1 reason.

www.huffingtonpost.com—college-is-not-for-learni_n_558200.html

• Are we reaching the right audience? Are our courses designed to meet the needs of the right people? Are we offering the appropriate courses? This begs the question: what might be some Institutional goals (University of Illinois) for Coursera participation, to help us craft the right sort of experience for our audience?

Disclaimer: I do not represent the University of Illinois, the College of LAS. My remarks are my own general thoughts. I'm sure our leaders are considering these questions already. I'd welcome your comments and thoughts as well.

- **Chronicle Motivation:** MOOCs will disrupt the higher education industry, institutions and MOOC providers are developing methods for delivering college courses at massive scale. The goal is to improve access and lower cost. Coursera has 5 courses already approved for credit by American Council on Education.
 - Imagine you had a lecture hall with unlimited seating, and could accommodate unlimited discussion, and could provide unlimited assessment. You would then allow as many people to audit the course in the whole world as they want, and some people could take the course for actual credit, if you can provide a credit-worthy experience. But they remain college courses, aimed at serving the need of awarding college degrees to college students.
- **Land grant motivation:** MOOCs are a platform for delivering extension-like offerings to the citizens of the world.
 - Illinois Extension Mission: To enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work.
 - Some course offerings in coursera have that "putting knowledge to work" sort of vibe, but it's not recognized as a way or method to search course offerings. There is no explicit "extension" type of catalog. Obviously, the choice and design of courses for this purpose would be quite different than the typical college course.
- **Pre-admissions marketing motivation:** offer free courses to identify high achieving students in specific disciplines to target for admissions. This might complement traditional measures such as high school GPA and ACT/SAT scores. I'm not aware of any institutions doing this. I probably wouldn't know unless it made the Chronicle or Inside Higher Ed or something like that.

I owe this one to the book "College Unbound", Jeffery Selingo
- **Program marketing motivation:** offer an introductory course for an online degree program for free. This gives people a chance to "try before they buy", to know more about a field of study before they plunk down their hard-earned cash, and provides the program a platform to demonstrate the content and quality of their program to a wide audience. It might even be possible to arrange to provide credit for the MOOC experience to be applied toward the degree program.