"Finding the Balance": Motivating Factors Behind Arts Faculty's Choices Regarding Massive Open Online Courses

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"Finding the Balance":
Motivating Factors Behind Arts Faculty's Choices
Regarding Massive Open Online Courses

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For Ella

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What I've learned through the process of writing this dissertation and during my time at Harvard is that you must search for your own sources of strength. It takes a lot of power to do this work, and it is important to have the ability to drink from multiple fountains when you feel weak. Despite the simplicity of this message, it was a lesson that took me a long time to discover. Many people and institutions told me they were sources of strength; I assumed certain people and places would be sources of strength. But it was quite a while before I learned to *find* my own.

On the way to this discovery, I lost a lot of time wading through doubt, depression, and fear. Even after I had discovered potential sources, it still took time for me to accept the strength they offered. But as I stand at the finish line of this marathon, sore and out of breath, I can clearly see how I am encircled by my various sources of strength – the people who offered me sage advice, energetic pep talks, tough love, intellectual prodding, reasons to laugh, and dry shoulders over the years. I am pleased and honored to acknowledge those sources below.

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With the help of professors who became friends and friends who taught me so much,

And by the grace of my thought partners and partners-in-crime,

     I have learned a great many things—

Namely, to avoid the passive voice in my writing and to trust my own voice in my life.

     Worthy lessons for us all.

     Enjoy.

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ABSTRACT

If we were to believe all the rhetoric around massive open online courses (MOOCs) just a few years ago, we were witnessing *the* revolution in higher education. David Brooks of the *New York Times* described the arrival of MOOCs as a "tsunami" (2012). Though much of the excitement has died down, the number of MOOCs continues to grow, as does the debate about their purpose and their effect. Notably absent from this discussion is the voice of the arts in the academy.

This dissertation explores the decisions of fine arts faculty as to whether or not to engage with massive open online courses (MOOCs). It examines the personal, pedagogical and political factors that influence their thinking about MOOCs. These include faculty opinions on technology in American culture, higher education, and in their own lives; the issue of time in their lives for this new work; their conceptions of arts learning and of MOOCs; and the institutional motivations that affect their choices.

This study comes at a critical time, as the rapid growth and dramatic presence of MOOCs have sparked much discussion about their place in academia. They have also given rise to conversations about pedagogy, student access to education, and the role of technology in teaching and learning. Faculty who teach the fine arts – a group that already has a tradition of being marginalized within the academy – have been absent from these discussions. It is important to identify why this might be the case, since this absence may have major implications for the future of the fine arts on college campuses.

Through semi-structured interviews with 16 faculty members from four colleges and universities, this study investigates how fine arts faculty are making meaning of their place in this new pedagogical landscape and what their choices might mean for the future of their discipline.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

If we were to believe all the rhetoric around massive open online courses (MOOCs) just a few years ago, we were witnessing *the* revolution in higher education. David Brooks of the *New York Times* described the arrival of MOOCs as a "tsunami" (2012). Michael Barber, writing for the Institute of Public Policy Research, named MOOCs as part of an "avalanche of change" sweeping through higher education in the next 50 years (2013). MOOCs were going to solve all of the academy's ills, and by doing so, perhaps destroy it. No longer would college-worthy information be accessible only to those who could afford it. No longer would isolated and out-of-touch academics control what students learned and how it was taught; instead, anyone could be a student and it would be the students who had to the power to direct their own education. They would no longer remain beholden to whatever the professor in the classroom deemed worthy of knowing. They could access educators from all over the world and learn whatever they wanted.

The speed with which these courses continue to grow is matched by their speed of evolution. Their content, learning goals, and pedagogies are shifting rapidly: from a few courses made for and by engineers and scientists to entire platforms attempting to teach classes in a wide range of disciplines and support quality teaching and learning for everyone.

Nonetheless, the majority of courses offered by the three prominent MOOC platforms are from the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. This is not entirely surprising. MOOCs were originally designed by faculty in the STEM disciplines to teach their classes to a wider audience (Gibas, 2013). Thus, the pedagogies of MOOCs and STEM courses are a more natural fit than those courses that rely largely on qualitative judgment (Subbian, 2013). For fine arts and humanities faculty, the methods of teaching and testing most commonly used in MOOCs are in tension with their pedagogical approaches. A

theatre professor proudly calls her teaching "time-consuming and labor-inefficient….[It is] an artisanal education of the imagination" that "ultimately works" (Shteir, 2013, para. 15). The variability of teaching and "learning through close colloquy" (Kolowich, 2013, para. 11) are among the core values of artistic pedagogy. "Because it's harder to define what [one wishes] to evaluate" (King, as quoted in Heller, 2013, para. 44), these values go up against current evaluation methods used by MOOCs. Regardless, with higher education's present focus on MOOCs, it is important to explore the reasons the fine arts are and are not engaging with this new technology and what that might mean for a field that has traditionally been seen (and has seen itself) as "marginalized in the academy" (Shteir, 2013, para. 4).

The number of MOOCs continues to grow, even as we learn more information about their actual potential to change the educational landscape. Meanwhile, the debate about their purpose increases and the rhetoric becomes more impassioned. For example, an argument in favor of democratizing higher education by allowing students free access to certain courses is seen as tantamount to not caring if faculty members lose their jobs so one expert can become the lone teacher in a subject. There does not seem to be a middle ground, nor does it seem the opposing sides are talking about the same things. To be fair, the stakes remain high: classes see enrollments in the tens of thousands and entire state university systems are partnering with MOOC providers. There is excitement about the possibilities; there is also much fear. It makes sense that the force of the pushback would equal that of the hype. Throughout it all, stakeholders are still looking for answers to vital questions: What are the effects of this new way of teaching on the learners, educators, and content in the long-term?

This dissertation explores how fine arts faculty (both visual and performing arts) understand the presence of MOOCs in the academy and how, in turn, their perspectives

influence how they relate to MOOCs. Most pressing to this study was acquiring a deep understanding of the motivating factors behind faculty members' decisions to participate or not in MOOCs. My inquiry into these factors was guided by the following three research questions:

1. What decisions have fine arts faculty made regarding their participation in MOOCs? What are the rationales motivating their decisions?

2. What do these faculty believe are the essential elements of fine arts teaching and learning? How might those elements relate to MOOCs?

3. What do fine arts faculty think are the possible implications of their decisions about MOOCs, both for themselves as educators and for their discipline?

In this study, I interviewed 16 arts faculty members from four colleges and universities to hear from those who had heretofore been relatively silent. I saw this silence as another indication – and indictment – of the arts' marginal status in academia. Art is used to living on the edges. Indeed, there are advantages of seeing the world from the fringes. However, there are also risks to not being seen as integral to the learning experience.

The answers to my research questions are not presented in a lock-step fashion, but are organized as follows. The next chapter provides a brief history of MOOCs, with an emphasis on the first MOOC, a course created out of the University of Manitoba based on connectivist learning theory. I do this for two reasons. First, this type of MOOC (also known as "cMOOC") is not as well-known as the MOOCs commonly used today ("xMOOCs"). Secondly, I contend (in the final chapter) that arts-based MOOCs will have to base themselves on this type of MOOC rather than the ones we are more familiar with in order to thrive. Chapter 2 also presents an overview of the arts in higher education, as that

supports the rationale of this study. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of this study, along with the rationale behind my study design and analytical choices.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present the three conceptual categories into which interviewees' responses fell. These are broad groupings that encompass much variation, dependent upon many factors. However, what matters is that faculty members who are for and against MOOCs made sense of MOOCs and their choices through similar themes and ideas. Even as faculty come to very different opinions about how they will or will not work with MOOCs, it is important to note that they care about, and are talking about, the same things: technology's role in our lives, how to best teach art, and what their schools feel about this topic.

Chapter 4 is about respondents' personal views on the various components of this issue. Of course, it could be argued that everything written in these pages reflects faculty members' personal views. Collected in this chapter are people's ideas on the role of technology in American society and in their own lives. These individual opinions are more about themselves as people in society, and not as much about their role as professors. How they best relate to the world is interesting to parse out to see how they connect their personal viewpoints to the professional decisions they make.

Chapter 5 focuses on how faculty members think about their teaching practice. I present a history of arts pedagogy that outlines the fundamental characteristics of learning and teaching today, regardless of the discipline. They all share a belief in these characteristics, yet they disagree on how – or even if – these characteristics can be conveyed anywhere else but in a classroom. It is these similarities and differences that are explored here.

Chapter 6 explores the role of the parent institution in study respondents' decision-making process. The institution itself has its own motivations to embark on working with

MOOCs, but also factors such as leadership and resources played a powerful role in faculty member's meaning making. This section explores the interplay between these organizational components and individual choices.

Finally, Chapter 7 reveals the implications of these findings on stakeholders in this arena. It also describes the limitations of this study and offers opportunities for future research.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Before moving forward with an in-depth exploration of how arts faculty members understand massive online open courses, it is important to define what MOOCs are. *Inside Higher Ed* (2013) wrote, "These days, the acronym [for massive open online courses] is omnipresent and – to many – needs no definition" (p. 3). However, for the sake of my work, I will start with Glance, Forsey, and Riley's definition of a "massive" course as one that has a number of students whose "participation at any point during the running of the course [is] large enough that it couldn't be run in a conventional face-to-face manner" (2013, para. 3). MOOCs are becoming a way to supplement brick-and-mortar classes; however, the content of the MOOCs themselves are delivered solely over the Internet and are free to anyone with a computer. "Open" not only refers to the unfettered access to these courses, "but to the style of communication: much, if not all, of it is on the Web" (Heller, 2013).

MOOCs' Ancestors

There is a great deal of innovation and "newness" embedded in the language surrounding MOOCs. Nevertheless, they come from a long history of using modern discoveries to further educational pursuits. Jonathan Haber (2014) suggests a way for us to put the MOOC in historical context by thinking of it as a descendent of an extensive family tree whose ancestors are technology and education (p. 42). Through this lens, the roots of MOOCs reach as far back at the nineteenth century, where "faith in the combined values of universal education and technical progress meant…any new breakthrough in communications technology was almost immediately put to work toward the goal of educating the masses" (Haber, 2014, p. 20). These ancestral models shared a strong mission of what Open University (an online research university in the UK) calls its "revolutionary

idea:" to break "the insidious link between exclusivity and excellence" (Open University

website, 2013).

The first generation of MOOC ancestors were the correspondence courses that

sprung up in the mid-nineteenth century after the advent of the postal service in England

and America (Anderson and Dron, 2011). Entrepreneurs like Issac Pitman and Anna Eliot

Ticknor used this new and inexpensive innovation to teach adult learners practical skills such

as shorthand and second languages (Bower and Hardy, 2004; Pittman, 2003) and to support

workers in learning the skills of their trade (Mood, 1995). It was not long before colleges and

universities saw the potential of correspondence study to reach a heretofore-untapped

population of college students.

Considered the "father of modern correspondence education," (Mood, 1995, p. 2),

William Rainey Harper led the charge based on his experience with the Chautauqua summer

institutes and four-year program (Mood, 1995). Describing this educational innovation in

1885, Harper stated:

> The day is coming when the work done by correspondence
> will be greater in amount than that done in the class-rooms of
> our academics and colleges; when the students who shall
> recite by correspondence will far outnumber those who make
> oral recitations (Watkins, 1991, p. 4).

This boast sounds familiar to the one Sebastian Thurn, founder of MOOC provider Udacity,

pronounced in *Wired* magazine just a few years ago:

> He imagines that in 10 years, job applicants will tout their
> Udacity degrees. In 50 years, he says, there will be only 10
> institutions in the world delivering higher education and
> Udacity has a shot at being one of them. (Leckart, 2012, para.
> 28).

By the mid-1800s, schools such as Illinois Wesleyan, University of Chicago, and

University of Wisconsin became the torchbearers of legitimizing this type of education by

establishing departments, hiring faculty – and most importantly – offering course credit (Watkins, 1991). Though correspondence study went through peaks and valleys of support, it remained the dominant form of distance education for almost a century (Wright, 1991).

MOOCs' next generation of ancestors was born in the 1920s alongside a new technology called the radio. Top American universities joined a consortium of "colleges of the air": radio stations established solely for classes taught over the airwaves (Matt & Fernandez, 2013). At its peak, almost 200 colleges and universities built radio stations on their campuses (Schlosser and Anderson, 1994). Like MOOCs, teaching through radio was seen as a savior to the inaccessibility of higher education. It was extolled as the way for "the nation [to] become the new campus" (Matt & Fernandez, 2013, para. 3). Once students registered, they gained access to course materials. All learning was self-directed, but structured by when the broadcast aired. Assessment was conducted *en masse* by mailing in essays and assignments to the professor.

As opposed to correspondence study, which was eventually taken over by higher education with resources smaller academic endeavors did not have (Mood, 1995), instructional radio eventually faded because colleges and universities did not have the resources to keep up with radio's growth. Competition for precious airwaves, increasing regulatory paperwork, decreasing salaries for the faculty, and complaints of "boring, lackluster programming" (Pittman, 1986, p. 41) all led to a sharp decline in the number of courses offered via radio by 1940. However, this ancestor did help give birth to educational television a few years later in two ways (Watkins, 1991). Firstly, radio added a personal connection to correspondence course, which prior had only used the written word to communicate. Secondly, radio expanded the institution's "consciousness" (Atkinson, 1941,

p. 74) of its mission to educate in addition to broadening its imagination as to how to achieve that mission (Watkins, 1991).

The next descendent of education and technology was educational television. There were some small experiments with educational television programs in the 1930s. However, it was not until the 1950s when it really took hold with Western Reserve University offering a continuous series for credit in 1951 (Schlosser and Anderson, 1994). By 1962, 74 colleges were experimenting with this technology through their own public broadcast stations or closed-circuit systems, including Michigan State, American University, University of Washington, and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Purdy, 1980).

Perhaps not the first, but by far the most famous of these endeavors was New York University's *Sunrise Semester*. It began as a partnership between the university and New York City's CBS affiliate in 1957. For 25 years, it ran six mornings a week at 6:30am, eventually offering two courses a semester broadcast on alternating days. Other than the use of television to present the material, it was structured very much like its predecessors: students registered for courses, received study guides and course materials through the mail, and had to send in assignments and examinations for a grade (Shapiro, 2015; Stein, 1972). In 1962, the show went national, taking over CBS's own educational programming, *College of the Air*, a nod to its radio predecessor (Variety, 1962).

Only a month into its first season, *Variety* called *Sunrise Semester* the "first unquestioned hit show of the new season" (Chandler, 1957, p. 22). Most interesting about this iteration of distance education was the amount of people who were engaged in the learning without needing to earn credit. It was this population that continued to grow, even while enrollment stayed consistent and eventually declined. Only 177 students enrolled in the first course, "Comparative Literature 10"; however, by the end of the semester, 122,000

people were tuning in to the class (Shapiro, 2015). Evidence of engagement was seen in the

city's economy: two books on the course's syllabus, *The Red and the Black* and *Pere Goriot*, were

sold out in every New York bookstore (Chandler, 1957). When *Sunrise Semester* was cancelled

in 1982, 47 students were enrolled in the courses, but two million people were watching

(Levine, 1982). These figures led to differing interpretations of success: did the low

enrollment constitute a failure or did the high viewing audience suggest a great success?

Similar questions are being raised today with regard to MOOCs.

MOOC's most direct precursors were computer networking and electronic mail

(email), invented in the early 1970s. These tools had originally been invented to support and

organize scientific research, but almost immediately, they took a role in the shaping of

education. Though few academics had access to this new technology, those who did (mostly

science professors) used email and computer conferencing to connect their students to a

"larger knowledge community" (Harasim, 2000, p. 44).

This iteration of distance education did more than simply utilize the newest

technology the same way its predecessors had. The proliferation of affordable personal

computers and the invention of the Internet and World Wide Web in the 1980s also paved

the way for pedagogical creativity within distance education (Rumble, 2001). For the first

time, distance education was able to support collaborative learning, a complete shift from the

one-way communication that had dominated distance education up until this point.

Additionally, researchers and educators at the time named this pedagogical shift. "The Web's

asynchronous nature both enables and requires collaborative learning: collaboration provides

the social glue of a community that engages learners and motivates them to participate"

(Harasim, 2000, p. 53). Previous versions of distance education were described only by their

mode of communication with students. For the first time, researchers included in the

definition of online learning the tools of communication and the pedagogical philosophy that made this type of distance learning unique from other types of education (Tavangarian et al., 2004).

However, despite these authors' best guesses on how online education would fundamentally transform distance education and higher education overall (Laurillard, 1993), it was not long before the Internet allowed traditional pedagogies to emerge through the self-publishing of course materials. Thus, the one-way, transmission mode of education also flourished at the same time as others experimented with a more collaborative method of teaching and learning (Harasim, 2000).

A watershed moment in the online education movement occurred in 2001 when the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) began OpenCourseWare (OCW), a website where materials and videos from actual MIT courses were posted for free (Kelly, 2014). The focus of this project was not necessarily to espouse a teaching theory; instead it was meant as a resource for anyone to access knowledge, in the spirit of self-directed learning and connectivist theory of education. But as Kelly (2014) states, "OCW was an important forefather of MOOCs; it made open access courses a hallmark of elite colleges" (p. 6). Though it would take another 10 years for other prestigious institutions to follow its lead, MIT made it acceptable for the top schools to participate in online education.

From correspondence courses to MOOCs, these distance education models all share "creative adaptation, visionary leadership, financial challenges, politics both internal and external to universities, and…a commitment to service" (Watkins, 1991, p. 1). Sadly, they also share the same types of problems and criticism. Advocates for correspondence study were constantly wrestling with issues "including course completion problems,… university policies regarding acceptance of credit for correspondence courses,…and standards of

quality" (Watkins, 1991, p. 22) These concerns all pertained to "the larger issue of how to

achieve and preserve the legitimacy and respectability" (p. 22). Radio's colleges of the air

shared similar problems of attrition, academic significance, and lack of student/faculty

interaction. Observers could not imagine distance education having the quality of in-person

interaction between a professor and a student. "A good mind…must be built, not

stuffed….Radio, of course, faces squarely against this whole tide" (Bliven, as quoted in Matt

and Fernandez, 2013, para. 8). And ultimately, educators were unimpressed with the level of

teaching displayed through "the idiot box" (Shapiro, 2015). "The most conspicuous result of

television teaching has been an incidental byproduct: The medium has displayed in public

what had heretofore gone on behind too many closed classroom doors – uninspiring

teaching" (Murphy & Gross, as quoted in Purdy, 1980, p. 21). Declining enrollment was seen

as proof positive using the "idiot box" to teach was not appropriate. Though proponents of

distance education never espoused it as better than synchronous learning, it was constantly

derided as being inferior learning. So, despite distance education's long history of pushing

higher education *writ large* toward more inclusion and innovation, courses that attempt to

break free from a physical classroom are just changing their status as the "poor and often

unwelcome stepchild" of the American academy (Merisotis & Phipps, 1999, p. 16).

The First (c)MOOC

Just as the ancestry of MOOCs is overlapping and not necessarily clear-cut, so too is

the recent history of MOOCs. What we know as "MOOCs" today are actually courses

grounded in the pedagogy of one type of online learning (originated from Stanford

University) merged with the nomenclature applied to another type that came out of Canada.

What the field has done to differentiate these two styles is to give them prefixes: "xMOOC"

refer to the types of courses that are most well known. Led by one or more instructor, these classes have pre-determined content and outcomes, and are embedded with self- or peer assessments throughout. The locus of knowledge in an xMOOC is the instructor; student success is measured by pre-determined quizzes and assignments (Kelly, 2014). Conversely, "cMOOCs" are based on a connectivist philosophy of education, where students interact with each other to create their own spaces of learning and serve as their own resources of knowledge (Siemens, 2005). The instructor in this type of MOOC is more of a facilitator, gathering the unique content and helping students make connections (Hollands and Tirthali, 2014).

Researchers steeped in the world of open education are not surprised that the first MOOC came out of Canada, or that it was taught through a connectivist lens. That country had established itself as being on the forefront of open education innovation (McAuley et. al., 2009). The first course termed a MOOC was called *Connectivism and Connected Knowledge* (CCK08) and was co-taught at the University of Manitoba by George Siemens and Stephen Downes in 2008 (Kelly, 2014). It was the result of many pre-MOOCs: courses designed to experiment with connectivist learning theory. Well before CCK08, Siemens had led a "non-course" with his newsletter subscribers, wrote papers, and ran online conferences about the idea. He believed "learners should own their own space of interaction.…If you learn transparently, you become a teacher, because people observe your learning; they see what you are doing and they can emulate or adapt it" (Hollands & Tirthali, 2014, p. 31). Downes, a long-time collaborator, purported "learning is a network phenomenon" and, therefore, the structures supporting that learning should be "network organizations" (Hollands & Tirthali, 2014, p. 33). Siemens and Downes decided to explore and expand this idea by creating a course to give students experience with what they were learning; it would test the limits of

this theory by having no restrictions on who could participate. Twenty-five students took the course for credit; almost one hundred times that number took the course online for free (Tamburri, 2012).

While planning the course, Siemens and Downes consulted with other colleagues who had experiences with online and open education. One of those collaborators, Dave Cormier, a researcher at University of Prince Edward Island, mentioned the course structure reminded him of massive open online role-playing games (e.g., *World of Warcraft*) by the way in which students would create their own educational worlds. And thus, the term "massive open online course" was born (Cormier, 2008; Hollands & Tirthali, 2014).

The Modern (x)MOOC

In 2006, Sal Khan founded Khan Academy in California with the mission of "changing education for the better by providing a free world-class education for anyone anywhere" (Khan Academy website, 2013). He did this through YouTube videos offering tutorials in subjects such as science, math, and statistics.

In 2011, Sebastian Thrun, a Stanford professor of Artificial Intelligence heard a TED Talk by Khan. Inspired by his creation of a "global one-world classroom" (Khan, 2011), Thrun decided to experiment with a course he co-taught in the fall by putting it online for free. What Khan had done was make real an idea Thrun had back in 2007: a "YouTube for education, a for-profit startup that would allow students to discover and take courses from top professors" (Leckart, 2012, para. 12). Thrun dedicated his own financial resources and hired colleagues to build this company from the course, expecting no more than 2,000 students. Aided by a short piece in the *New York Times* (Markoff, 2011), enrollment eventually surpassed 100,000 by August 2011. This was happening at the same time two

other Stanford professors were offering their courses online, thus starting the MOOC platform, Coursera.

The creation of Udacity (Thrun's company) and Coursera on the West Coast served to compliment what had been in existence on the East Coast since 2001 with OpenCourseWare. In fact, Siemens saw his cMOOC as an offshoot of OCW: "Our goal, since CCK08, has been to do for teaching and learning what MIT did for content" (Siemens, 2011, para. 1).

At the time no one – not Khan, not Thrun, not the *Times* – used the term "MOOC" to describe their work. It was Siemens who claimed Thrun's course as one of his own. In a post on his website, Siemens connected himself, CCK08, and MIT's OpenCourseware as being a part of the same vision "to connect with colleagues from around the world and develop a broad understanding of topics from diverse perspectives" (Siemens, 2011, para. 1). He did acknowledge, however, that the pedagogy of the Stanford courses was divergent from his own. "The Coursera model emphasizes a more traditional learning approach through video presentations and short quizzes and testing. Put another way, cMOOCs focus on knowledge creating and generation whereas xMOOCs focus on knowledge duplication" (Siemens, as quoted in Daniel, 2012, p. 8).

The concept of free online access to high-quality education as a legitimate way to learn reached its tipping point when the *New York Times* named 2012 "The Year of the MOOC" (Pappano, 2012). Over the past five years, the three most prominent MOOC platforms – Udacity, Coursera, and edX – have raised the reputation of online learning by partnering with prestigious universities and faculty from all over the world to offer hundreds of courses to millions of students. edX started as a collaboration between just two universities (MIT and Harvard University). Now, it has grown into a consortium of 45

charter institutions from around the world and 61 members, including schools, non-profits, and governmental organizations (edX website, 2016). Coursera has 138 institutional partners from 28 countries (Coursera website, 2013). It should be noted that the vast majority of these courses fall under the xMOOC category, as opposed to cMOOCs.

The irony of the omniscience of MOOCs is that there is still so little known about their potential. MOOCs have provided unprecedented potential for a new population of students to access knowledge. They have given faculty a new medium through which they increase their visibility and enhance their teaching through creative pedagogy and new curriculum development (Kolowich, 2013). Additionally, by their very nature, MOOCs provide a great deal of information about who participates in MOOCs and how they do so. The questions that remain are exactly what their impact will be on the academy and vice versa. Just as faculty are redesigning their course content, MOOC platforms are restructuring their infrastructure to allow for more disciplines to take part as well as reimagining their own pedagogy. Additionally, as financial models are being tested, it is yet to be seen if the "openness" in their title can remain sustainable. Regardless, MOOCs have revealed the possibilities of using technology to reshape higher education.

The Arts in Higher Education

In the discussions about the merits and limitations of MOOCs, the voice of the fine arts is notably faint. To understand why this might be, it is helpful to consider the position the fine arts disciplines have traditionally held on the college campus. On one hand, the arts are a vital part of the college experience for students, faculty, and community. Approximately 90,000 students graduate with a degree in the arts and universities often serve as the cultural cornerstone for many communities with limited access to other artistic

institutions (Biemiller, 2013). Many outside the field extol the benefits of an arts degree for non-artistic domains (Pink, 2005; Rae-Dupree, 2008; Tepper, 2013).

At the same time, support for the fine arts has long been in peril both financially and philosophically. "Survival tactics are not new to arts practitioners. We have a long history of having to find our own money" (Biemiller, 2013, para. 18). This is especially true today with heightened scrutiny on higher education to account for its high costs (Baum et. al., 2013). With some exceptions, the fine arts on campus has suffered from lack of resources, a high expenditure per student due to material and physical plant costs (Biellmer, 2013), and an inherent inability to be easily assessed by standard measures.

A possible reason for the lack of financial support for the fine arts on the college campus is because its curricular importance has traditionally not been taken seriously. In 2008, Harvard University's Task Force on the Arts chastised the school for making the arts "conspicuously marginal." The authors assert this marginalization "sends a signal that the arts are unimportant to the work of the university; that they remain but a pleasant way to spend some leisure hours: that cognitive life and professional training lie elsewhere" (Greenblatt et. al., 2008, p. 4). This educational climate reflects the common claim that "leadership tomorrow depends on how we educate our students today, especially in math, science, technology, and engineering" (Obama, as quoted in Sabochik, 2010, para. 4). The importance of the arts in leadership development is notably absent.

This is not to say the fine arts have no presence on MOOC platforms. In the spring of 2016, Coursera listed 77 fine arts courses under "Music and Art," (a subcategory of the Arts and Humanities), approximately 4% of the more than 1,800 total courses offered on their site (Coursera website, 2016). Conservatories, liberal arts colleges, and large research universities are using MOOC platforms to offer courses in art history (Live!: A History of

Art for Artists, Animators and Gamers, CalArts), drawing (Introduction to Art: Concepts &

Techniques, Penn State), music composition (Songwriting, Berklee), and film analysis (The

Language of Hollywood: Storytelling, Sound, and Color, Wesleyan), for example. Even the

Museum of Modern Art teaches four courses on visual art and education (MoMA website,

2016).

This is evidence that some schools, disciplines, and faculty are creating a space for

themselves in this new pedagogical landscape. Just as the creators of MOOCs and their

platforms are deeply exploring what student engagement looks like online, so too are these

few faculty redefining what it means to learn art. However, most fine arts rely on in-the-

moment collaboration and immediate feedback as an essential component to quality learning

experiences. Unfortunately, this incongruity between how the fine arts are traditionally

taught and how MOOCs are currently structured has meant a majority of fine arts courses

have had no presence in the MOOC world. How the arts faculty members in this study

interpret this pedagogical gap will be discussed in Chapter 5, and the potential impact of

their choices will be discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The relative absence of arts representation in MOOCs also means there is a dearth of research about the potential of these type of courses. This is the case even as the research on MOOCs is growing and developing. There is research on student demographics of MOOCs and their learning outcomes (e.g., Ho, et. al, 2014) and on MOOC pedagogy (e.g., Glance, Forsey & Riley, 2014; Karpicke & Blunt, 2011). There is also a great deal written about their potential and actual impact on the higher education landscape (Babson Survey Research Group, 2013; Brooks, 2012). As the MOOC landscape continues to change and its role in higher education is determined, ensuring the conversation about MOOCs and the arts is supported by robust data is what fuels my research design and analytic choices, specifically my choice to engage in a exploratory, qualitative study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Edmondson and McManus (2007) characterize the realities and the challenges of researching new ideas – my goal with this project. When there are "topics [that] have attracted little research or formal theorizing to date," or when one is attempting to "represent new phenomena in the world" (p. 1161), this is called "nascent theory." "Nascent theory…proposes tentative answers to novel questions of how and *why*, often…suggesting new connections among phenomena [emphasis added]" (p. 1158). Not only did I begin this endeavor to explore "new connections" between the phenomena of MOOCs, the arts, and higher education, but I also wanted to discover the why. What fuels faculty opinions about MOOCs is more important to this research than what faculty members have decided about MOOCs.

Additionally, the authors argue a critical part of conducting valid research is to ensure the topic explored and the methods used to explore it have "methodological fit,"

defined by Edmondson and McManus as "internal consistency among elements of a research project" (p. 1155). "Because little is known" about MOOCs and the arts, "rich, detailed, and evocative data are needed to shed light on the phenomenon" (p. 1162). Like Seidman (2006), I am interested in faculty members' "stories." My goal is to understand the "lived experience" of arts faculty, and "meaning they make of that experience," (Seidman, 200, p. 9). In support of this, my research questions (listed in Chapter 1) are more "open-ended" to "allow data collected…to strongly shape the researcher's developing understanding of the phenomenon" (Edmondson & McManus, 2007, p. 1159). Additionally, I pull from elements of naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and primarily use semi-structured interviews and content analysis not only to answer my research questions, but also to identify possible patterns to create a framework for future research.

Before leaving the subject of the use of methodological fit in this study, I wish to explain how I have chosen to report the findings of this study. In this regard, Kaiser (2009) is helpful in framing my rationale. I followed what Kaiser labels the "dominant approach" (p. 1634) when addressing confidentiality by creating a consent form that was approved by the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects at Harvard (CUHS), the University's Institutional Review Board. As Guillemin and Gillam (2004) note, this process did indeed prompt me to think about the role of confidentiality in two ways.

First, I believe assuring the participants their identities would be anonymized gave them the confidence to speak with me openly and honestly. Second, I took aspects of the "alternative approach" (Kaiser, 2009, p. 1636) by thinking about the intended audience of this research. Since it is my hope that arts faculty from various institutions will be made aware of my work, I chose to anonymize both the faculty members whom I interviewed as well as their home institutions. Thus, I have changed the names of the four colleges

represented and obfuscated other identifying details. Furthermore, no quote has been

attributed to a particular study participant. Instead, I only identify enough of the relevant

characteristics of the study participants – their parent institution, their artistic discipline, and

whether they have taught a MOOC – when necessary to understand the context of the

quote. I took pains to ensure the three identifying characteristics were not combined in any

way that might allow for deductive disclosure (Kaiser, 2009, p. 1632).

Sample Selection

Edmondson and McManus (2007) describe qualitative methods as those in which

"data analysis and data collection overlap" (p. 1172); this describes my research process well.

Relying primarily on a mix of two purposive sampling strategies: snowball and convenience

sampling (Patton, 1990), I conducted 16 interviews with fine arts faculty from four higher

education institutions. I employed two different strategies in choosing participants: one at

the institutional level, and the other at the faculty level.

Institutions

For this study, I focused on four higher education institutions, interviewing several

people at each of these sites. I made this design decision to discover if the individual faculty

members' perspectives on MOOCs were related in any way to their institutional locale

overall. Specifically, I was curious to see if the importance an institution placed on the fine

arts might have an effect on how secure their arts faculty felt about their work, and therefore

how open they were to the possibilities of pedagogical innovation, as exemplified by

MOOCs. To highlight this possible distinction, I intentionally selected two institutions with

a "fine arts focus," (i.e., their primary mission is the training and education of artists), and

two liberal arts colleges that do not specifically train artists ("non-fine arts focus"). In schools with a fine arts focus, there is no question as to the priority they place on the arts. So perhaps faculty members at these schools would be more willing to experiment with MOOCs, since the marginalization of their discipline is less of a factor. This prioritization of the arts is not necessarily the case in liberal arts colleges, even those with a strong arts presence (Greenblatt et. al., 2008), so perhaps faculty from these institutions would be tentative. Additionally, within the two categories – fine arts focus and non-fine arts focus – I intentionally selected one campus that has offered MOOCs and one that has not. I was interested in knowing if an institution's experience with this technology influenced how its faculty responded. Below are brief descriptions of each institution and Table 1 displays how each school represents the two relevant study criteria.

- **Emberton University** is small, highly-selective liberal arts college with one of the larger undergraduate populations of comparable schools. Due to its large teaching faculty, the university is able to maintain a low faculty to student ratio, while simultaneously offering a variety of courses of study. Emberton is part of a MOOC consortium, offering courses in the arts, history, math, economics, and psychology.

- A smaller prestigious liberal arts college, **McIntosh College** has 40 majors and more than 800 classes. The college is proud of its small class sizes and intimate learning settings. McIntosh has decided not to work with any MOOC provider to offer these types of courses, but has not ruled out offering them at a later date.

- **Oribel College** is a large, private, art and media school located in the heart of a major US city. It hosts more than 150 majors, minors, and programs in a wide variety of artistic disciplines. Oribel's focus is to develop working artists, but does support a

liberal arts curriculum. The college boasts of helping students create a professional-level portfolio so they are ready for the workforce upon graduation. To support such large numbers of students, Oribel employs more than 1,000 full and part-time faculty members. Oribel has not yet offered MOOCs.

- **Afton University** is one of the leading visual and performing arts schools in the country, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in more than 40 disciplines. Located near a major city, Afton boasts a strong connection with the arts industry due to its preeminent alumni. It is far more selective than Oribel, with an enrollment under 2,000 students and a faculty of approximately 300. This allows Afton to have the majority of their classes have less than 10 students. Afton has offered MOOCs in three artistic disciplines.

Table 1: Colleges and Universities Represented

	Fine Arts Focus	**Non-Fine Arts Focus**
Has offered a MOOC	Afton University	Emberton University
Has not offered a MOOC	Oribel College	McIntosh College

Faculty

Once the four schools were chosen, interviewing faculty from as many different artistic disciplines as possible was the top priority. This was done in order to mitigate any disciplinary bias in responses. Essentially, I hoped to discover if a faculty member's content area actually played a role in his or her perception of his or her ability to teach art online. Table 2 shows the distribution of faculty in the study, by artistic discipline.

Table 2: Number of Respondents by Artistic Discipline

Artistic Discipline	# of Participants
Dance (modern, ballet, choreography)	3
Film (production, directing, history)	2
Music (composition)	1
Theatre (costume design, directing, acting, history, technical design)	6
Visual Art (Japanese, sculpture, photography)	4
Total	**16**

Half of the respondents came from arts-based schools and half of the respondents came from schools that offered MOOCs; however, only 25% of faculty members interviewed have experience teaching a MOOC. The range of respondents' teaching experience was quite broad – from two to 34 years. Interestingly, although this was not an intentional feature of the research design, the wide variability with regards to years in the profession turned out to be important, in that where faculty members were in their academic career played a significant factor in how they saw themselves in relation to the phenomenon of MOOCs. Table 3 lists the number of study respondents by the number of years they have taught.

Table 3: Number of Respondents by Years of Teaching

Years of Teaching	# of Participants
0-10	5
11-20	6
21-30	2
31+	3
Total	**16**

The Interviews

Before scheduling research interviews, I conducted four pilot interviews with personal colleagues who teach at the college level. My purpose was threefold: first, I wanted

to hone my interview skills and practice asking succinct, yet probing questions with a supportive audience. Second, I used these practice interviews to audition particular questions and wording. I wanted to ensure that participants heard no bias in my questions. Finally, I wanted to see what types of questions would elicit the most in-depth responses. These pilot interviews were conducted via Skype and recorded. Though these interviews were not transcribed, I did review them to help craft my protocol. I also asked for feedback on my interviewing style and questions, which I incorporated once I started collecting data.

The sixteen research interviews were conducted from May to December 2014. Two of these interviews were held in person; one was conducted over the phone; and the remaining thirteen interviews were conducted via Skype or Google Chat. The interviews ran from 45 to 90 minutes, with the average interview lasting approximately one hour. The framework of the interview protocol came from my three research questions provided in the introduction.

Each interview began with questions to get a sense of any prior knowledge faculty members had about MOOCs as well as their initial reactions to them. Based on my previous research on each interviewee, I specifically asked why (or why not) respondents had chosen a particular course of action with regards to working with MOOCs. I then gave room for the faculty members to richly describe what they believed was most important for their students to know – about themselves, about art, about the subject matter – and if they believed it was possible to convey those things through a MOOC. Finally, I asked respondents to opine about the state of the field in relation to MOOCs, to share how their decisions have affected them professionally, and to imagine what arts in higher education will look like in the near future. The complete protocol is attached as Appendix 1. Audio recordings of all interviews

were professionally transcribed; I then checked the typed transcripts drafts for accuracy against the same recordings.

Early on, I had to refine my protocol to allow for more open-ended conversation and for the interviewees to question me. This shift eventually revealed two important factors that influence this work. First, the points of clarification and requests for more information further revealed participants' values and how they perceived MOOCs and online learning. For example, some interviewees were pleasantly surprised to learn some MOOCs provided ample space for dialogue and conversation through forums.

Second, several respondents were impressed with my interest in this project "even though" I have an arts background. (I have both academic and professional experience in the theatre.) Though it was my experience building a MOOC that served as the impetus for this study, I was aware it would be my previous artistic experience that afforded me some level of insider status with my interviewees (Ganga & Scott, 2006; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). However, their astonishment at my research topic and protocol questions revealed perhaps a belief in a false dichotomy between being passionate about the arts and interested in online pedagogies. Still others were anxious to learn what their colleagues and fellow study participants would share with me. I interpreted this interest as evidence of a true lack of community and communication around what MOOCs are and what they can be to the arts.

During each interview, I took notes and turned them into research memos afterwards in order to make explicit my process of understanding and meaning-making (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). The goals of these memos were to 1) summarize the key points I took from the interview, 2) brainstorm how that specific interview answered each of my research questions, and 3) to document new questions that arose from the conversation. For instance, after interviews with two professors who offered MOOCs, I pondered how the

existing structure of MOOC platforms might limit the possibilities of arts professors to use them; might we need a whole new online platform to make arts-based MOOCs work? The answer to this question will be explored in Chapter 7.

Code Creation

My coding was developed through a two-tiered process. This was done to help organize all of the information, while simultaneously analyzing its content. One level of coding consisted of characterizing the data on two different continua: what MOOCs are and are not, and faculty's attitudes toward technology. The other was focused more on creating categories that best described the ideas being expressed. Though the first sorting process was used primarily as an organization tool, it did provide insights into how study participants were making sense of the topics being discussed. It is also important to note that I was simultaneously applying etic codes and bringing to light emic codes in the data that ultimately contributed to my findings.

What MOOCs Are…and Are Not

Throughout the interviews, participants made statements about what they believed MOOCs were and were not. This characterization could apply to their understanding of how MOOCs are created and used day-to-day, or it could pertain to what MOOCs do or do not represent in a larger context. These ideas were based upon their own experience, what they had read in professional publications and mainstream media, or knowledge gathered from events on their campus. And so, I identified every moment where an interviewee states what he or she believes a MOOC is ("MOOC=") or is not ("MOOC≠"). These categories did not necessarily correlate with positive or negative descriptions. For instance, MOOCs could

either represent a "new kind of teaching" or be "worse than a lecture." However, it was useful to get a broad sense of how participants described MOOCs and what this phenomenon represented.

Positive and Negative Attitudes toward Technology

I strove to create a protocol that did not influence participant responses or cast judgment on their views on MOOCs. To achieve this goal, I asked for faculty members' thoughts and feelings around both arts and online pedagogy. I wanted to get insight not only on people's choices around engaging with MOOCs, but also on what motivated them to make those choices. It was – and continues to be – important to stress that it matters little whether or not faculty members in this study like MOOCs. What is most important is to understand why they feel the way they do.

In digging deeply into faculty members' motivations, what became apparent was a connection between the interviewees' views of technology and online learning and their openness to engage with MOOCs. I coded any pessimistic, dismissive or critical comment that described either their own or their colleagues' perspectives on MOOCs, online learning or technology as "faculty attitude – negative." Approximately 70% of respondents shared some type of these "negative" comments, even though all but one of these respondents had taught a MOOC. For comments that describe online learning in supportive, favorable, or approving ways, I applied a code entitled, "faculty attitude – positive." Slightly more than 30% of respondents in my study had at least one quote in their interview was "positive." Of these, more than 50% of the respondents have experience teaching MOOCs. There were also comments that expressed a more mixed or confused opinion about online technology. The interviews of five study respondents contain at least one comment that fell into this

category, named "faculty attitude – mixed." These comments described a general interest or curiosity in MOOCs, but a lack of motivation to learn more. Or they articulated an understanding that online education at some level is part of higher education's future and worthy endeavor for some people, but not for them.

Delineating seemingly straightforward opinions such as "positive" and "negative" cleared the way for more nuanced and deeper exploration of the issues that influence faculty members' decisions. It was also necessary foundation building to craft a nascent theory about this new and underexplored topic.

Etic and Emic Codes

I began with a list of deductive codes drawn from the research on motivational factors for faculty to engage with MOOCs. Many came from the results of the *2013 Inside Higher Ed Survey of Faculty Attitudes on Technology*. Some of these codes include "Resources," "Technological Acumen," "Student Access," and "Professional Benefits." Other etic codes came from my research design: the faculty's artistic discipline and the characteristics of the home institution, for example. This last code was strongly reinforced by faculty responses. For example, here is a comment from a theatre professor from a non-arts focused institution.

> I'm teaching in an undergraduate liberal arts environment and I think that informs a lot of my teaching choices and the students I cater to in this environment. I think that affects a lot of the choices I make and this places certain limitations on how I can teach….In this environment there's little wiggle room for experimentation sometimes because you have to get the canonical, classic information through. I can imagine if I was an institution where I taught graduate students, I could see myself being more amenable to – not only me being more amenable but also the institution being more amenable to – MOOCs and different kinds of technology.

Most of my own meaning-making of the data came from the discovery of new emic

codes that emerged from the actual interviews, the part of the data I found most exciting.

For example, during an interview with a theatre professor, she brought up the idea that

where faculty members are in their career path might influence their choices to become

involved with MOOCs.

> So I would say definitely not while I was on the tenure track
> would I teach one because I think that it would take a lot of
> time to prepare [and] I would not have a guarantee in terms
> of the reception…What's interesting is I don't think that
> tenure-track professors are involved in [MOOCs] at
> Emberton, to my knowledge. It might not be the case, but
> the professors who I've heard who have done it, they're
> senior, super senior professors, super senior.

This idea of professional security as a factor to consider did not occur to me before I

began this study. After hearing this, I coded each interviewee for the number of the years

taught and whether or not he or she had tenure. The findings from these codes are explored

in the chapter that explores personal factors and MOOCs.

The Three "P's"

At first, my codes were simply descriptions of what I was reading and documenting

my initial findings. After several iterations of refining those descriptions, I found participants

focused on three distinct themes when discussing specific ideas (see Appendix B): what I

name "The Three P's." This became the organizational structure for my three findings

chapters.

- *Personal*: Respondents entered into this conversation about MOOCs from a place

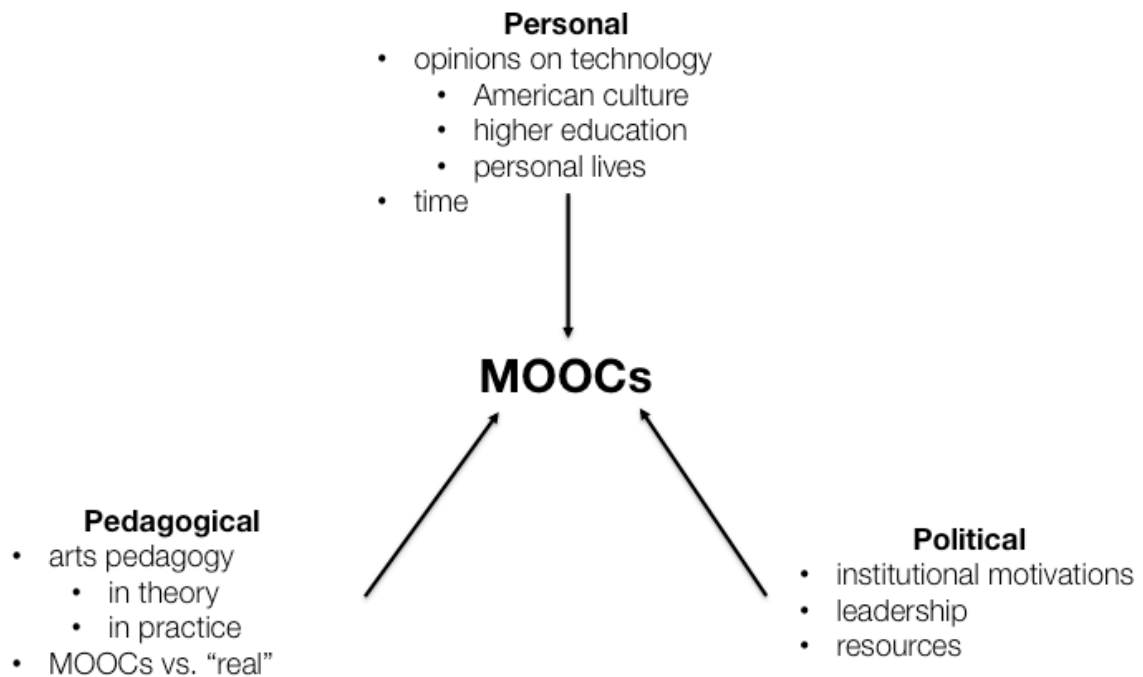 pre-determined by their own opinions about the role of technology in our lives.

  As described above, faculty's attitudes fell upon a spectrum from positive to

negative. However, they opined specifically about three distinct realms they saw technology influencing: American culture, higher education *writ large*, and in their own lives. They also spoke about their own personal and professional priorities and how secure participants felt in their own career path. These are more examples of emic codes to which the current literature does not speak, and thus are vital to explore.

- *Pedagogical:* All respondents had clear ideas about why and how art should be taught and learned and articulated how these ideas influenced their own teaching practice. They also had ideas on what online learning was (or was not) and what it could (or could not) be. These ideas about arts pedagogy and MOOC pedagogy underpinned much of their choices around MOOCs.

- *Political:* The explicit and implicit messages conveyed by the faculty member's home institution and its leadership had a strong bearing on participants' responses. Factors such as resource allocation, the fiscal health of the institution, current policies about the use of technology (both written and unstated), and the priorities of the school's leaders all played a role in faculty members' views.

These three themes reveal, through rich data, the number of factors that enter into respondents' meaning-making with regards to MOOCs. They also reflect the blend of inductive and deductive codes that surfaced throughout my analysis. Finally, they speak to what is most important in this study, why faculty members in the arts care or do not care about MOOCs and what they are doing about it.

Table 4: The Three P's

Personal
- opinions on technology
  - American culture
  - higher education
  - personal lives
- time

MOOCs

Pedagogical
- arts pedagogy
  - in theory
  - in practice
- MOOCs vs. "real"

Political
- institutional motivations
- leadership
- resources

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study is that it relies on convenience and snowball sampling. I began with faculty and institutions with which I had a personal or professional connection, and expanded my search for interviewees through recommendations and referrals. Employing a more randomized selection process might have provided even more response variability and also increased the number of faculty who participated.

Additionally, I entered this research with two experiences that enhanced my understanding of this research topic, but may have biased my thinking about it. First, my professional background includes working in the central administration of a graduate theatre program. During that time, I was an integral part of redesigning the curriculum of the school and changing the culture to one that embraced new technologies, in and out of the classroom. Second, I was the course developer for a MOOC for HarvardX, the first of its

kind to come out of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Though not an arts course, my experience provided me with insider knowledge about MOOCs some of my interviewees might not have possessed. Throughout my research, I tried to stay aware of any potential biases my past experiences may have created so they would not affect my data collection or analysis.

CHAPTER 4: THE PERSONAL FACTORS

For many artists, the personal and the professional are deeply connected. There is a belief that in order to create good art, artists who care about their craft must have a strong understanding of themselves (Gilbert, 2015; Gruen, 1991; McGrath, 2011). Though not all of the faculty members in this study are practicing artists, they all spoke of their teaching as a type of artistic practice. That is to say, participants' personal beliefs had an effect on how they responded to questions about their pedagogy. In this chapter, the ways in which those beliefs manifested themselves will be explored.

I found two distinct, but related ways in which respondents' personal standpoints affected their decision-making process: one had an outward focus, and the other is more inward. The first had to do with how they saw the role of technology influencing different spheres about which they cared deeply. This is an oft-debated topic in our society, but the faculty members who were dismayed by its pervasiveness did not fall back on the typical "stay-off-my-lawn" trope to express their frustration. Instead, they voiced their individual concerns about how our dependence on screens of various sizes impact our ability to connect as people, which is a fundamental requirement in the arts. Those who were more welcoming believed it was a way to *enhance* connection by reaching people across generations, place, and time. Here is an example where respondents spoke about the same thing (technology and connection), yet came to different conclusions.

The second way faculty members' personal perceptions had a strong influence on their decisions had to do with how important exploring MOOCs was to them. This, in turn, seemed to be couched in where they saw themselves on their career path. Regardless of how many years they had been teaching, the majority of respondents reluctant to explore MOOCs stated "lack of time" as a main reason. For some, it was about not *having* any; for

others, it was about not being willing to *make* any…an interesting, but important distinction that will be explored below.

One can see how both respondents' personal perspectives on technology and the priority they place on engaging with MOOCs run parallel to each other; it is evidence of the autonomy afforded to faculty members that they can decide on such an individual level how much they will become involved in MOOCs. For example, a long-time theatre professor from Oribel College who hated to see his students reading scripts from their iPhones did not feel he had any time to learn about MOOCs. And a mid-career dance professor from Emberton who thought it imperative we learn new technologies was open to working with MOOCs if she were not responsible for so many other commitments.

Faculty's Opinions on Technology

For many faculty members in this study, there was an emphasis on the "online" in the MOOC moniker. Both those who support and oppose the use of technology in education had strong personal opinions about how on-screen devices, the Internet, and instant access to information affected not only the educational process, but also the culture at large. What it means to rely on a computer screen to convey information and to engage with others made some respondents apprehensive. For others, it was seen as a new, exciting territory to explore. These views about technology influenced how they saw MOOCs. Participants spoke about the role of technology in three spheres: in American culture, in higher education *writ large*, and in their own lives.

In the Culture

It was refreshing to hear participants being aware of their own biases in regards to technology in American culture, regardless of whether they saw it as a positive or negative influence. For these faculty members, "culture" is not an amorphous concept; it is constructed specifically by how one interacts in the world. For some, "online conversations are not a complete conversations…between individuals in the way that they can happen when people are in the same room together." This ends up having a negative effect on the culture because it "has impact on the process of developing students' critical thinking skills and their imaginations in a way that's probably less effective on an individual basis." Not only did they see online communication as incomplete, they believed it also lacked honesty. A theatre professor put it this way:

> I feel like technology – in a way it brings people together, but it also in a way – it really can separate. And also, when you're looking someone in the eye, it's much more difficult to lie. We're talking and my attention is fully to you, and I'm really being thoughtful about this, but I could see someone else answering the phone and double-tasking with five other things while they were trying to fulfill this for you. It's heinous to me…. There's no transparency.

The difficulty student artists have in removing bad habits – both physical and mental – was cited as further evidence of how our reliance on technology is a detriment to the culture. A theatre professor from Oribel College who teaches voice and movement lamented:

> It's much more difficult for students to engage their voice and body because they've been brought up in front of a screen, and so for using their voice, using their body as vehicles for expressivity, to embody characters in great plays….I'm working much harder to have them accept that – that there's a truth bigger than communicating on their iPhone.

But then there are others who believed we have no choice in the matter; we must reach young people, especially art students, where they are. The alternative, according to a dance professor from Emberton, is to "say goodbye to your children." Without finding a way to use the communication tools of the next generation, the lessons of this one will be lost.

> Because they're living in a different world, and if you're not willing to bridge that divide…and you're not willing to imagine ways of connecting to this world with them, for them, say goodbye to your kids or your grandkids, you know, if not immediately. Because maybe you're still influencing your kids, but the next generation?

For these artists, the effect of technology on culture manifested itself in more than the next generation of citizens-artists. It also influenced how the current generation of artists does its work and how that work is received. One dance faculty at Oribel articulated her concern over what happens when "everyone just has access to everything" because she "already feels to some extent we're losing potentially a lot of diversity in our aesthetics."

> We're still struggling so much for dance professionals to be paid for what they do that I worry that this so-called accessibility will actually mean that more people will be able to dance with less skill, which is already happening with all the TV shows and all of the dance competitions…. What's already happening is that more people think they can dance and less people are coming into the space [of] live, highly proficient dance bodies to watch them or to take classes from them. And so dance professionals could stand to lose even more resource support from the society if we go massively in this direction.

"Screen time" is not solely about the devices, but the way art is portrayed on those devices: the prevalence of YouTube, reality TV, and viral videos on social media.

Two things were striking about the debate about the technology on a cultural level. First, participants in this study saw the stakes as quite high. Reaching art students is about

more than just teaching a skillset, it is about affecting the world. Second, faculty members

were able to articulate the opposing side of the discussion, regardless of how strongly they

believe in their own perspective. For example, see how the same dance professor from

Emberton was able to name the main concern of those who disagree, even as she eventually

dismissed it.

> I hear that righteous tone too: "No, I will lose the essence of
> what we do." To those people I point out that people are
> dying all over the world. We have poverty, starvation,
> discrimination…what are they trying to protect? Like if they
> have the answer, we wouldn't be living in such a… You
> know? Maybe they should like let go a little bit and trust that
> possibly our kids would find better.

A different dance professor from Oribel who disagreed with her also addressed the

opposing perspective when presenting her position.

> I can totally hear the argument that says, "Well, this is where
> human life is happening now, and people actually have to
> know how to operate out there…." And so I can hear that
> argument and I still say something is being lost, something
> very important is being lost in the human equation.

These faculty members naturally placed themselves, their students, and their work

into the fabric of the broader culture. Artistic expression is a form of communication and

these artists discussed their work as a conversation between themselves and the world. Add

to this the notion mentioned above that study participants saw their teaching as another

form of artistic expression, and it is not surprising that faculty members had strong opinions

about new ways to have that conversation.

In Higher Education

Unlike the confidence with which participants share their views on technology in

their own lives or in American culture, more faculty members are unsure of where they stand

with regards to technology's presence in higher education. To be clear, there were faculty

members who saw "fundamental goods" embedded within MOOCs and the technology it

harnesses. These fundamental goods were "attractive" to one film professor from McIntosh.

Other faculty members noted that MOOCs provide "opportunities for people who are not

able to attend a four-year residential college, particularly outside the United States," and

"lessen[s] the educational divide."

> As long as you have an Internet connection and you have a laptop, you can be anywhere. So…I do think there are advantages.

Some faculty members saw the benefit of MOOCs enabling them to reach students

using the tools and language young people already employ to communicate with each other.

One respondent called MOOCs "an expression of our new modes of communication."

Therefore, they saw it as their job as educators to at least explore the possibilities of the new.

> Online learning or the delivery of instruction through any kind of an online system had a lot of possible merits. And while it had challenges, it seemed to me to be something that we should be looking at especially since so many young people today do so much of their information acquisition through online. It seemed like figuring out a way to have that be more than just information acquisition is something that we as educators need to do.

Even as faculty felt a duty to learn about MOOCs because they perceived them as

the future, a dance professor from Afton University was open to them not because they

represent new technology, but because they are old.

> I wasn't one of those people going, "Oh my God. How is this possible?!?" I was actually going, "Yeah, okay. This makes perfect sense on many levels." I mean, don't forget, come on. We've had what used to be called 'long distance learning.' People used to go on their local public television station.

One particularly powerful expression of support for MOOCs came from an art professor

from Afton University (an arts school that offers MOOCs). Her embrace of MOOCs was

borne from her own principles about the role of the arts in the world. Through this lens, she

saw MOOCs as simply another way to allow more people to experience the arts.

Additionally, MOOCs allowed educators to broaden their own horizons by branching out of

their "narrower and more elite and exclusive environments." Ultimately, she believed *not*

exploring this pedagogy is immoral.

> I think the people who say "no way" have the luxury of their
> prejudices…. One of the things that I feel passionately about
> is that the world indeed would be a better place if there was
> more arts education, more understanding about arts and
> culture, more understanding of people's differences and
> similarities through the humanities, arts and culture. So to
> grandly withdraw from such a platform is unethical in some
> ways in my view, and I use that word carefully and strongly.

For other faculty members, however, there were clear dangers in broadening access –

dangers to arts education, to the arts, and to academia. One participant stated upfront a

"prejudice regarding technology in general." For him, live theatre is a "hot medium,"

whereas the "thumb dance of texting and iPhones and technology…and online class" are

examples of a "cold medium." Not only that, but moving artistic practice online is a death

knell for the arts on college campuses because it limits the artistic potential of the student.

The more artists only have to rely on their electronic devices to communicate, the more

difficult it is to teach them how to interact without them. To him, MOOCs simply felt "like

another…nail in the coffin."

However, most respondents who were uneasy about technology in higher education

talked about its effects on more specific populations. Two theatre professors from different

institutions expressed their disquiet about offering arts education to just anyone. They

questioned the morality of not maintaining a strong barrier for those who want to create an

artist's life.

> I think the arts are an important part of anyone's education.
> I'm not sure the accessibility issue though, in at least in my
> mind, necessarily extends on a broad basis to people who
> want a career in the arts, to people who want to become
> artists. It's a career that involves swimming against the
> current anyway, in a lot of ways. People have to individually
> find their way to do that. One way or the other.

The second participant put it this way:

> Here's another thing about accessibility for all, particularly the
> arts. I feel like many are called and few are chosen. I mean, is
> it responsible to offer an online basic skills or any kind of
> level of acting class knowing that there's 97% unemployment
> of Actors' Equity at any given time? How do you justify
> offering massive online classes for a profession where there's
> going to be no employment? Where's the oversight?

Several respondents spoke about the effect of MOOCs on them and their colleagues.

Some worried about the nexus of control moving from those educators who are in the room

with the students to a so-called "expert, which is also what so much of the MOOC

fascination turns on." One faculty member felt "queasy" when she thought about the

message it sends to students: "the best people in the world [will] teach you this thing, and it

will be so much better to listen to that person from Harvard than the person at your crappy

school." Another professor explained it this way:

> You're at the mercy of someone else defining the curriculum
> and defining for the students their expectations for that kind
> of curriculum or teaching.

Others were apprehensive about the effect of this technology on the academic job

market. Some of these faculty members expressed awareness of the pushback San Jose State

University gave to edX (Rivard, 2013; Kolowich, 2013) and wondered what it means to

those looking for work if MOOCs are allowed to pervade all colleges. One feared giving

universities another "cheap" and "plentiful" option to hiring a professor to be on campus.

He saw MOOCs as "an extension" of adjunct instructors, serving as a crutch to many

schools in order to cut costs. Another professor from Emberton spoke about MOOCs

limiting the availability of a particular way of life.

> I think I worry about my colleagues, and I worry about
> people who want to teach because what Emberton offers the
> professor is the opportunity to teach in a very lovely
> atmosphere. But if only one person or three people in the
> country are teaching costume design, then what happens to
> the rest of us who want to teach costume design and don't
> have a place to do it because we've all been replaced by one
> single expert in costume design?

One reason why there was uncertainty about this technology's role in higher

education is because of the effect it may have on faculty's standard of living; they were torn

between a "greater good" and their own way of life. A design professor in the study

described the very nice life she has created for herself over the past 30 years – teaching,

producing, and working as a professional costume designer. During our conversation, she

wondered if that type of life would be waiting for the next generation of art professors. This

question revealed the real fears about faculty members' futures underlying this conversation

about MOOCs' presence in higher education.

For the number of respondents who were clear on how they felt about an increased

presence of technology in higher education, an equal number of interviewees had more

questions than answers when it came to how and why technology should be a part of

academia. One could hear the interviewees try to reconcile a great deal. Throughout their

interviews, they wrestled with the question of whether MOOCs are a fad or a fundamental

change to higher education.

> Was this kind of attempt to democratize education, you
> know, a genuine outreach? Or was this some new way that we

> might become a different kind of institution? Are MOOCs just the beginning of a slide towards a different kind or model of education? That's really my question.

Another wondered about the long-lasting impact of MOOCs.

> I think there was an argument made at the time that if we didn't get involved, we would lose the opportunity to shape something that was inevitably going to kind of take over higher education on some level. And on the flip side, I think there were people who were *afraid* that it was going to take over higher education.

One fine arts professor from Afton questioned whether this "weirdly American" phenomenon of shifting toward "more" is actually a good thing: "What is so great about claiming to educate a hundred thousand people at once anyway?" A professor from McIntosh expanded on this question by wondering to whom educators are beholden: students who can access a particular level of education or those who cannot.

> Well, there's so much discussion around, I guess, the return on investment in higher education, and I think that obviously that makes it harder to justify just having 12-student classes, right? In some way you could say it's excluding more students – but then again, of course, that's one of the things that McIntosh likes to talk about is these small class sizes. But then you are basically turning away students who want to take the class, who are interested, who are probably good students and are paying a lot for an education. So it's hard to argue for that.

Finally, study participants questioned what role do they want to play personally in either helping or hindering the integration of technology and higher education. Ultimately, many faculty members saw this merger as "an inevitability" and thus, it would be "foolhardy to be closed to it." The problem is, as one theatre professor put it, what he teaches "doesn't integrate that well into an online learning process" so creating an online course would be more "of a forced process." A film professor feared that the rise of online learning would displace his teaching model.

> I imagine that MOOCs and things like them are an inevitability, and I think that they're good. I just hope that the model that I teach isn't excluded from that. So I know that sounds sort of defensive. I don't really – it comes out more defensive than I mean.

In Their – and Others' – Lives

Whether reflecting on themselves or their colleagues, participants identified characteristics such as being a lifelong learner, a desire to stay relevant, or just plain stubbornness as influencing how they work with technology in their own lives.

Only 25% of study participants had taught a MOOC. Nevertheless, more than 50% of those who had not taught a MOOC expressed a personal preference to engaging with technology. Two reasons surfaced for this. The first had to do with how faculty members saw themselves. A music professor defined himself as "a researcher and experimenter in learning and pedagogy." Their personal definition of good teaching included staying abreast of best practices in pedagogy; they had to keep learning in order to teach. Faculty members expressed this desire in various ways: from an individual curiosity ("I'm kind of game to try anything, you know.") to maintaining professional standards.

> I think the idea of teaching is you have to go back, especially if you're teaching what you know, you have to go back and look at how you do things to make sure that it's correct.

The second reason was more of a "primary… evolutionary" desire "to belong to what's going on." This reason was articulated most by those respondents who were junior faculty. These faculty members saw technology's place in academia as predestined, and so they had a personal imperative to remain professionally relevant. For example, a film professor who was one of the first on his campus to teach a MOOC did so because he believed, "this is going to be an important way of communicating in teaching." He needed to

learn the technology because he is not "full professor who can just retread the same lectures." He admitted, "I've got a career ahead of me, and I feel the need to stay on top of things." A design professor at Afton articulated it as such:

> I mean, I do feel that the world is headed in that direction for quite some time, so I need to make sure – I need to figure out how to make that work with the things that I do. So it's one thing that I figured I can do and I can get it put in place because of my position, I think, so try that out and see if that works and then move on to other things.

I note earlier in this chapter a certain freedom study participants seem to have in their choice to engage with MOOCs. Perhaps this autonomy was more readily available for those who preferred *not* to engage. At least 25% of respondents spoke explicitly about a generational digital divide, highlighting "older" faculty members' unwillingness or inability to embrace basic technological tasks (e.g., emails or online administrative duties).

> I mean, even getting faculty at times to go online and do some of the most basic kind of online record-keeping that they're supposed to do with their students like keeping attendance online is an incredible struggle.

These more conservative faculty members are blamed for the lack of forward momentum on *any* technological advance on their campus, let alone experimenting with MOOCs. Some participants offered a certain benefit of the doubt, like this theatre professor from Oribel College.

> Yeah. So, you know, there are a number of faculty older than me and some of them just really – and again they've worked in theater for 30, 40 years. They're just not very adept at picking up new technology.

But there are other participants who saw their colleagues' reticence as an indication of close-mindedness over learning new things due to "age and exhaust [as in growing weary] factors." They said their colleagues are coming from a place of "I already know this. This

works. This is how I have been trained." A theatre professor from Emberton characterized this way:

> I haven't reached this point yet, but at some point [faculty] – I don't want to say they stop learning, but they just continue to do what they know. They sort of max out…they sort of stop going to conferences. So I wonder if there are ways in which lighting, design, directing, acting perhaps – all of these things could happen, but it wouldn't happen with my senior colleagues that are currently here because they are doing their thing. This is not their thing.

And an art professor from Oribel attributed the technological stubbornness to a type of artistic elitism:

> We have a college where the IT has been lagging and people who, you know…she's a painter. What does she needs to know how to use e-mail for, right? She doesn't do that. That's not what she teaches or what she knows.

Although respondents' opinions on the role of technology obviously affected their work, these particular perspectives were fueled by individual definitions of self and personal priorities. This second motivation of personal priorities played out in quite a specific way for those who decided not to work with MOOCs, as discussed below.

Time

Ten out of the twelve interviewees who said they would not teach a MOOC cited "lack of time" as a main reason. In trying to contact and conduct interviews with these participants over the course of nine months, I do not doubt how busy they are. However, this answer was not as straightforward as it seemed. As these faculty members discussed their work, nothing stood out that made their days necessarily busier than those faculty members who did teach a MOOC. Both groups juggled teaching, research, advising, and even administrative duties. Additionally, although most of these twelve faculty members held

negative views about the role of technology in at least one of the arenas described above (American culture, higher education, their own lives), many of them readily acknowledged – if not embraced – the influence of technology in our present day.

It was the prevalence of this answer that required deeper examination. In doing so, "time" ended up being a proxy for "priority." That is to say, when interviewees said they did not have the time, what they meant was, *MOOCs are not a big enough priority to me to make time.* And so the question becomes, *what takes a higher priority?* Knowing this will help those who want to include arts faculty into MOOCs align the conversation with their existing priorities. If stakeholders want to engage art faculty, then it may require a multi-pronged approach that caters to where faculty members are in their careers.

There are two details around the idea of time or more specifically, priorities that sparked my interest. First, my data revealed that where the respondent was in his or her career trajectory was connected to what that faculty member cared about and feared. Those in the early years of their career, those at the height of their teaching, and those who are nearing the end of their tenure all had different considerations. Secondly, it would seem from this study most respondents who cited time as a factor had a "pass the buck" attitude. New faculty members believed senior faculty members were the ones with the luxury of pursuing MOOCs, and older professors saw this as a "young folks' game."

The Early Years

An arts professor at McIntosh College who has taught for more than 30 years was convinced young faculty members should take up the mantle of exploring MOOCs. Though he expressed skepticism about the potential of MOOCs, he believed "we ought to be trying." At the same time, he had no problem relinquishing that responsibility to a colleague

"who is younger and perhaps a little bit more flexible." A professor from Emberton felt

similarly.

> So I do think that it maybe, we're sort of in a transitional
> phase. And so the more, I guess, experimental professors or
> the ones who have less things on their plates, they can take
> the risk and use these things and figure it out.

Ironically, those same younger faculty members who did not yet have tenure felt too

constrained to explore new pedagogy. Even as they were opportunities to expand one's

reach, young faculty members reported feeling uncertain whether to take the time to pursue

them. A second-year film professor shared his trepidation.

> I don't know that at this point in my teaching I feel – well, it's
> also because I am so busy and I'm just – I'm a beginning, you
> know, I've been teaching just a few years, and I'm in some
> sense sort of finding my feet at McIntosh and as a teacher –
> to throw [MOOCs] into the mix at this point seems like a
> little too much when I'm still figuring out the classroom
> experience.

Another senior music professor at Afton saw MOOCs as a great way to enhance

one's tenure portfolio by accessing potential audiences: "You can also do well on a book….I

felt like it's just good for your tenure file and things like that." However, a young theatre

professor at Emberton saw the risk to her tenure chances as too great. She points out she

had only heard of "super senior professors" teaching them, because they had the time to

spend on an experiment so new.

> So as a tenure-track faculty, I would say definitely not while I
> was on the tenure track would I teach [a MOOC] because I
> think that it would take a lot of time to prepare, and I think
> that I would not be – I would not have a guarantee in terms
> of the reception…. I don't know how that would work,
> consideration to how we can be evaluated or how our time
> can be considered.

Whether due to a faulty memory or a misunderstanding of the pressures facing new faculty members, senior faculty in this study seemed to mischaracterize the new faculty experience and how much time it takes to build a career. With the pressures placed on new faculty, perhaps putting the onus on them to take on the mantle to become involved with MOOCs is unfair.

Mid-Career Confidence

According to the faculty interviewed for this study, those in the middle of their careers were just now established in the routines and responsibilities of their job. They were – or had just – become accustomed to the time it takes to be a chair of a department or committee. ("So being chair, I already had a lot of things I had to commit to. I just didn't have free time to take on a new project.") They also must advise students and design and prepare courses. ("I teach six classes a semester here at Afton. Trying to find time to switch those over to online learning, that's probably the biggest hurdle.") The particulars of MOOCs were still unknown to many faculty members in this study, and as such, they could not see how these types of courses would – or could – become part of their repertoire. For some, the path needed to be much clearer in order for them to take on a project of this magnitude.

> If it had come easily, I probably would have done it. But it didn't, I had many other things that I was focusing on. I was rehearsing. I was running a program. I was raising kids. I had a full load to teach every semester. And so it didn't grab my attention like the next big thing for me personally.

Even those mid-career faculty members who did teach a MOOC admitted they were surprised by the amount of time it took to create it. One film professor put it this way:

> I don't think any of us knew how long it would take. In my mind, I had thought, "I'm doing the prep. It's going to take a lot of time anyway. Why not add [a MOOC] into the prep?" So I didn't realize that it was going to be such a long-term project even for the five weeks. That helped me say yes.

Because of the amount of work, a music professor resolved the next time he teaches his MOOC he will use it more strategically to further his other pursuits.

> And if I do it again, I will have a much more specific goal which is to link it to a book that I'm writing and sort of use it as a marketing thing.

Ultimately, faculty members at the mid-point in their careers seemed to be the most willing to explore new pedagogical terrain.

> I think when you look back to this, you'll see that I'm probably as confused about this kind of stuff as anybody else. I've been teaching for 11 years, and I started teaching what I know. And in that time of teaching what I know, I've also learned new things to teach and things that I didn't know professionally.

Winding Down

From this study, it appeared faculty members who had taught for 30 or more years were enjoying doing the work they have mastered and were busy thinking about their next endeavors after retirement. Some believed they are simply too old to learn new tricks: "I've been teaching for 30 years, so you're talking to a dinosaur." Others believed what MOOCs could offer to arts education was "not worth the time and the effort."

> It would be a huge, you know, a huge undertaking, I think, to try to figure out how to translate what I do onto electronic media compared to how else I might spend my time. I don't see a value in it, no.

For those interviewees who were receptive, they appreciate how MOOCs could keep them on the pedagogical "toes."

> It is making me reflect about teaching a lot, which is good. And again, I've been at it for a long time, and I could be starting to get lazy. I'm at an age where it's like, "Man, I can just get lazy now."

However, one theatre professor said MOOCs would have to wait until she completely walked away from her academic responsibilities before she would be able to take them on.

> I think that once I retire, I might very well pursue it. I think that may be the time when I can do it….I think with what I could go out there right now and marshal up, I could have the whole thing done in four months.

And finally, we return to a senior faculty member abdicating the pursuit of MOOCs to his newer faculty colleagues. The reason this time is not necessarily because younger faculty members are better suited, but because he was simply not interested.

> I'm an actor and director and teacher, and I spent 30 years at Oribel. I don't foresee my last four or five years here to be an investigation of online learning. I think that's going to be for the next generation of acting teachers to contemplate and bring into the pedagogy…if that's where higher education in the arts is going. But that's not my interest. That's not where I'm going to spend a finite amount of time.

Conclusion

For the faculty members in this study at various phases of their career, the priorities were equally pressing, but it is important to note the differences. Those starting their careers were still finding their footing with regards to traditional teaching methods and were thinking strategically about how any additional professional tasks affected their pursuit of tenure. Those faculty members in the midst of their career may not have had to concern themselves with tenure, but they were very much beholden to the needs of their departments and their students; many of the interviewees at this stage were continuing to make a name for themselves as artists as well. And for those faculty members who saw retirement in the near future, they finally got to enjoy a job that came easily and they did well. This satisfaction

should not be confused with complacency, but instead be seen as a serious questioning of how knowledge of MOOCs would be useful once they were no longer teaching.

Teaching in higher education comes with a great deal of artistic and intellectual freedom, as well as a level of stability that stands in sharp contrast with the world of the arts. These are two characteristics that make it appealing to artists. Therefore, it makes sense that respondents' personal beliefs on technology and their time strongly influenced their professional choices. Participants of this study made clear their opinions on both topics; they also revealed how their opinions work together to help shape their choices around MOOCs. Those who care about the voice of the arts in this new online world need to take heed of the independent thoughts of arts faculty members and how they combine to create strongly held opinions.

CHAPTER 5: THE PEDAGOGICAL FACTORS

As argued by Jonathan Haber (2014) and David Maguire (2014), MOOCs are fully entrenched in the Gartner Hype Cycle (p. 8). They have already gone through the "Peak of Inflated Expectations" when pundits and legislators believed they could be the foundation of an affordable college education (Matthews, 2013). MOOCs have seen the "Trough of Disillusionment" with talk of how their "disappointing" declining enrollments meant they were a failed experiment (Lewin, 2013). Even during the course of conducting this study, what MOOCs are and what they represent expanded and contracted almost simultaneously. The reach of this type of online learning continues to grow, while their impact on the daily workings of the traditional university has been seemingly minimal. Yet, the perception of some characteristics of MOOCs has not changed, specifically what they are best designed to teach. If the arts are to benefit from MOOCs reaching the "Plateau of Productivity," then it is vital that we understand how arts faculty think of their own pedagogy and how that may or may not map onto to MOOC pedagogy.

Most faculty members in this study framed their discontent with MOOCs within the context of pedagogy. That is not necessarily a surprise. Scientists and computer engineers founded MOOCs and it is apparent from the infrastructure of the early MOOCs they were not thinking about these platforms someday supporting arts-based learning. Even as MOOCs' capabilities continue to develop, there is still a perceived disconnect between what is possible with an online platform offered to everyone and the ideal environment for true artistic development.

Does this mean there is no place for the arts on this platform? Should the arts completely turn their backs on online learning? Based on the responses from this study, the answer is not simple or straightforward. There may be real disconnects between the design

of most MOOCs and most arts pedagogies. Study participants spoke about these disconnects at length and how they shaped their opinions of MOOCs. In doing so, they also ended up highlighting their own philosophies of education. Indeed, their responses to MOOCs may have revealed more about their relationship to their teaching practice than to MOOCs.

In this chapter, I reveal what faculty members considered the most important aspects of their pedagogy, what I call the "essential elements." I provide a historical context for their definition of these elements within the history of arts pedagogy. I divide the faculty respondents' discussion into two parts: one, about the learning outcomes the faculty claimed they strive to reach and two, about what they said they do in their teaching practice to attain those outcomes.

By bringing these essential elements of arts teaching and learning to the fore, the divergence between how these faculty members teach and their perception of online learning is made clear. This gap between their teaching reality and their conception of MOOCs is exemplified by what types of courses respondents believe were best suited for MOOCs and by how they defined "a real class."

Finally, we hear the pedagogical reasons why some faculty members do not want to work with MOOCs as well as why others chose to do so. Here we discover the motivation for both choices are quite similar. Both types of faculty want to utilize their best understanding of high quality arts teaching in order to reach their students in the most effective way possible; what differs for them is how to do that optimally. For some, it is about pushing the boundaries of how we can connect with each other, something artists are often known for. For others it is about refining the time-honored approach of the master teacher.

Essential Elements of Arts Pedagogy

When study participants spoke about what was most important to them as educators, it was not merely about conveying particular content. Instead, it was about demonstrating to their students a way of being an artist. Each faculty member had his or her own approach; however, there were commonalities across disciplines. The faculty members in this study wanted their students to have a strong sense of themselves as individuals and as artists, to be able to collaborate with others, and to be able to hear and provide productive comments that could further their work. A dance professor summarized her learning goals this way:

> I want them to have a sense of creative process. I want them to have a sense of their own creative process. I want them to have a sense of composition, of form. I want them to be able to observe and interact with their peers and provide constructive, critical, and useful feedback to one another. I want them to make work that's cogent to themselves and to the audience. And I want them to get outside of their box and take risks. I want them to collaborate with one another or to be able to collaborate with one another.

And to get students to achieve these goals, it is vital that the teacher is present with his or her students – physically, emotionally, and psychologically. It is this presence that is an integral part of not only teaching an artist, but being an artist. As a film professor from McIntosh put it,

> There is something in the traditional language of the artist that believes in the sort of sanctity of being present in the world and often with other people.

Historically, this has been done through the apprenticeship model, what Shulman (2005) would characterize as one of the arts' "signature pedagogies." Souleles (2013) chronicles this pedagogy in art and design all the way back to the thirteenth century (p. 244). Even when a student's learning moved from the craftsman's workshop into formalized

school settings and the mode of teaching became increasingly prescriptive, the master-apprentice model pedagogy endured. Souleles points out from the 1400s to the mid-1950s, the content of *what* should be taught in arts schools – in addition to the purpose of doing so – shifted dramatically; however, the pedagogy did not (p. 253).

One can see this in how arts faculty members talk about their work today. Houghton highlights CalArts as one of the "pioneering" art schools that changed its pedagogy in the late twentieth century. Though he names several cutting edge changes the school made, an example he uses is that students were either referred to as "fellow artists or mentees" (p. 14). Penn State Associate Professor William Kenyon (2010), similarly, has "always approached education and training along the lines of apprentice and master" (p. 48).

And yet, due to the merging of arts schools with universities and the changing nature of how art is assessed, Chorpening (2014) argues there is not *enough* apprenticeship in arts schools. "So as universities have faced increasing financial challenges, the demands that fine art courses place on space and teaching have been deemed somewhere between being unsustainable or simply not worth sustaining" (p. 94). Today, an individual master-apprenticeship relationship is not sustainable in higher education, yet the concept of presence remains relevant. It would seem from this study that faculty members have compensated for the loss of the master-apprentice relationship by drawing from design thinking and studio pedagogy. A pedagogy just as rich in tradition as apprenticeship, studio pedagogy was developed in Europe by the École des Beaux-Arts in the nineteenth century (Bendar and Vredevoogd, 2006) and the Bauhaus in Germany in the twentieth century (Anay & Özten, 2014). Both teachers and alumni of these world-renown schools brought their understanding of studio pedagogy to American colleges (Fricker & Fricker, 2010; Borteh, 2016). While the master-apprenticeship model is used in studio settings, there is also a strong

emphasis on collaboration and peer assessment (Kuhn, 2001). "This studio mode of learning accepts uncertainty, serendipity and happenstance as part of the nature of education, wherein the solutions are intentionally incomplete" (Crowther, 2013, p. 19). This also serves as an apt description of the nature of art-making.

Regardless of the discipline, four components of arts learning emerged from the data, each closely tied to the idea of being present with students: *creativity*, *critical thinking*, *self-knowledge*, and the *concrete skills* of the art form.

Creativity

The question of if – and, if so, how – creativity can be taught has become popular, especially after creativity was named one of the "21st century skills" necessary for American education (Partnership for 21st Century Learning website, 2015). It is clear, however, that a majority of the faculty in this study have long believed that creativity can be taught. For them, creativity is not a gift with which someone is magically blessed. Instead, it is a competency that must be understood and cultivated, and students must learn how to design the conditions for their creativity to best support their vision.

For a music professor at Afton University, one of the "main goals" for all his students was to "learn how to think outside the box [with] every assignment." This professor embedded the need to be creative into every assignment. A theatre professor from Oribel showed his students the link between their mind and body, and their creativity.

> [An essential element of my teaching is to] develop a stronger appreciation for an understanding of the relationship between their senses…, their intellectual and imaginative processes, and their creative action. But it begins with their senses.

Others spoke of the importance of understanding the context of one's creative process and

how the artist affects that context. Essentially, no art is created in a vacuum. According to

these faculty members even the presence of the artist influenced the art. This is true for film:

> [I want them to come away with a sense of] the value of creativity within any context, not just in terms of art making but the actual practical applications of creativity…[and] the relationship between making, producing, and thinking…

For theatre:

> [A big part of my own teaching is] getting the students to be aware of themselves as part of the context and their own self-awareness as part of the context. When you begin to change your body, you change your perception of yourself. People actually can't at first hear that their voices have changed. They continue to hear themselves as they believe themselves to be. They also become aware of the history of their habits [that limit] their ability to communicate with others and to be present to others. So as the teaching affects self-awareness, their context for learning new things and developing further changes.

For music:

> It's not cognitive. It's right brain, not left brain. It's experiential learning through the body as opposed to the mind perhaps. It's not processing data. It's transforming of self, looking at personal habits.

Or for the visual arts:

> One of the things that we try to teach is how contextual the creative process is in terms of its process. So you've got an impulse or an idea, you start making something, you see what you make. Or in the case of design, you look at your visual research, it speaks back to you. You engage in a process with others. The context changes because of what you've added to what you're seeing. And then what you see and what you do after that is based on the new context…

And so if the development and understanding of creativity as a unique process for

each person is a part of learning the arts, one of the important questions that MOOCs must

answer for these faculty was best articulated by one art professor: "Could we use this

successfully to teach creative practice in the arts?"

Critical Thinking

Understanding that context is an integral part of art-making also leads students to

think more deeply about the art they see and the art they create. Respondents spoke of the

ability to think critically as a vital element of being an artist. A film professor at McIntosh

College said he wanted his students to know more than the mechanics of making a movie.

> My goal is to have my students make something *and* think
> critically through what they're making….It isn't just about
> pushing a button. Yes, there's a camera and there's an
> instruction manual, but I hope that my students are situating
> what they do in some kind of critical tradition and thinking
> about creative models and that is integrated with the
> hardware…that it's not just "push this to do this," but there's
> reasoning behind pushing button X or button Y.

This desire for students to know and question their place in an artistic – and broader –

context extended across all the artistic domains represented in this study. It was required

knowledge to create and consume art. As explained by an art professor at McIntosh, it is

necessary that "the work of art…be situated within its cultural context…." It was his job to

teach his students "how an object is the unique product of a particular time and a particular

place and a particular culture" and then get "the students to go from the culture back to the

work of art but also go from the work of art into the culture."

Possessing a historical perspective also mattered to a music professor from Afton.

> I want them to have a stronger grasp on [music] theory and
> technical theory of what's going on, as well as an
> understanding to some kind of historical reference of what
> we're doing aesthetically so that they don't think that they're
> inventing all this stuff without any knowledge of what's
> happened in the past.

Having a strong grasp of the historical context of a movie was not only evidence of knowing

a film for this Emberton professor, but of a new way of thinking overall.

> If I'm doing my job, they're able to put themselves in a place
> of empathy with the original or the intended audience for that
> work of art, to understand how it works, to actually feel it and
> also to reverse engineer the strategies, the techniques on
> screen. That's the big thing. If they're able to do that, then
> the benefit is that they're…thinking outside of themselves.

Another way respondents talked about context and critical thinking coming together

was in changing how students "see." For example, as a theatre design professor on a liberal

arts campus, she was more interested in opening her students' eyes than she was in creating

the next great costume designer. For her, "the most important thing…as a design teacher is

that [the students] see better, that they see more, that they think about looking, really looking

more and asking questions about what it is they see." And as if out of a scene from *The Devil*

Wears Prada, this professor wants her students to question the sources of their own creative

vision.

> I would say that costume design is only an excuse for getting
> them to look around at the world more….So opening their
> eyes to be critical about who is providing visual information
> to you and where it's coming from. What the reasons are that
> they may be wanting you to buy into this particular notion
> that everybody's gotta wear pink this year, for instance.

Critical thinking skills do not just help students see more of the world, it also helps them see

deeper into the art they are studying.

> So what I say to my students at the beginning of each class is,
> "What I hope is that you will go into [Japanese or Chinese
> art] galleries and you'll be able to…remember the cultural
> forces that shaped these works of art well enough that you'll
> have a context for it. Instead of rushing just to the
> Impressionist galleries or the Contemporary galleries, you'll
> linger in the Chinese galleries or the Japanese galleries or the
> Buddhist galleries, and you remember something about what

> is going on with the image or the work of art. They're not going to remember 15 years from now the name of a woodblock print artist, but if they remember that woodblock print is Japanese and that it reflects something, then I've accomplished something.

In the context of arts learning, critical thinking was more than developing an analytical perspective. For these faculty members, critical thinking represented an opening of the mind. Students with this skill not only have the ability to change their own perspective, but that perspective becomes more complex and nuanced. In addition, this ability allows students to examine themselves in a deeper way, and self-knowledge is a vital characteristic of an artist.

Finding One's Voice

Faculty members in this study emphasized the importance of training students to establish and listen to their own artistic voice. To do this, a personal connection between student and teacher is necessary to help a student understand him or herself as a person and an artist in order to create his or her best work. Clarke and Cripps (2012) define the role of the arts teacher as one who connects "creative responses, studio habits of mind and skills to the act of being an artist and developing an identity as a practitioner" (p. 114). The student also needs support in establishing boundaries between these two identities. In a 1999 study, Burgoyne, Poulin, & Rearden speak of the necessity of actors being acutely aware of the "life/theatre feedback loop" (p. 163) lest "boundary blurring" results in negative consequences on one's wellbeing. The authors suggest candid conversations between faculty and their students can help students be more aware of the psychological pitfalls of embracing a role (p. 171).

Since one of the basic tenets of being an artist is that each artist is unique, the crafting of an artistic voice was seen as a very personal and individual endeavor. According to the respondents, it has several components. First, there is a shift away from impressing the teacher and trying to do it 'right.' "I don't want them to be thinking about what I want," said an art professor. "I want them to be thinking about what they have to say. I want them to be able to begin to identify what it is they want to get out on the page or in the space." And a theatre professor put it this way:

> What I emphasize in my studio courses – particularly Directing – is their autonomy, their independence, and their own practical activity in making art. They have to do these themselves. And it's a big turning point often for them to realize they're doing that for themselves and their understanding of their audience as opposed to doing it for me.

Second, faculty members work on teaching students how to listen to themselves "non-judgmentally" and to "their individual points of view." This is so they will recognize their artistic voice when they hear it and when they feel it. As another theatre professor stated,

> I do want them to feel differently in their bodies and to be able to learn and to listen to themselves. There's a level of confidence and awareness that I'm hoping they get so that the students know how to listen using their perception."

A visual arts professor articulated the third component, which is empowering students to follow their curiosity and push their own boundaries.

> Then another thing is that they lose the fear of not knowing. In other words, that they're okay with not knowing something, that it's okay to ask questions and it's okay to not know something. It's better to be honest about not knowing something and asking questions than to pretend to know.

Each of these ingredients to discovering one's voice – shifting focus, learning to listen, and gaining courage – require the instructor not only to know a student's work, but also to know the student. Though these steps may be consistent for most art students, they certainly cannot be applied uniformly. This is where modeling and mentorship are pivotal.

Concrete Skills

As interviewees spoke about the importance of mastering the more abstract aspects of creating, they also felt it was their responsibility to make sure students have the tangible skills to actually make art. "They need to have technical skills that are involved," a music professor told me. Before anything, students "need to master that first and practice it and finding multiple ways of doing that." These skills vary depending on the art form and are extremely intricate. A dance professor at Oribel listed them in detail.

> In my technique classes, I want my students to come out with movement-based skills, which intersect the physical and the emotional and the interactive and the energetic and the intellectual. Physical in terms of their ability to encompass physical concepts, to master not just their body, but their body in interaction with physical parameters – weight, time, space, amount of effort. How do you optimally warm the muscle fibers to be most pliable and most responsive to nerves? How do you focus the mind to pick up movement from one body and transpose it into your own? How do you tune your ear to be able to…interpret from a sonic impulse into a physical impulse? How do you dance with your own weight, how do you feel the weight of other bodies around you?

This professor was able to articulate all of the separate, yet interrelated skills that go into being a dancer. These are not about one's personal attitude toward oneself or one's art; they are about what it takes to do the work of being an artist. Regardless of the whether a study participant taught at an arts focused school or non-arts focused school, they all were equally

as specific when it came to the concrete skills they wanted their students to know. Two arts professors in this study listed the following competencies. According to one, the skills included: "visual analysis, for sure; skills in understanding historical and cultural context; skills in articulating their relationship to their own work and their relationship to the work of their peers. And obviously a knowledge of relevant art history, depending upon the subject." Another faculty member cited, "Skills in creative problem solving; skills in iterative thinking; skills in developing metaphor and analogy, those things being essential in a lot of ways to our practice.

A choreography professor at Afton University wanted to give students the skills to answer key questions.

> So they want to make a work of site-specific performance art…how do you get them to feel like that's a possibility? Well, you create a series of exercises and things that they have to do to prepare so that, if they complete those things, then the actual act of creation becomes less onerous and seems more doable to them.

For a film professor from Emberton, the students in his classes needed to have "a wider vocabulary and different ways of thinking about the image and visual storytelling." With this "wider vocabulary," they can then start to craft visual stories of quality.

It is true that there is a great deal of importance placed on learning processes that could be seen as developing the soul of an artist. However, these quotes highlight the importance faculty members placed on getting their students to learn the nuts and bolts of their respective art form. The meaning behind a piece of art becomes diminished if it is executed poorly. Additionally, it does a disservice to students if they are thrust into the world without the requisite skills to actually do the work. Faculty members expressed the belief a master teacher is only as good as his or her students.

Essential Elements in Practice

A majority of the respondents in this study identified these four learning goals –

creativity, critical thinking, finding one's artistic voice, and concrete skills – as the most

important in their work as educators. However, what was even more striking are the

similarities in the *approaches* these faculty members employed to reach those goals. Regardless

of the discipline, most faculty in this study went about the art of teaching by relying deeply

on crafting spaces for students to interact with their peers and being there to provide

feedback in the moment. There was also a deep focus on collaboration as both an input and

an outcome for quality arts learning, based on the principle that art is a social event; it

requires interaction with people to truly survive and thrive. Both of these strategies required

the strong presence of a master teacher.

Teacher Responsiveness

Whether it is about getting an actor to understand the motivation of a character,

getting dancers to lose their inhibitions, or getting filmmakers to understand a scene in a

movie, teachers spoke of being in the room with students, in the moment, to respond

quickly and make adjustments. A participant who teaches acting at Oribel described how he

is physically with his students to help them through a scene when necessary.

> I'm in the actor's space, encouraging and offering ideas and
> asking questions and very quickly turning on a dime when the
> actor becomes stuck and clueless to come up with another
> alternative to open up something for them or have them look
> at a being or a moment in a different way.

A dance professor from the same school used the energy of the students in the room to craft

her dance lessons.

> I have a standard warm-up and a training process, but then when I actually teach dance phrases or dance movements, I improvise them in the moment. And I improvise them based on the feeling that I get out of a room full of dancers, similar to the way if you jumped in a circle in the middle of a party and just dance, your body will be responding to the feeling in that circle of other bodies. So I have evolved a way of teaching technique that has that as a part of the process.

Emberton is an arts-based school, so a hands-on approach is expected from faculty members whose primary task is to train artists. However, this is also the philosophy of faculty members from non-arts based schools. At Emberton University, two different professors provided examples of their teaching style that was very much based on the "signature pedagogies" (Shulman, 2005) of art and design, and allowed them to respond to their students in the moment. A film professor prided himself on being part of a department where they "try to teach film from the filmmaker perspective always, and that requires a lot of face-to-face with the students."

> In dealing with popular entertainment cinema, I think the best…way to do it is to have everybody watch it together. I get to read the room as they watch it. I have seen the film many, many times – I know there's an offensive scene coming up. How are they going to take it? What gets a laugh and what doesn't? And that, you know, that's what tells you what you need to discuss in the next lecture or the discussion. You learn about what the students need by being there with them watching the film…

A theatre professor doubted if it is possible "to teach art without actually talking to the person who made the art."

> So maybe there's a lecture and then there's individual moments that you spend with your students. You actually get to have a give and take with them about their work and what they're doing, why they're doing it, and whatever else.

Collaboration

Instead of the teacher serving as the only master in the room, most of the faculty members in this study spoke of creating spaces where everyone has something to learn and everyone has something to teach. Artistic growth comes from students embracing both roles. Respondents spoke explicitly about collaboration as a skill that they must teach to their students, as they do not instinctually know how to do it. And because "we're teaching an analog art form," in the opinion of one acting professor, "it has to be done in the classroom."

According to the respondents, collaboration is a skill that has many benefits. First, it can teach students how to listen – a skill necessary "to be part of a team and work with people" *and* to be a good artist. According to a theatre professor from Oribel College, "It's about what's happening with the other. It's the engagement of the other, and really great actors are great listeners and great reactors." It also develops physical and emotional skills for the actor. As another theatre professor put it:

> One of the big principles of what I teach is that one's relationship to presence, to breathing, to communication means relating to voice as a physical, rather than a mental, process. You actually need to experientially measure the distance between you and somebody else when you speak, real physical distance. And it has big impacts on people's ability to operate and be courageous enough to have intimate engagements with other people and to be open verbally in those ways.

Secondly, collaboration also helps artists learn how to lead and delegate, a much needed skill in the world of filmmaking.

> I have them do a collaborative group shooting exercises, very much involved, being there in person, talking to each other. It's about communicating, really, actually, sort of forming a kind of group and a kind of hierarchy.

Finally, collaboration can teach students to stay humble while they discover what it means to

be part of something greater than themselves. As one film professor at McIntosh stated:

> Some students have problems finding value in their own
> voice. Other students place a lot of importance on their own
> voice and perhaps need to learn more how to delegate and
> compromise and the kinds of things that can only come out
> of working with two or three other people, or 10, 11 other
> people in a space on a project within a set period of time.

Ultimately, teaching students how to learn from each other is part of the process of

becoming an artist. It directly connects to the process of a student finding his or her artistic

voice:

> I really do want students to recognize how much they can
> learn from each other. And I do think they – if the class is
> structured well, students will learn more from each other than
> they will from me.

It also connects to strengthening a student's critical thinking skills.

> I wanted the students to have the experience of seeing the
> analysis and work of art as a conversation and not as a
> pronouncement and to understand that there are various
> ways of looking at cultural production. It was important to
> work against the canonical voice, "sound of the master," all
> that kind of stuff. So you're constantly moving between the
> need to be that teacher and the need to acknowledge that
> everybody is learning together.

What is it about learning to be an artist that requires students to be so connected to

their instructor and to each other? Essentially, it is because – as a visual arts professor in this

study explained it, "art is a social process." All respondents believe art itself is about people

working in concert for the purpose of communicating with other people. Whether it be

dancers or actors crafting a work for the stage, a musician practicing to perform in front of

an audience, or a visual artist creating a piece to be viewed in a gallery, these faculty members

wanted to instill in their students the importance of collaboration as an essential element of

the artistic process. "With art," one professor said, "people have to talk to each other, and the art has to be interrogated in a social environment in order for the artist to develop their own individual voice and the toolbox – conceptually and practically – that they need."

> I do think that part of the appeal of theatre…is that there is a seminal, culminating event that takes place in which the students are acting or singing or dancing or playing or painting, etc., etc. Because the liveness, the "eventification" of our fields in the fine arts is so much a part of it.

As a theatre professor articulated, it's never just words on a page.

> One of my main goals is to have them understand that as a performance art…as an art form, and as an entertainment form [theatre] is multidimensional. So it's never just, "Wow! Isn't this playwright great? Aren't the words on the page great?" A play is nothing without the work of the set design, the directors, etc., etc., etc. Everybody has to play together.

A major takeaway of this exploration of the "essential elements" of arts pedagogy is that all the participants of this study defined quality teaching and learning in similar terms. The apprenticeship and studio model supports the pedagogy of the arts disciplines represented in this study. All faculty members took very seriously all aspects of arts teaching – from self-awareness to the specific skill sets used make an artistic product. And all interviewees believed in being in the same space with their students to give them immediate feedback and foster a culture of collaboration.

One could argue that some arts disciplines – music, visual arts, creative writing, for example – do not need to rely on faculty being in the moment or in collaboration as much as the performing arts like dance and theater – both because they are such independent endeavors and because the body is not the medium of expression. Therefore, perhaps they would be more receptive to MOOCs. However, as will be discussed below, the discipline of the faculty member in this study had nothing to do with his or her choice to engage with

MOOCs. Instead, it was how faculty members felt about the perceived differences between traditional courses and MOOCs.

"There's a MOOC, and Then There's a Real Class"

"MOOC-ish" was the way one interviewee from Oribel College described the result if he were to attempt to make one of his acting classes accessible online. Note that even after an in-depth discussion of the possibilities of MOOCs, he still did not believe his courses could become true MOOCs. What I found more remarkable was the unconscious connection he made between his opinion of MOOCs and his perceived hierarchy of arts courses. For many faculty in this study, both those who did and did not offer a MOOC, some courses better encompass the essential elements of arts pedagogy, and thus are less able to become "MOOC-ish." Basically, faculty believed the closer the class is to the "essential elements" of a true arts course, the less able it is to be taught online, especially to a group of students who have met no application criteria, as is the case with MOOCs. Although there was strong consensus among study participants as to what those elements are, where they disagreed was which classes best possess those elements. Faculty members named the polar opposite for three course characteristics: introductory vs. advanced classes, theoretical vs. applied skills, and large lecture vs. small seminar style. What is important to remember is that for faculty who did not teach MOOCs, their opinions of the pedagogical possibilities of MOOCs served either as a reason to reject them or fed their curiosity. For those who did teach a MOOC, they embraced the challenge of crafting an engaging and rigorous online space for students.

There are many ways to explain this gap in the type of courses arts faculty deemed appropriate to online learning. One reason might be ignorance about what MOOCs are and

what they can do. Another reason might be optimism and open-mindedness to the possibilities. However, I posit this dichotomous perspective comes down to an idea participants characterized as the concept of a "real" arts course. This idea came up numerous times with many participants and it was closely connected to the "essential elements" previously identified. And so the question becomes: should – and how – do we engage arts students in a learning experience that's not "real"? Coming directly out of how participants and the literature defines arts learning, what follows are faculty members' opinions on what types of arts courses might work best for MOOCs and why. Part of that discussion includes the exploration of respondents' thoughts on the "real" arts course, and why these same study participants – some of which have taught MOOCs – believe MOOCs will never be "real."

Introductory vs. Advanced

Several study participants believed courses used to introduce students to "lower level learning" and "very basic stuff" were most appropriate for MOOCs because students were not yet "learning application on that topic." They saw these courses as best suited for MOOCs because they do not require the presence of a faculty member or hands-on application or discussion to learn the content. Since so much of what a student learns in the beginning are the fundamentals, one theatre professor from Oribel went so far to say the "first two years of college…could be totally taught online." Several faculty members from different disciplines agreed. For example, an arts professor stated:

> I do think there is a technical aspect that can most definitely be taken off the plate, very basic ideas, art history, things like that, color theory, things that don't need necessarily one-on-one application.

And a theatre professor believed an online lesson is perfect so that "the basics and all that is covered, and then I can teach them how to apply that software."

> I think that that works really well because they learn the things that are in books, but they don't read books. They're really good on the Internet, and they really take it more in, and they can go back, and they can go forward and stop...

Inherent in this opinion about introductory courses was a conflation of a certain type of pedagogy and the level of complexity of the content. An arts professor from McIntosh saw "essentially what I do in a classroom…certainly with introductory courses" as no different than a MOOC. The underlying assumption seemed to be an introductory course does not require in-depth discussion or experiential learning to make its content known.

On the other hand, because of the self-sufficiency needed to complete a MOOC and the potential diversity in the student body, a few faculty members in the study believed more advanced courses are better suited for MOOCs – courses that are not "so academic." One dance professor saw MOOCs as "an environment where people already have…a conceptual base."

> So like the hip hop dancers or break dancers around the world who are sharing videos and moving their form or their conversation…to an online conversation….I think that's an example of how it works really well. So I guess what I'm saying is maybe upper-level dance education, more advanced classes, more advanced training could go online.

And though "fashioning an online course and creating an online learning environment" was a challenge in and of itself, an arts professor from Afton who taught a MOOC actually chose "lectures and supplement[ed] them with information and visuals" that would be "adventurous" to "get people's attention." For these faculty members, the emphasis was less about sharing new knowledge, and more about re-engaging students with a familiar subject matter or with a new perspective on said content.

Theory vs. Applied

Almost half of study participants believed MOOCs are better suited for "stuff that's more theoretical" as opposed to courses that either teach applied skills or require hands-on application. A dance professor referenced the presence required for arts teaching and inherent in studio pedagogy when discussing how dance could be represented in a MOOC.

> Dance history and culture and theory classes, absolutely. I mean, they can transfer almost just as easily as any kind of a theory class….But anything that's practice-based, like teaching people how to dance, teaching people movement analysis, teaching people how to teach dance, I still think you've got to have bodies interacting with one another.

An arts professor listed very specific types of courses that could work as MOOCs, none of them were practice-based.

> I think there probably are good areas that could be taught online…I think in areas of history, theory, appreciation. I took an art history survey course; I can imagine getting a lot of the same out of that.

These faculty members explained that the courses they have named as possible for MOOCs require the least amount of direct faculty supervision. Like other faculty members in the study who had not taught a MOOC, they assumed that MOOCs meant a lack of interaction with students.

However, as has been discussed, experiential learning is held up as an ideal of arts teaching and learning in every arts class. Again, we see the faculty making the assumption that MOOCs are best suited for arts courses that do not employ the best arts pedagogy. This also provides insight into why many faculty members may not feel motivated to engage with

them. As one visual art professor said, "I teach studio art mostly….That seems not

necessarily in keeping with the idea of a MOOC."

Lecture vs. Seminar

Approximately 25% of all respondents in the study stated lecture courses are better

suited for MOOCs than seminars. One music professor who taught a MOOC believed

lectures "are…basically a MOOC already. You don't even know anyone's name or anything

at that point anyway, so who cares? You might as well film it and put it online anyways."

This is almost what a film professor from Emberton did. In fact, he was more inclined to

teach his MOOC because he was piloting a new lecture course at his institution.

> That, I think, helped made it more MOOC-y, you know. So it
> was going to be designed to be pitched out to about 200
> students in a room, which is different but not so different
> from looking at a webcam….The lecture part seems a little
> more obvious because it's a presentational mode and not
> discussion-based.

A few faculty members looked at MOOCs with disdain *because* they saw them as a re-

creation of the lecture, which, as one art history faculty member noted, is "a pretty

discredited way of teaching at this point." Another put it this way:

> It might be a sort of retro in a way…sort of the like big
> lecture halls and the slides…if you're lecturing, and you're
> just clicking the thing, and pictures will go in, and people are
> just taking notes furiously, and there's an exam. But I
> definitely think that way of teaching has fallen to the wayside
> in some fields because it was less dynamic.

Even the film professor from Emberton who taught a MOOC designed from his lecture was

perturbed by how easily his students equated the two.

> I kept saying [to the student], "Oh, the classroom experience
> is different." He said, "No, I got pretty much the same thing

> out of your lectures as I did out of the MOOC." And that
> bugged me, and I don't know what to do about it.

Conversely, there were arts faculty members who chose to use lecture as their primary teaching style and saw its benefits. For these instructors, MOOCs are not the same as lectures. Being in the room with other people adds an immeasurable amount to the learning experience. An arts professor challenged the idea that lectures are purely passive. For her, MOOCs are "just me and my computer and the material, which is worse than a lecture…"

> …because you can't look around the room and go, "That
> person is engaged. I wonder what's engaging them," and
> "That person is not engaged," right? So even in a traditional
> lecture class…you could completely see when people are
> engaged, right? But as a student, you can see when that
> happens, too. I can see when somebody is getting it. And so
> that's important because I really do think that students learn
> enormously from each other.

Even with all eyes on the instructor, faculty noted that there is an element of peer pressure that supports student engagement. This type of peer effect cannot be replicated in an online environment. MOOCs also do not allow for instructors to experiment or improvise in the moment to support learning objectives. Most of the assets for a MOOC are created before the course even begins. For example, a theatre professor said she relies primarily on discussion and lecture in her classes; however, she noted that she looks for places to bring performance into the classroom, because her students study and analyze "plays and it's nice to have them embodied and give them voice and have us see them."

> I have a scene analysis and performance presentation. So they
> have to use scholarly text to inform a scene reading that they
> put up in class. They can decide if they want to [perform] the
> whole scene and then talk about it and analyze it, or they
> break it up…

"An Educational Experience, Not a College Class": Exploring the "Real"

As the previous discussion reveals, the discussion about which arts courses are best

suited for MOOCs was highly discrepant. Faculty members from four institutions across the

country and several different disciplines came to consensus on how to teach art, but they

had widely opposing thoughts on what is preferable to put online. The discrepancy is also an

indication of how little is known about MOOCs, either through willful ignorance or a failure

of faculty members' home institutions to educate them. This disagreement reveals faculty's

views on what a "real" arts course is. For some interviewees, the more advanced, hands-on,

and interactive a course is, the closer it is to embodying the essential elements of arts

pedagogy; therefore, the more real it is. These are the types of courses that demand "real

interactions with people." For others, the classes meant to instill the basics of an artistic

discipline are the ones that need the presence of a master teacher the most, and thereby are

actually more real.

Regardless of the rationale, or their experience with MOOCs, the majority of faculty

members interviewed for this study saw a fundamental difference between courses created

for MOOCs and "real" courses.

> When you say teaching the fine arts through MOOCs, I
> mean, what does that mean? Teaching at the same level as
> going to a brick-and mortar-classroom? No. A MOOC is
> never going to replace having a real artist in the room with
> other students. And for people to think that that's going to
> happen is ridiculous.

However, for some, the "unreality" of a MOOC was irrelevant. The fact that they

are not real can be the hook that brings students to an arts education, which is one of the

institutional factors that draw schools to MOOCs to begin with.

> I think it's incredible to have a really good [MOOC] class out
> there that people are like, "Well, this is great. I want to take

up a real class," which is what they'll call it. "The MOOC was
great; I wanted to apply to Afton so I can take a real class."

A film professor actually pointed out the unreality when offering his MOOC, by putting up "disclaimers saying, 'This is not equivalent to an actual college class. I hope that you enjoy and understand film better, and I hope most of all this makes you seek out more formal film education. Go see real teachers.'"

Notwithstanding the marketing potential of MOOCs, faculty members who engaged with this "unreal" form may have a greater purpose, hesitantly articulated by a dance professor at Afton University:

> Can it inspire people to want to make art? Can it inspire
> people to want to learn more about art? Can it inspire people
> to want to seek out being with artists? I believe yes. I mean,
> it's better than nothing.

Faculty Understanding of MOOCs

By the level of resistance, and even hostility, to MOOCs expressed by many respondents, it is clear that inspiration is not enough. It is also apparent not all arts courses are created pedagogically equal in the eyes of arts faculty, yet those classes are still taught. So what is it about teaching a MOOC that seems so repellant? What about them intrigues others? What follows is an exploration of what aspects of MOOC pedagogy that both attracts and repels participants in this study. Certain faculty members explained their foray into MOOCs as a way to push themselves professionally and stretch the limits of what art learning is and what it can do. Those who are repelled by them primarily worried about the lack of physical interaction and accountability, which may lead to feeling dissatisfied.

"Oh, I'm not doing that.": The Disconnect with MOOCs

Of the 12 faculty members in this study who did not teach a MOOC, 75% expressed a completely negative attitude about them and five said they have absolutely no interest in creating one. Most of the negativity was not borne from opposition to the idea of MOOCs generally. Instead, it stemmed from their inability to see an effective way to translate what they do into an online space that is open to all. A costume design professor at Emberton could not articulate the difference between a live class and a MOOC ("Is there something different about being in the room with somebody and having some kind of interpersonal relationship with them? Can you help them do something differently? I don't know."), but she knew there was one. These faculty members could not see a place for their way of teaching on any MOOC platform. Faculty members' pedagogy-based objections to MOOCs generally fell into three categories: the asynchronous nature of MOOCs, the lack of individuality in student assessment, and a real fear of instructor dissatisfaction.

Not Being in the Moment: As was discussed above, the cornerstone of arts pedagogy is the relationship between the teacher and apprentice, and the relationship among the apprentices. This is an offshoot of the nature of art itself, which consists of "actual experiences that are spatial and tactile. If you pick up a piece of ceramic, it's very different from just looking at that piece of ceramic."

The faculty who did not see themselves teaching a MOOC questioned if true art-making could take place and real learning could happen without being in the same room as their students. For example, a theatre professor at Afton teaches "hands-on applications like drafting, welding, and sculpture," and he believed "you can't tangibly teach [online] because

they're off the computer." A dance professor even equated learning from MOOCs to

learning from exercise videos.

> There are things that a teacher will say in a community of
> students who study with them on a regular basis that you
> can't get from one yoga video that you keep playing over and
> over again. [The one yoga video] may give you a little bit of
> alignment stuff, but a person in the room is going to come
> and see your position and make minute changes, actually
> physically touch your body so that you can understand where
> you're supposed to be directing your energy at a certain time.

Unconvinced faculty members also believed the dynamic between students could not

be duplicated in a MOOC. And because that is so necessary to the artistic learning process

(whether it be in a studio or a lecture hall), MOOCs are simply not worth pursuing. One

theatre professor could not "wrap [his] brain around" trying to put "the engagement in the

classroom, the chemistry between scene partners or ensemble members in a scene" online.

He described it as, "too large and difficult a concept for me to kind of invite into my brain."

And a film professor doubted that the "alchemy of a small class" could be put online at all.

> I'm always open to, as I think we should be, introducing
> different materials once I get to know the students. It
> wouldn't necessarily *not* work online… But again it's
> something about…they respond to each other instantly,
> right? They just start firing sometimes and talking to each
> other. Certain interests come out, and I don't know if that
> would happen online.

Accountability: Researchers and designers are currently grappling with quality student

assessment and accountability for all MOOCs (Glance, Forsey & Riley, 2013; Karpicke and

Roediger, 2008; Ho et al., 2015). But these issues become particularly complex when one

includes the arts into the discussion. For arts faculty in this study, the traditional testing

methods most commonly used in MOOCs were in tension with their pedagogical

approaches. Even before deciding if an answer was right or wrong (a question in the arts

with this type of answer is already rare), arts professors focused on getting to know each

student as an individual. Due to this, they "worry about anything that's scaled up and

massive that doesn't have the opportunity for the student to have their voice heard and

discussed."

This level of focus is described as necessary in all types of arts courses. One visual

arts professor at McIntosh spoke about this individual assessment when it comes to writing:

> We spend a lot of time meeting with students outside of class
> about their writing and in conversation that takes place in
> comments on the writing.

One reason why his institution decided not to pursue MOOCs was because "there didn't

seem yet to be a way of doing that [meeting with students] in the context of a MOOC," at

least based on what McIntosh understood MOOCs to be. For a film professor at Emberton,

having the faculty member in the room with students forces them to think more critically

about both the art and their own reactions to it.

> If I'm showing [a movie] in a classroom, I take away a little
> bit of the ability [of the students] to simply reject the film as
> bad. Instead of, "I don't understand this film," it could be,
> "Oh, this sucks. I'm not going to bother with that." But being
> in a classroom, having me there, that changes the way the
> people experience the art.

And for a theatre professor, what can be assessed online is not really what matters to be a

theatre artist.

> I mean, a great audition on tape and on the screen does not
> mean that the actor in the room can be a collaborator, can be
> an ensemble member, can really resonate and amplify her
> voice and movement skills to fill a 1,500-seat house.

Teacher Satisfaction: There is a common misconception that university faculty do not

like to teach – that teaching sits at the bottom of their priority list. Though there is plenty of

research to refute this belief (Bain, 2004; Beyer, Taylor & Gillmore, 2013), the perception

persists. I did not realize I fell prey to this stereotype until I noticed my surprise to

interviewees' discussing losing their enjoyment of teaching by moving classes online. It

becomes clear through these interviews that not only do the faculty in this study think deeply

about teaching, they enjoy it. Faculty members in this study were happy to "watch the

learning process" and watch their students "grow." Study participants who think of MOOCs

as a "very different teaching experience" articulated a fear they would lose this joy by not

being in the same physical space with their students. For example, one theatre professor

believed she would be cheated out of the pleasure of teaching if all she does is create classes

to be put online.

> Part of teaching is watching them fail and succeed…. You
> don't get that online. Without that experience, I don't know if
> I'd want to teach. I guess that's probably the biggest thing. As
> an educator, I don't know if I get the same experience
> creating a class as I do teaching a class.

In addition, study respondents relished the opportunities to build relationships with

their students. They were able "to know their [students'] personalities" and "their likes and

dislikes." Being in the classroom with them allowed the faculty member to respond to

students' needs in real time and enabled them to do things like "bring in things to the

classroom because someone says this, and I see, 'Oh, they're really interested in this because

they're all talking about it.'" It was unclear to at least one professor that she would care for

her online students the same way she does with the ones she sees in-person.

> But I think as a teacher, I think that there's a level of
> investment that I then have for these students that are in
> front of me that I would imagine would be like: "Oh, that
> person is interesting, but I don't really know much about
> them."

"A New Kind of Teaching": Engaging with MOOCs

Based on how the reluctant faculty members in this study articulated their concerns, one could be easily convinced that these arts teachers have no business engaging in MOOCs. On their face, MOOCs go against everything that is sacred and powerful about art and art pedagogy. However, 50% of the participants of this study expressed either a positive or neutral opinion about MOOCs. What was most interesting is that their reasons were quite similar to the reasons why others chose *not* to teach MOOCs: the desire to stay motivated and engaged. The faculty members who were interested in MOOCs wanted to challenge themselves toward "new kind of teaching" by creating "a whole new model" that breaks away from the "traditional language of the artist that believes in the sort of sanctity of being present in the world and often with other people." They wanted to do this for the purpose of reaching new learners. For example, a dance professor from Emberton thought MOOCs offered "interesting issues to be tackled."

> I'm interested in MOOCs because [they] force you to decide what is it that is irreplaceable and that requires physical proximity and presence and interaction, and what might actually benefit from the not having that, and then everything in between.

Many felt it was a way to challenge themselves professionally. As one art professor articulated it, teaching a MOOC would force him to not only think about both his discipline and his teaching in a new way:

> I was interested in MOOCs as perhaps a way – if not just to change my own teaching, but a way to at least think about other pedagogical approaches to the teaching of non-Western art.

Another art professor from Afton felt a moral imperative to engage the students of her MOOC with the same intellectual rigor as she did the students in her classroom.

> I felt really strongly that I needed to challenge myself in that environment to speak as clearly and as approachably as possible, to not withdraw into the Ivory Tower, if you will, in terms of language, but on the other hand to not dumb down the ideas and concepts. That it wasn't about saying, "Oh, this is art *appreciation* rather than art history and art practice." Or, "This is only what *those* people can understand." But that this is actually the field.

Conclusion

Although the structures of higher education have necessitated the reduction of the master-apprentice relationship, faculty members in this study still placed a great deal of importance on being present for each student in their education. Since one of the goals of MOOCs is to reach as many people as possible, this inherently goes against the pedagogy that forms the foundation of the arts.

However, through conversations with participants of this study, what became clear were the nuances in faculty members' reactions to MOOCs that reveal the breach is perhaps not as wide as originally perceived. These interviewees spoke about specific and unique skills they wanted to teach their students, an emphasis on collaboration as a both a means (by which to teach the arts) and an end (because art is meant to be shared with an audience). These ideas are not necessarily contradictory to MOOC pedagogy, and so we must go deeper to understand how faculty members understand MOOCs.

When we do that, a powerful finding to come out of this exploration is the idea of "real." Specifically, MOOCs were not perceived as being as "real" as brick-and-mortar courses, perhaps because they do not inherently support the essential elements of arts pedagogy. However, different faculty members revealed their own biases as to which types of arts courses are more real than others, and there is a wide range. This is evidence that those who care about bringing the arts into MOOCs have to work to make them more

"real" for arts faculty, and making that possible may mean different approaches for different faculty members.

In the end, we must keep in mind the pedagogical motivations for those who are open to MOOCs and those who oppose them are quite similar. It comes down to a desire to engage with their students and to impart vitally important lessons about art. Those who expressed reluctance to teach MOOCs expressed a concern that this "unreal" space would not be able to engage the student-artist. Those who have – or want to – work with MOOCs see them as not yet reaching their full pedagogical potential. These faculty members want to create something that has the ability to engage with students in an unprecedented way.

CHAPTER 6: THE POLITICAL FACTORS

Though participants in this study seemed relatively independent when it comes to what and how they teach, context matters. When designing this study, I believed faculty members from arts-focused schools (Afton University and Oribel College) would be more open to pedagogical innovation than those from non-arts focused schools (McIntosh College and Emberton University) because they would feel less marginalized as arts faculty on an arts campus. Since they were part of institutions where arts was an integral part of the mission, I wondered if they suffered from the type of financial and curricular sidelining that occurs with the arts in other types of colleges. It was conceivable they might be more willing to experiment with new pedagogy because they would have less at stake professionally, and perhaps receive more support from their institution.

I found, though, that while pressures and priorities set by the school do play a role in faculty decision-making about MOOCs, the dynamic is far more nuanced than I first imagined. Factors such as the institution's motivations for choosing or not choosing to offer MOOCs, the priorities of school leadership, the school's financial and human resources, and how faculty are able to shape their own reputation in light of their choices appear to be more important than whether or not they work at an arts school.

With regards to reputation, these faculty members seemed to consider the specific ways their students and their colleagues might perceive their participation with MOOCs, and what that could mean for them as educators and artists. The interviewees responded to this by citing similar talking points to garner support for one side or the other, and spun their choices to various constituencies: students and colleagues, for example. Faculty members were affected by their context in regards to their participation in MOOCs and, in turn, they influenced their context right back.

How these aforementioned factors influence the thoughts and actions of study participants can be understood through the lens of Bolman and Deal's political frame. In this case, faculty members' home institutions are both "arena[s] for internal politics and political agents with their own agendas, resources, and strategies" (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 238). By making meaning of MOOCs by considering what their institution can and cannot offer them in terms of resources, by assessing how they might be perceived by their colleagues, interviewees view their schools as a political ecosystem where they both have to "depend on their environment for the resources they need to survive" (p. 228) and have to take into account possible "conflicting preferences" of different groups (p. 226).

Regardless of whether an institution decided to partner with a MOOC provider (Emberton and Afton) or not (McIntosh and Oribel), I discovered interviewees referenced similar factors as influences on their thinking about MOOCs. For example, though McIntosh chose not to work with MOOCs, an arts professor there regretted that the opportunity was not made available to interested faculty members. Another visual arts professor from Oribel did not think her school had the technical capacity to produce quality MOOCs, though the school is well known for its breadth of subject areas and high caliber of instruction. So it seems the politics of higher education did affect faculty members' decision-making processes, but the politics are not solely based on a fear of further marginalization.

What follows is a deeper examination of the factors that play a part in the respondents' meaning making that reside outside of their personal views. I highlight three of the factors that respondents in this study named most prominently: their home institutions' motivations, leadership, and their school's resources and how they are allocated. Faculty members not only identified how they are subject to these factors, but also how other stakeholders perceived them as participants or non-participants in MOOCs.

Institutional Motivations

Just as there are a myriad of personal motivating factors that influence individual faculty's choices, the reasons behind their parent institution's choices about MOOCs were varied, and seemed to shape the lens through which faculty view MOOCs. Interviewees identified three main motivators that affect their institution's choices: college access and affordability, branding, and the potential of MOOCs to aid in recruiting and admissions.

Affordability and Accessibility Concerns in Higher Education

The rise of MOOCs in the early 2010s was in some ways a response to the national call for financial and quality accountability. Higher education has been "asked to answer for what they do, who they are, who they serve, how much they cost, and what standards they meet" (O'Connor, 2011) by those within and without the academy (Baum, et. al., 2013). A film professor from McIntosh read "opinion pieces about the value of higher education" almost "every week." They were "about the price of college, the availability of scholarships, materials being taught and how much they do or don't reflect contemporary global society." MOOCs were one way to respond to these questions by allowing students access to high-quality education with no financial barriers (Kolowich, 2013). Faculty members of schools that both did and did not offer MOOCs were able to identify what one film professor deemed, "the fundamental goods" of opening up access to quality education. An arts professor from Afton who was integral to bringing MOOCs to her campus explained her rationale:

> I think [the choice to create MOOCs] came out of a growing
> imperative around issues of affordability and accessibility in
> higher education, and especially in arts education.

She went on to describe how MOOCs allowed Afton to not only answer the national call for

accountability and expand its pedagogical repertoire, but also contribute to the world in a

positive way.

> As elite private educational institutions, they have a
> responsibility to give back to the world to some degree, and
> MOOCs are a good way to do that. You reach a lot of
> people. You receive a lot of data and response. You look
> nice giving something for free when so much of what else
> that you do is very inaccessible to most.

Ironically, because Afton University offers MOOCs, it is now part of an even more elite

league of colleges – or "brand names" as one participant called them – that can maintain

their prestigious reputation while still being altruistic by essentially "giving away" their

product.

Being Branded a Disruptor

When MOOCs became part of the mainstream academia landscape in 2012, they

were labeled higher education's latest disruptor (Chung, 2015; Meister, 2015). Respondents

in this study were able to identify how their institutions answered that call. Some believed in

this innovation and wanted to be a part of it. For example, one of Afton's senior dance

faculty members was adamant he wanted his university and his department "to be seen as

being on the forefront of education and technology and relevant." For the faculty of

Emberton, producing MOOCs was 'pitched' to them as the thing that would keep them "on

the cutting edge of education."

In the case of McIntosh College, they were courted with the promise of being a

disruptor. A theatre professor recalled it this way:

> We're all pretty sure that one of the reasons that [the MOOC provider] was so very keen on having us join is because McIntosh has a very high reputation in terms of teaching humanities, and the early courses were all mostly technology courses. I think they were very keen on having us join to both innovate – how to do that online – and also to prove or send a message that it *could* be done online.

Other schools wanted nothing to do with this disruption, or even believed in it. "I don't know that they are the disruptor of higher education that everyone believes them to be," said one art professor of MOOCs. Even a film professor who taught a MOOC did not necessarily buy into the hype:

> There was a big push to get behind it and talk about it as this great new frontier. And so I did a couple of presentations where I was: "Well, it's not going to change the world, but it's a good thing that we're doing." And I'm not sure that was on message…I mean, we were supposed to be presenting it as, "this is the future."

Regardless, study participants who decided not to teach MOOCs could see their allure. One of McIntosh's theatre professors described how their sexiness was both attractive and unnerving.

> Well, the lure is because it's trendy. I mean, I think this was part of why people are a little bit suspicious of it. I think there was an argument made at the time that if we didn't get involved, we would lose the opportunity to shape something that was inevitably going to kind of take over higher education on some level.

With hindsight, one can safely say that MOOCs have not caused the annihilation of higher education as we know it, even though they have created strong ripple effects. It is still too early to tell if Emberton and Afton will be forever known as "disruptors."

Advertising and Admissions

Several participants of this study were aware of the international allure of MOOCs and those who taught a MOOC saw it as a benefit. According to one theatre professor, the leadership at Emberton University actually pitched MOOCs to faculty as a way for "Emberton [to] interact globally with global students." Some faculty members whom I interviewed agreed. One music professor thought teaching a MOOC was "cool" because it gave people all over the world "a window into this campus." These courses not only placed their school on a global platform, but they put the faculty members who teach them there as well.

> I made a little tiny five-minute presentation to some folks at an arts institution in Hong Kong, and that just generated all kinds of discussion and interest. And the head of an arts school in Singapore had taken my [MOOC], and so immediately she had an understanding of what I do. I'm hopeful that more people know…that we're interested in the world and we're in a sense interested in being a part of the dialogue, a national, global dialogue.

Due to the worldwide reach, in addition to the amount of money and time it takes to produce one of these courses, a lot of thought went into which courses were chosen to represent the institution. These courses not only had the potential to share the best of the school with the world, but also served as "windows" into what the school could offer. In the case of Afton University, the courses chosen to represent the school were done so very carefully. The arts professor who helped bring MOOCs to her campus explained the school's justification:

> I think it is worth saying those courses were chosen very strategically. The music course was chosen because that was the most logical thing to inhabit this environment. And so that seemed like, "Of course you can probably do that in a MOOC." My course was chosen because it led from some of our strengths…and allowed us to be able to take those

> strengths into a broader environment. And the [third] course
> was chosen kind of counter-intuitively. That was one where
> we're going to say, "No. We're going to choose the thing that
> you would say, 'you absolutely cannot imagine teaching [this
> content] as related curriculum online,' and let's see what we
> can do."

Featuring Afton's best even influenced pedagogical choices within the courses.

> Every module or every week contained an interview with a
> guest artist talking about their work. And I put that in there
> because I wanted to showcase the diversity of practitioners
> and work because I wanted to showcase Afton to a certain
> extent.

Emberton also used certain courses as a part of a MOOC "marketing plan" for the

university.

> A really important part of us using [a particular MOOC
> provider] was promotion of the university, especially
> overseas, to make Emberton just a better-known brand. And
> the film department has kind of some recognition, at least in
> the U.S., but I wanted to clarify that and open it up.

Throughout many of the interviews, a distinction was made between MOOCs and

"real" courses, as discussed in a previous chapter. In most settings, it was seen as a

detriment. However, when it came to using MOOCs as a recruitment tool for admissions,

every faculty member in this study who taught a MOOC mentioned the distinction in a

positive light.

> It looks like you're maintaining your face in the forefront and
> to teach a free class out there is a good way to bring students.
> As a recruitment tool, I think it's incredible to have a really
> good class out there that people are like, "Well, this is great. I
> want to take up a real class," which is what they'll call it. "The
> MOOC was great. I wanted to apply to Afton so I can take a
> real class."

A professor from Afton who taught a MOOC used it partly to "find more people"

with the requisite foundation skills to apply to the school, "because there are skills that were

not being taught at the high school level." He saw MOOCs as a way to say to perspective

students: "Hey, learn this and then apply…please." Other study respondents echoed his

sentiments. They said things such as, "We found a lot of people apply to the school because

of it, which was really cool, especially to our program" and, "People started including the

final project of the MOOC in their application to the school." An Emberton professor "had

a student or two that took my MOOC in high school and then came to Emberton."

Essentially, "It just improved the quality of the people who applied."

For all that was – and still is – unknown about the potential of MOOCs, the

respondents had some confidence in the use of MOOCs as a marketing and recruitment tool

and saw that as a primary reason to teach them. In the eyes of the professors in this study

who taught a MOOC, that belief paid off.

Leadership

In all of the schools represented in this study, the institution's leadership played a

pivotal role in how the participants perceive MOOCs. Because this pedagogy was perceived

as so new and yet so important, participants articulated a need for significant instructional,

financial, and logistical support from the administration. As one participant put it, "In order

for me to develop a MOOC, yeah, somebody would have to make it interesting." She went

on to describe her experience trying to take part in her school's initiative.

> I didn't even have any feedback as to why [a proposal to
> teach a MOOC] wasn't accepted. I didn't have any feedback,
> and I didn't have any real interaction with anybody that had
> expertise. So even if my department had said, "Hey, it's not
> really ready for this platform," or "We think that you're going
> to lose something in the content. Here, work with this expert
> in online education for a semester," anything, anything,
> anything might have kept me motivated. But all I got was a
> "no," and like I said, I was busy. The system probably could

> have been more supportive of making both a financial as well as a time incentive. If I had had a teaching release for a semester and could have worked on developing a course, yeah, I would have done that.

In contrast to that experience, one faculty member at Emberton received a specific request from the school's president to create a MOOC; that is why he did it. Before that time, he "hadn't heard of MOOCs."

> [Emberton's president] wanted to be in their first liberal arts university [pool], so he needed to get faculty to offer classes. He didn't ask me for a particular class; he just pitched the idea broadly.

Because the president wanted Emberton "to be one of the first universities" to be part of the MOOC revolution, it became the reality, regardless of what faculty members knew about it. Faculty from Emberton remembered the president "believed in it" and had the idea that if they didn't "sign on now," the school would be "behind the ball." Another faculty member remembered hearing about it in a meeting.

> The president had already secured faculty who were going to teach the first iteration of this. I think it was three or four faculty, so it wasn't really like, "Do you like this, or don't you like this?" It's like, "This is what we're doing."

It also seems the president's determination to be the "first" alienated some faculty members who may have wanted to participate.

> I think [Emberton's president] actually did invite faculty, and I thought, "Well, if you had invited me, I wouldn't have said no."

This drive to be at the front of the line seems to have come at the expense of creating buy-in and finding all potential allies in this endeavor.

Faculty members from Oribel College highlighted how the disconnect between the administration's word and deed left them with a feeling of distrust. Despite communicating

its desire to explore the possibility of MOOCs, Oribel's leadership had not put any systems

in place to move their MOOC initiative forward. A dance professor recalled questioning

their commitment:

> The former administration was pushing verbally in the direction of MOOCs but was not actually offering any incentive structure for that to happen, so of course things were going very slowly. The new administration is just now coming onboard, and they've been dealing with a lot of things. MOOCs have been just a conversation – a word that floats around meetings thus far.

The faculty members interviewed from Oribel revealed a lack of faith in the ability of its

leadership to follow through, which they then interpreted as lack of interest in MOOCs.

> I don't know that my institution would be open to it, although frankly, they are talking about ways of how can we better leverage the assets that we have, both in terms of the human assets and the physical assets and how can we increase revenue.

Indecisiveness from the school's leadership has the potential to make faculty

members even more wary, as was the case with McIntosh College. This was a school that

chose not to offer MOOCs. In addition to faculty members' concerns with the entire

enterprise, lack of clarity from their president did not engender confidence.

> I think the other issue was that, you know, we started out saying we were going to work with [one MOOC provider], and then suddenly, the administration decided they didn't like [that one] and they wanted us to work with [another MOOC provider]. And I think there was some skepticism of why did you want us to join [the first MOOC provider] in September, and then by December why did you want us to join [the second MOOC provider]?

Similar to Emberton, Afton University chose to have some of its academic

administrators pilot MOOCs for the purpose of not placing the onus of experimentation on

the faculty. A theatre design professor actually felt "no pressure to do it yet. In fact, there's

the opposite of that. They're very careful." One of the first MOOC teachers explained it this

way:

> There's this new thing happening. Rather than saying, "Oh, somebody else go do it." I did say to my faculty, "I'm going to ask us all to engage more thoughtfully with these new models of teaching and learning. And to prove to you that I will understand in the end just how much work it is, just how complicated it is, and all of the issues that arise, I'm going to do it myself so that I'll know what I'm talking about." So there was definitely that sort of sense of leadership at an institutional level.

Whether colleges chose to offer MOOCs or not, interviewees from all the schools in

this study interpreted the spoken and unspoken messages from their leadership and blended

them with their personal beliefs to draw their own conclusions. For some, school leadership

was the deciding factor when their own positions were undecided. As with any initiative, it is

important university leaders not only clearly articulate what they are advocating, but why. If

that is not done, faculty members will fill in the gaps in communication with their own

opinions and preconceptions.

Resources

Creating a quality MOOC takes a great deal of resources: time, money, space,

equipment, expertise in film production, editing, instructional design, and web design. It

requires a large amount of creative energy on behalf of the faculty to creatively reconfigure –

or even invent – content for these courses. And finally, it necessitates having the political

capital to obtain resources. Even those study participants with limited exposure to MOOCs

understood how much it takes to produce one. And from the very start, they understood

that it must be a priority of the leadership first.

> If the institutions want things to go in this direction and they want the change to happen with existing faculty, then they have to make a way for the incredible amount of work it's going to take to research and experiment and figure out how to work the technology and figure out how to do it. They have to figure out a way to pay people to do that and not for it to just be extra work that you're doing for the same money that your colleague is making teaching what they already know.

However, study participants were suspicious of their home institution's ability to provide all those resources adequately. Whether it be the technological muscle to create the website, the human knowledge to adequately design an engaging learning space, or the financial support to provide to faculty to take on this extra work, respondents from schools that did not offer MOOCs did not have much hope their schools could summon the resources necessary to do it. Even at the schools that did offer MOOCs, their faculty members noted limitations on both the production capabilities of their institutions and the amount of time made available to develop their courses. A technical design professor in the theatre department of Afton provided a daunting inventory of what would be needed for him to produce a quality MOOC.

> I'd like an HD camera. I need a sound rig, and I need two people to run these things. And then I would like to get a stipend too. You know, because it's a lot of work to put six weeks of class or 12 weeks of class…. In a perfect world there'd be a room you can go into and check out [equipment], especially with the audio. Audio is the big problem. Go in there and have an audio engineer, just someone who knows what they're doing, a boom [mic], and stuff like that…

Unfortunately, this did not necessarily translate to actually possessing those physical resources. He went on to say, "that doesn't exist. Someone will have to come to your office and set up all the lights and set up that…" In fact, it was Afton's acknowledgement of the gap between what they had versus what they needed that motivated them to partner with an

established MOOC provider. One professor admitted the school has invested "most of our

technology dollars in production for the arts and less of our technology dollars in teaching

and learning tools."

> And so when we began to think about how we could explore
> bringing some of our curriculum online, it was clear that we
> didn't have very many tools in-house to do so.

It is interesting to note that she did not discuss how Afton considered the resources

of money or time in the development of these courses. Instead, she highlighted that she

chose to teach a MOOC because she knew she "was going to rely a lot on [her] own

resources," so she wanted to "see how safe it was before I started involving other faculty or

just anybody." Instead of using the other faculty or additional funds, she volunteered her

own time as an administrator and a faculty member.

This was in stark contrast to McIntosh College, which did not want to work with a

MOOC partner partly because of what one respondent called, the "typical McIntosh point

of view."

> We wanted to do it our way rather than having some kind of
> model imposed upon us. That comes with a kind of naïveté
> towards the amount of technological assistance doing the
> MOOC actually has.

The ignorance of McIntosh's administration about what it means to produce a quality

MOOC may be due to the fact that the first MOOCs produced were essentially videotaped

lectures, with a camera in the back of a classroom and a faculty member going about their

normal teaching practice. It could be easy to assume that creating this type of course would

be relatively simple and undisruptive. However, their faculty members understood McIntosh

did not have the human resources to make a successful MOOC on its own.

> McIntosh does not have the staff to support a MOOC. I
> mean our academic technology people can barely support

> what we're doing at the moment…. I mean, we actually don't have a professional designer at McIntosh, for example…. We have people who can code and people who can develop software, but the software then needs to go through a kind of design process.

What was missing at his institution was the necessary human knowledge to create something that would be pedagogically and artistically "designed."

Study respondents from Oribel also knew the technical requirements for a MOOC; unfortunately, they had little faith in the institution's capacities.

> I will say that my institution…in my opinion, we are really far behind a lot of what's going on.

Not only were they overdue for technological updates, but Oribel suffered in the past from a lack of will to invest. One participant described it as a "slow acceptance." Having said that, she did have hope due to a change in leadership. "The problems with our IT department and the whole infrastructure has been called out by the college president and the provost as one of the primary things that needs to be dealt with." Harkening back to the section above, this interviewee emphasized institutional leadership needing to prioritize investing in people as well as in dollars. A film professor from Emberton also highlighted the connection between leadership and resources by praising his school's leadership for being "really fabulous" at providing the right kind of support. He did not "feel compelled to do things absolutely on the highest technological level as long as I feel that what I'm doing is really high quality in terms of my own work."

There is also another side to the discussion about resource gathering and allocation. Respondents expressed concern about the limited amount of capital their institutions have and a lack of knowledge about how to best use it with regards to producing MOOCs. This could be exacerbated by the newness of MOOCs. However, they also expressed

apprehension – even fear – when discussing what it *means* to be – or not to be – the recipient of those resources ("Is my job in danger if I don't start doing it?"). This anxiety came from the extreme language used to describe MOOCs' beginnings. Once upon a time, the mere existence of MOOCs meant the death of higher education (Friedman, 2013; Brooks, 2012; Leckart, 2012). If a university wanted to be a part of this "revolution," its faculty members perceived participation as a dichotomous choice – you're either in or you're out.

Though the power of MOOCs to change the higher education landscape has lessened, the hyperbolic language translated into an uneasiness about being "left out," even when respondents were not quite sure from what they were being excluded. By not teaching a MOOC, they feared being seen as adversaries against those who were willing to participate in this new endeavor in the political arena of their institution. What they did know is that their colleagues might and did receive more resources for these courses. These resources took various forms…from greater reputation:

> If we're going to be left out…I think, I don't know if you want to call it a fear or apprehension or whatever, that maybe faculty members who became involved in MOOCs and teaching courses for thousands of students would somehow gain more resources or prominence than other faculty members who didn't, you know.

To technological support:

> I mean, we do have six courses online…and those courses have been supported fairly heavily, and there's video person and audio person. But the rest of the faculty, I mean, it hasn't been opened up to the rest of us.

To financial compensation:

> And I wouldn't be surprised if there's also additional monetary incentive because…you can teach additional classes for additional money here, but they discourage tenure-track faculty from doing this.

Not only was there a fear that certain faculty members received a bigger piece of the resource pie, but those who did not participate might be burdened with more of the traditional workload so MOOC faculty could be afforded more time to develop their courses.

> I'm just speculating here, but there may be people who – if they weren't interested in the MOOCs – were more concerned about the diversion of resources. I mean we have a relatively small faculty. And if a faculty member – or two or three to five – decided to offer a MOOC, it may have been a case that during the time they're developing that, they're actually teaching fewer other courses. It seems to us from what we heard that it takes quite a bit of time to get these things up and running.

If even a small percentage of an arts department decided to develop MOOCs, that might mean the workload for traditional courses would shift to those faculty members who chose not to participate. In effect, they would be punished for not getting on board.

It can be argued that much of the fear around resource allocation and its meaning comes from confusion about what exactly MOOCs mean. As one dance professor put it, faculty members' objections to the changes MOOCs bring is "just a bunch of frankly paranoid academics worried that they're going to lose their jobs. Everyone is getting all whipped up for nothing…." It seemed easier for him to dismiss these concerns, as he was one of the few at his institution who taught a MOOC. But even he admitted to doing so "to make sure that my field, dance, at my school was involved in it. I didn't want us to be left behind in a sense." He disregarded his colleagues' nervousness about being marginalized, thought that is exactly why he chose to teach a MOOC.

> I initially volunteered at Afton to do this because I wanted to make sure that my school got promoted. Well, Afton is known around the world frankly because of animation, film, and visual arts. But its most famous alumni come from those

schools. And so…I knew this was an opportunity to bring my
school to the world.

And he was not alone. The film professor from Emberton who taught a MOOC
chose to do so to garner greater prestige for his department. He was proud of the way they
"blend production and film history," especially at a liberal arts school (as opposed to a
conservatory-style film school) and "so the more that I can just show other people this is
what we do, the better." Aligning one's goals with one or more of their school's institutional
motivations could of course aid a department or a particular faculty member in receiving
resources. According to an arts professor,

> If you teach at a small liberal arts college in a topic that is not
> mainstream—economics, math, English, something like
> that—you also have to be a bit of a proselytizer for your field.

Another study participant could see the benefit of going against her own personal and
pedagogical objections of MOOCs for the purpose of better aligning herself with the
school's leadership.

> I wonder…in some ways it would get the department more
> on [the president's] map in terms of the Emberton that he
> envisions, right? And it would probably keep the department
> more involved in conversations that are happening about
> Emberton and where it's going, etc., etc. So I think in one
> way that would be helpful.

Threaded throughout this discussion on resources was deep insecurity about how the
allocation of resources reflected faculty members' status on their campus, regardless of
school type. For some, this concern was connected to already feeling at-risk on their
campuses because they are arts faculty members. For others, it was also exacerbated by lack
of clarity from their school's leadership. Regardless, respondents had a nuanced
understanding of what resources were available and they imparted their own meaning as to
when those resources are given or withheld.

Reputation

Participants brought up another relationship framed within the concept of resources: that of their reputation among their students and their colleagues in the field. Though these populations are not directly responsible for the interviewees' livelihood, prestige and reputation were definitely resources faculty members utilized to help accomplish their goals. It seemed to matter what their students and fellow professors thought about whether faculty members in this study participated in MOOCs.

Their Students

When some interviewees mentioned students and MOOCs, they believed the students' first problem with the online courses would be about parity. That could be because it is what the faculty members first thought about. One respondent remembered his first reaction to MOOCs was one of outrage: "I'm a Princeton alumnus, and I remember Harvard, Princeton, Stanford were giving all these courses for free, [and I was] thinking, 'Wait, I used to pay for these classes!'" An arts professor from Oribel was adamant MOOCs would not become a major presence on her campus because paying students would not tolerate it.

> We're tuition-based. That's how we run. The idea of people being able to sign up for classes for free that other people are spending top dollar to take, they've got another problem. And you've got a student body who's going to rise up against you. You know what I mean? [It's not happening] yet because the courses are very limited. But if I were to have a course that I teach face-to-face as well as the same course that was online, definitely. There would definitely be some problems.

A music professor who did indeed teach the same course in person and online had the completely opposite experience, even though he shared the same concern – that "the students on campus would be pissed off that they were paying for we are now giving for free." Fortunately for him, "That never even came up. Everyone was excited to have all these new people all over the world to engage with."

For both the institutions and study participants who have not worked with MOOCs, there also seemed to be uneasiness around how a MOOC would affect the educational experience of the students on-campus. McIntosh, a school that does not offer MOOCs, was worried about tampering with "the McIntosh experience" for their students by providing that experience online. Would it mean the same if non-enrolled students were allowed access to it?

> There were also I think questions regarding how McIntosh students would interact with the MOOC and whether that would change their experience…whether the non-McIntosh participants would be getting a different experience than the McIntosh students, and whether that seemed right.

Some students at Afton feared the presence of MOOCs was the first step in turning the school into an online university. A respondent characterized those students as ones "who don't understand it." However she did make a point of stating, "That's the furthest thing from our minds."

Some interviewees saw being a part of the MOOC world as enhancing the brand; for instance, increasing the school's international caliber. For others, there was an apprehension about how MOOCs might change their brand and what that change might signify to their students. One theatre professor described it this way:

> I do wonder how the relationship between the physical Emberton and the online Emberton is going to evolve and whether one will have a huge effect on the other.

Their Colleagues

For all the benefits that faculty members identified as coming from teaching a

MOOC, the response from colleagues was mixed. Some MOOC instructors spoke of being

valued as resources themselves because of their experience as "early adopters."

> So it's putting me in a certain class of educators who have
> done this. I mean, there are X number of people out in the
> world who know me who didn't know me because they took
> the class. That's both strange and scary and nice at the same
> time.

That being said, one film professor actually received "the cold shoulder" from his colleagues

in film studies because "the consensus seems to be that this is kind of a turncoat thing to do

because you are taking jobs from new PhDs." This response mirrored the concerns some

study participants articulated when discussing the role of technology in higher education.

Though a dance professor from Emberton has not taught a MOOC herself, she

described a spirit of openness, and even eagerness, to work on the growing edge of

education and technology.

> One would expect there would be a fear of displacement.
> Like, dance is about the body. And when we take it away
> from the body, we basically destroyed our field. And I don't
> know – I actually don't find many people who have that fear
> in my field. In fact, it's kind of the opposite. There's this real
> desire and belief that the world and technology in particular is
> changing so quickly. We don't have enough time to make
> sense of it on a physical level. And so if we're going to be
> transitioning education onto computer rather than residential
> campuses, then we want to be the ones involved.

She saw the move toward more technology as inevitable, occurring at a speed very few can

fully comprehend. Instead of bemoaning this reality, she and her colleagues felt the experts

in the field – the arts faculty – should be the ones controlling the resources to craft the

experience for students instead of having it being crafted by others…or worse, having it not

crafted at all.

Conversely, for several people I interviewed, MOOCs were not even "on the radar"

of people in their field. One interviewee posited, "maybe 5%, maybe 10% even really know

what MOOCs are." Another spoke of MOOCs in a different world entirely.

> From the department's point of view, there has not been any
> discussion about offering online classes in the performance
> components of the theater department….I think it's far afield
> from the cohort of my faculty, where we are.

Participants cited many reasons for this, many of them related to factors discussed in this

and previous chapters: lack of incentive, stage of their career, overall opinions about

technology, for example. Ultimately for some, it takes a great deal of mental effort in

addition to resources to make the connection between the arts and MOOCs. For these

faculty members, there is no cost to their reputation to be involved in MOOCs.

Conclusion

The relationship between faculty members and their home institutions could either

enhance or diminish their perspective on MOOCs. In some cases, the influence of a school

actually changed a faculty member's mind on whether MOOCs were good or bad for their

institution. It was not clear from this study exactly which combination of opinions and

variables creates specific outcomes, but it is important to uncover and clarify exactly what

those opinions and variables are. It is also important to recognize faculty members can read

not only 'the official story' behind choosing or rejecting a new initiative, but also understand

the underlying motives of their home institution and its leadership. It is also clear there must

be alignment between word and deed if a college wants to fully recruit its faculty on making

major change.

CHAPTER 7: WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Both the relative youth of MOOCs and their powerful impact on the field make quality empirical research on the subject highly relevant and necessary. The arts have been part of the academy for much longer – more than 600 years – and their powerful impact also warrants robust and thorough inquiry. This thesis strengthens the body of literature on MOOCs in higher education by moving faculty understanding of and experience with MOOCs beyond anecdotes in the mainstream press to a place of rigorous synthesis and analysis. Additionally, by focusing on the faculty within the fine arts, this study highlights some tensions between the design principles of arts education and the dominant MOOC pedagogy that may currently impact their relationship. It also revealed places of connection and potential convergence.

One study participant beautifully articulated a motivating factor of this study: "the future is going to be analog and digital, and finding the balance between the two is the biggest question of the twenty-first century." This study is a beginning; however, I expect there are additional opportunities for future research that could aid in this search for balance.

First, based on these findings, it would be intriguing to examine the perspectives of other stakeholders mentioned in this study, specifically higher education leaders and MOOC providers. For instance, in conversations I had with a person who works for a MOOC provider, he acknowledged that MOOCs needed to improve in certain areas, including "collaboration," "building community," and "teaching the fine arts" (personal communication, January 13, 2016). Further study would reveal how the providers see these challenges. By surveying what has already been done, perhaps the path to include arts faculty in solving these challenges would be made clearer.

Second, a more in-depth examination of the experience of an arts-based MOOC would provide useful information for the majority of arts faculty who have not taught one. Studying how an arts professor grapples with both the theoretical and practical pedagogical concerns could generate useful new knowledge, in addition to allaying fears and dispelling misconceptions. There are also many ways in which people beyond higher education are bringing the fine arts into the online learning space; this includes the performing arts. For example, designer Lesia Trubat, has invented a wearable technology that translates a dancer's movements into graphics that can be modified and displayed to an electronic device. The possibilities of this technology are varied including, "*self-learning or dance classes* [emphasis added]" (Cargocollective.com). Exploring how people outside academia are bringing arts learning online would be very useful to all who care about creating quality arts educational experiences.

"As our world changes, our arts change."

A theatre professor in this study observed, "Technology is part of our culture and it's in the stories that people want to create….Teaching of art that ignores that is going to ignore the art that's being made." The pervasiveness of technology is changing not only *how* art is taught, but *what* art is taught. This inextricable link between life and technology thereby brings into question what is considered art. One art professor argued in the future, "the arts are going to be tied back to the original work of art." Yet, more and more, the "real thing" is a creation born purely online, through digital means. The concept of "real" in arts learning is being overturned by its shifting definition in our society.

In order to respond, arts faculty need to first acknowledge that MOOCs are here to stay, even as their form changes (for example, small private online courses and distributed

open collaborative courses) (Jaschik, 2013). Second, faculty need to rethink the idea of

"real," as it is creating a false dichotomy that hinders communication and creativity in

developing quality arts pedagogy online. Third, arts faculty must consider the question a film

professor in this study asked: "What are the fundamentals?" What will be the most

important, basic concepts that a new generation of artists will need to know to balance the

analog and digital worlds? By bringing their expertise to these questions, arts faculty

members can have influence on the "great potential for online education to open up the

possibilities in art education," as one interviewee stated.

"The role of the campus will be different."

This study demonstrates there are certain factors that need to be addressed in order

to garner support from arts faculty with regards to MOOCs. Many of the concerns

expressed are not unique to the arts, yet some do require specific consideration.

Many study participants believe making college education more affordable for

students is of the utmost importance. As a music professor bluntly put it, the cost of college

"is absolutely stupid right now." Some faculty members are anxious that universities are

going to "implode." This is acutely felt in the arts, as the possibility of making a reasonable

living through the arts has traditionally been extremely difficult. Regardless of their personal

stance with regards to working with MOOCs, any sincere effort to allow more students to

overcome location and financial challenges is worthwhile in the eyes of respondents. The

majority of study participants also believe that academia must stay abreast of, and even

embrace, educational innovation. With this innovation, there is an understanding that higher

education itself might fundamentally change. By breaking down the academy's physical

borders, disciplinary borders might crumble as well. One music professor described the

online space as a place where people can receive knowledge efficiently, and thus the college campus becomes home to "community-based learning," where students can truly be "interdisciplinary." A professor from Emberton actually envisioned the end of "arts majors. Everybody will be doing the arts. This idea that there's art and not art will start to fall apart. People will approach their lives with a creative attitude."

Even so, it is crucial that higher education administration must not wear down its human capital as it races towards the future. As one professor articulated, "It rests on the desks of administrators to figure out how to manage the process of change, how to fund…innovation without completely abandoning and destroying the human beings that are keeping the existing system running." This translates into providing explicit policies and guidelines as to how participating in MOOCs affects faculty members' salaries, their tenure clocks, and their opportunities for job security and advancement. Without clarity on these issues, those with perhaps the most groundbreaking ideas will not come forward for fear of jeopardizing their own careers.

"MOOCs need to get with the arts."

Regardless of MOOCs current limitations, it is apparent that MOOCs keep evolving to respond to the needs of their learners and to maintain sustainability. For instance, with Coursera's (one of the largest MOOC platforms) latest policy shift to charge for some courses, the "open" part of the MOOC acronym may no longer be relevant (Straumsheim, 2016). Notwithstanding these moves, there is a general acceptance that online learning in some form has become an integral and legitimate part of higher education (Lewin, 2013). Therefore, MOOC providers must work to integrate even more disciplines into its infrastructure; this is especially true of the arts.

Just as the arts requires shifting its views on the potential of its own pedagogy,

MOOC providers need think more creatively in order to encompass the collaborative

aspects of arts learning into their online structures. As one professor from Afton states it,

"With art, people have to talk to each other, and the art has to be interrogated in a social

environment in order for the artist to develop their own individual voice and the

toolbox…that they need."

This not only applies to how instructors interact with students, but also how

students share with each other. Even xMOOCs – the type of MOOCs most people are

familiar with – have the potential to foster meaningful collaboration and critique (Brennan,

Blum-Smith, & Yurkofsky, 2015; Loizzo & Ertmer, 2016; Maggio, Saltarelli, & Stranack,

2016). Platform components such as discussion forums, video sharing, and annotation tools

need to be enhanced and expanded to support the potential of unlimited conversations.

What this signifies is the pedagogical future for an arts-based MOOC may be in the past. It

requires moving away from the pedagogical underpinning of the xMOOC platform and

reclaiming the connectivist idea of education enabled by the cMOOC.

Another arena where MOOC providers can make a dramatic change is in the realm

of copyright and permissions for use of artistic works. An arts professor who taught a

MOOC struggled with this, as her school "had to negotiate and pay substantially for

copyright permissions in order to be able to offer the class."

> We are dealing very explicitly with other people's intellectual and creative property when we're teaching. We have to show examples of work. We have to show images. And permissions and copyright are not understood very realistically by the [MOOC] providers. The providers have this sort of lovely notion of the [Creative] Commons that everyone will inhabit and swap things around, and it just doesn't work that way.

This does not only apply to visual art; music and film would greatly benefit as well. MOOC providers can use their position as the custodian of a great deal of content and users for the purpose of advocating for reasonable royalties for the use of artistic work for educational purposes.

Teaching the arts online requires a shift by both arts faculty and by the MOOC providers. Arts faculty members, as experts in their artistic discipline as well as in the art of teaching, are the stakeholders who can "keep trying to push the envelope…in the arts" so that the field is not "left even further behind," as stated by a professor from Afton University. "We need to figure out ways to at least respond to online learning even if we don't think it as satisfactory as the one-on-one experience." Simultaneously, MOOC providers will have to create more innovative tools that keep human connection at the center of the learning. However, each constituency contains the best people to guide each other through that process. I believe the possibility of better alignment between the pedagogical goals of the fine arts and MOOCs in higher education does exist. By engaging in creative conversations, both groups can not only bring arts into the MOOC world, but transform that world for the better because the arts are now a significant part of it.

It is my contention that the arts can no longer afford to disengage with MOOCs. In order for the arts to avoid a fate that places it even further on the academic margins, it is time for the arts to fully participate in the conversation with and about this new pedagogy, and help guide its future. As so aptly put by a study participant,

> We do not want a world that believes education is what can only be most efficiently instrumentalized through technology. We do not want technology that isn't touched by creative people and the arts. And so we don't have any choice but to participate in this experiment.

I could not have said it better myself.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Part 1: Background
1. How did you first learn about MOOCs?
2. Do your remember your first impressions/reactions about them? (In general? At this institution?)

Part 2: Motivations
"I'm really interested in learning about your own decision making process with regards to MOOCs."

If faculty has taught a MOOC
It's my understanding that you taught _____, is that true?
1. What motivated you to participate? (Personal benefits, pedagogical, professional opportunities/development)
2. What were some of the hopes about it as you considered teaching a MOOC?
3. What were some of your concerns you had about doing this?

If faculty has not taught a MOOC
1. Did you want to?
      If due to external factors: Why? What would you have taught?
      If due to internal factors: Why didn't you?
2. Were there any personal, institutional, professional, personal factors?
3. *If they don't mention:* Some faculty have mentioned a lack of (resources [financial, time, space], technological acumen, trust with MOOCs providers [use of data, commercialization], institutional support) is a major reason why they don't teach a MOOC. What are your thoughts on that?
4. Do you think you will ever teach one? What conditions would have to change in order for you to change your mind?

Part 3: Essential Elements of Fine Arts Pedagogy
"Now I'd like to move into learning about how you see the relationship between essential elements of fine arts teaching and learning and MOOCs."

1. What do you want your students to know when they've completed your course? How important is that?
2. In what ways do you want your students to be changed after they've completed your course? How important is that?
3. Can you see ways to make those things happen through a MOOC? Why or why not?
      If faculty taught a MOOC: How do/did you do this in your MOOC?
4. If you taught in MOOCs, did your MOOC affect your in-class teaching?
      If yes: How? Can you give an example?
      If no: Why do you think that is?

5. Some have said that it is essential that the fine arts aligns itself with MOOCs. Others have been quoted as saying there's no way the fine arts can be taught online. What are your thoughts about that?

Part 4: Implications
"Now I'd like to ask you some questions about how you see your decisions with regards to MOOCs in relation to your field."

1. How do you think your choices around engaging with MOOCs will affect you as an educator? (Your colleagues? Your students? Your department?)
2. In your opinion, are MOOCs here to stay? If so, will they be taught as they are now, or will they change? In what ways?
3. Based on what we've talked about today: MOOCs, fine arts learning, etc., how do you envision the learning experience of a fine arts student 10 years from now?
    If yes: In what ways?
    If no: Why do you say that?

Wrap-up
1. Is there something else you wanted to add?
2. Did I miss something important in my questions? What should I have asked?

APPENDIX B: CODES ORGANIZED BY FIRST-LEVEL THEMES

	Political	Pedagogical	Personal
MOOCs=	global dialogue	low-level learning	not being left behind
	international appeal	intro courses	staying on top of things
	allows school to interact with global students	"first two years of college"	not getting lazy
	bring internationality to college students	theoretical courses	young, experimental faculty
	access for international students	upper level dance education	generational acceptability
	global classroom	advanced training	
	marketing overseas		huge time investment
	having powerful reach	book chapters/modules	source of additional income
		lecture	"good for your tenure file"
	"proselytizer"	100-200 people in a room	marketing a book
	good way to bring in students	traditional lecture	distraction
	reach bigger audience	"retro"	book promotion
	increased presence	worse than lecture	electronic textbook
	convincing people of worth	same student experience as lecture	certain class of educator (reputation)
	exclusivity	a previous way of teaching	"Muggle textbooks"
	"brand names"	"disembodied disconnection"	risk to tenure track
	"more students, more dollars"	non-creative	a shift in workload
	showcasing the school		commitment
	a "window into the campus"	forefront/future	not easy
	recruiting applicants	makes sense historically	takes more planning time than regular course
	improved quality of applicant	one manifestation of the force of technology	opportunity for administrator to teach/engage with students
	"looking nice" giving something for free that's usually inaccessible	going beyond replacing; starting something completely new and different	personal project
	"advertising"		
		collaboration	"the death knoll of higher education"
	addressing college accessability	talking to each other	job threatener
	addressing "fundamental goods"	self-teaching/self-interning	loss of jobs
	access	individual learning	extension of adjunct model
	good timing with issues around affordability and accessibility	creating a learning community	creating two-tier system of education
	lower cost for higher education	the loss of cultural diversity (content)/ everyone learns the same thing	giving up on public education
	1st experience with higher education		loss of faculty jobs

another outlet for learning the arts

giving back

attempt to "democratize" education; genuine outreach

being ethical

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accessability

more people dancing with less skill

reaching a lot of people

---

less people watching live dance

critical participants

"interesting issues to be tackled"

---

the first

cutting edge of education

experimental school/willingness to risk

not being "behind the ball"

manifestation of rapid evolution "highly encumbered with the structure against rapid evolution"

practice for online, for-credit experience

way to change institution

being strategic

authentic disruptor of continuing education

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a change in teaching

international collaboration

not knowing students' names

more concise

"remorseless and relentless"

highlight imperfections

challenging faculty to think about different types of learners: scholars, artists, laymen

student diversity

	Political	Pedagogical	Personal
MOOCs≠			

MOOCs≠

easy

lack of financial support

lack of knowledge support

verbal support without incentive structure

---

real artist in the room

real lecture discussion

real

college class

"exactly the same way"

lecture as pedagogy

---

being a good teacher

getting to know students

watching the learning process

dynamic exchange

"as rewarding an experience"

direct feedback on assignments

---

market for theatre courses

---

colleague comraderie

---

change in higher education

---

collaboration

discussion-based

communicating/talking to each other

interaction with students

communal experience

individual attention

in-person assessment

"the liveness"

---

faculty control (video assets)

faculty control (student experience)

being a cheerleader

---

pursuit without inspiration

clarity of contribution to tenure

guarantee of reception

---

disruptor of higher education

---

application

advanced courses

practical application

learning by doing

critical use of tools

---

creativity

improvisation

"something…not easily measurable or even named…"

"complex aspect of human integration of new knowledge"

---

walking into a museum

ability to read emotions

"the embodied experience"

physicality

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