



Student Government

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

University of Colorado Student Government Legislative Council

Date: March 13, 2013

78LCR?? - MOOCs

Sponsored by:	Tyler Quick	Vice President, External Affairs
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A Resolution Regarding MOOCs at CU

Resolution History

Online learning has rapidly risen to prominence over the last decade. In a 2010 study, the US Department of Education recently found that, "on average, students in online learning conditions performed modestly better than those receiving face-to-face instruction."ⁱ Several organizations are now devoted to leveraging the power and efficiency of online learning to make hundreds of courses available online at no cost to students through Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) models.

In early February, 2013, the American Council on Education (ACE) recommended that its 1,800 member colleges offer credit for the completion of five MOOCs currently

being offered by Duke University, the University of California at Irvine, and the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to approving the content and depth of those courses, ACE found that the controls provided, including ProctorU online monitoring, were sufficient to ensure integrity.ⁱⁱ

On February 21, 2013, CU-Boulder announced it had joined Coursera, a social entrepreneurship company that partners with top universities around the world to offer courses online for anyone to take for free and will begin offering four MOOCs starting this fall. CU-Boulder was one of 29 institutions added to Coursera, bringing the total number of Coursera school affiliates to 62.ⁱⁱⁱ The University has not definitively addressed the future of MOOCs at CU, or the policies and procedures that will guide various decision-making processes surrounding MOOCs.

Resolution Summary

This resolution calls on the University of Colorado at Boulder administration, including the Chancellor's Office, Student Affairs, and the Boulder Faculty Assembly, to work together to promulgate clear and unambiguous policies regarding the future of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) at the University. Members of CUSG and our constituents will be directly affected by the manner in which the University pursues or fails to pursue the opportunities presented by MOOCs.

Whereas, the University expressly accepts both the public role and responsibility of a flagship school to provide affordable and accessible education to all under the Flagship 2030 plan;

Whereas, massive open online courses offer quality educational opportunities to individuals who cannot otherwise afford them;

Whereas, online learning is already an integral part of the CU experience, through courses taught using Desire 2 Learn;

Whereas, CU began offering four undergraduate courses through Coursera on February 21st, 2013;

Whereas, the University has not successfully publicized the existence of these courses to the University community;

Whereas, the University has not publicized policies regarding how courses are selected to be offered as MOOCs, how outcomes will be rated, how credit will or will not be offered in the future, how courses are to be supported by the University or departments; and

Whereas, critical questions regarding monetization, credit, resource allocation, future implementation, and publicity regarding these courses have not been publicly addressed;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the assembly of the United Government of Graduate Students, THAT:

Section 1: CUSG recognizes that MOOCs will have a significant impact on issues of access and affordability in higher education.

Section 2: CUSG recognizes that the University has a responsibility to transparently and thoroughly address the exponential rise of MOOCs in a way that best meets its goals under the Flagship 2030 plan.

Section 3: CUSG offers its assistance in formulating, and urges the University administration and faculty to formulate, clear policies addressing future selection of courses to be offered as MOOCs, metrics for evaluating outcomes in those courses,

metrics for deciding whether MOOC offerings will be renewed, and a plan for publicizing offered MOOCs to the University community.

Section 4: CUSG offers its assistance in formulating, and urges the University administration and faculty to formulate, clear policies addressing the possible granting of credits for MOOCs; including whether to request accreditation of courses from the AAU, how to ensure integrity of student evaluations in MOOCs, what departmental resources such as TA support and course buyout should be offered to faculty teaching MOOCs, and how to use any accreditation to attract talented students to the University and reduce the cost of attendance for University students.

Section 5: Upon passage, this resolution will be distributed to the Inter-campus forum, Board of Regents, CU Boulder administration, the Boulder Faculty Assembly, and media.

Section 6: This resolution shall take effect upon passage by the Legislative Council and upon either obtaining the signatures of two Tri-Executives or the lapse of six days without action by the Tri-Executives.

Vote Count

Brittni Hernandez
Tri-Executive

Colin Sorensen
Legislative Council President

Tyler Quick
Tri-Executive

Logan Schlutz
Tri-Executive

Sources

ⁱ Means, Barbara et al, "Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies" <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Kolowich, Steve, "American Council on Education Recommends 5 MOOCs for Credit," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* <http://chronicle.com/article/American-Council-on-Education/137155/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Beuten, Cathy, "CU-Boulder to introduce MOOCs with Coursera in fall semester," *CU Connections* <http://connections.cu.edu/news/cu-boulder-to-introduce-moocs-with-coursera-in-fall-semester/>