

Scholarship for Online Education Vision Statement

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents an innovative model of online education, which can potentially increase the completion rate and transform the education industry in general.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

K.3.1 [Computers and Education]: Distance Learning-Massive Open Online Course

General Terms

Human Factors.

Keywords

Massive Open Online Education; Scholarship.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recent years have witnessed the rapid expansion of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) worldwide. MOOCs are created by professors from elite universities and are free for everyone to take. Over tens of millions of learners enrolled in MOOCs and got certificates if they successfully completed the assessment required. However, the completion rate of MOOCs is generally low, and about 4% of learners who registered actually completed[1].

Motivation and intention plays an important role in learners' retention in MOOCs. Previous study shows that 74% of learners who paid a certain amount of money (\$30 to \$ 100) to enroll in the Signature Track that provides identity-verified, university-branded credential [2]. Our analysis of an introductory Biology MOOC indicates that users who received external incentives are more likely to obtain the Distinction certificate.

With this in mind, we propose to develop a website which provides scholarships for users who excel in MOOCs. Corporations, NGOs, and individuals can set up scholarships in the website to encourage online education, cultivate new workforce and recruit self-educated people.

2. WHAT

We aim to build up a framework which incentivizes people to study online and recognize the quality of online education nationwide. Instead of asking learners themselves to put a

financial stake which “provides additional incentive”[2], we provide the scholarship incentive to all learners.

In the first place, individuals and organizations can initiate a scholarship in the website. Scholarship providers can stipulate the amount and the selection criteria of the scholarship. For example, \$100 scholarship is provided for users who successfully completed the Machine Learning MOOC, or \$200 for who ranked top 10% in the Probabilistic Graphic Modeling MOOC, or \$900 for who obtained certificates in three core courses in Computer Science.

Before a certain MOOC starts, learners can apply in the website to be considered for a certain scholarship. After the MOOC ends, learners can upload the certificate or the grades they received to claim the scholarship.

Corporations can in this way recruit the learners who acquired certain domain of knowledge. This may to some extent alleviate the shortage of Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) major graduates.

3. WHY

MOOCs provide a low-cost way to educate a large population. It has the potential to produce a large number of self-educated engineers and qualified labors. However, it asks for a high level of self-regulation and motivation to complete MOOCs. To fully realize its potential, certain incentives shall be provided for people to take the new form of education. It can also ease the financial pressure for learners to get higher education in brick-and-mortar universities.

4. REFERENCES

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