

Designing Learner-Centric MOOCs

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Lecture 30

Course Design in MOOC

Firstly, the standard principles and recommendations that we use for overall course design still hold. For example, the idea of course level learning outcomes, and thinking of a course in terms of what the learners should be able to do at the end of the course, and then breaking down the course in terms of its constituent modules, and units with the corresponding outcomes. This process of course design, which is one of the very classical processes, this still holds, even in a MOOC.

Having said this, there are a few additional things that an instructor has to keep in mind, and one of it is because we are talking of a Learner-Centric MOOC. So how we bring in this idea of learner centricity, how we maintain it throughout the course, that is one point that we have to keep in mind. Till now what we have done in this course is created one set of learning dialogues, learning by doing activities, learner experience interaction and learning extension trajectory, in a learner-centric manner.

This idea of chunking that we used for a single LeD still holds. So, what we did in an LeD was identified a small piece of content or the domain concept, and then made the learner do an activity, and then did a summary of expected responses and then content. So we broke up our whole lecture into small pieces and interleaved it with activities. This holds at a course level also.

The second thing that is important to keep in mind, is that it's not necessary to have LeD, LbD, LxI, LxT in that sequence. It is, in fact, desirable to choose a

sequence which works well for your learner and for that context. For example, when we did the 701 course or the elements of Learner-Centric MOOCs course, what we did was we started with a LxI on 'what is MOOCs?', wherein we had this idea of bringing in diverse perspectives into the course first, before starting with what is our perspective of a MOOC and what should be the components of a MOOC. So, depending upon the context, in another course you might want to start with an exercise, which is an LbD, you might want learners to start attempting something and then go on to explaining that concept. So, depending upon the course, or depending upon the segment of the course in which you are, you could vary the element with which you are starting that particular module.

While you're thinking of designing your Learner-Centric MOOC, you also have to think of what kind of data that you're planning to collect from it and what kind of actions will you use with the data. So a simple example. Let us say that instructor is giving a set of videos, as well as practice quizzes, in the initial week of the course, and the instructor puts a poll beneath the video, as to 'did they understand?'. So “did the learner understand the content in the video?” Or it could also be let's say, “was the language or the speed with which the instructor is speaking, was it too fast or too slow?” And the instructor is trying to use this data. So, based on the input that comes from the learner, he uses this data to then modify the future videos that he or she is planning to create for the same course.