

## **Libraries, MOOCs and Online Learning Summit – 19 March 2014**

***Organised and sponsored by ALIA, OCLC and CAUL***

### **Closing Summary**

Janette Wright, CEO and State Librarian, State Library of Queensland welcomed all delegates to the seminar and acknowledged the indigenous owners of the land on which we met.

CAUL's President Heather Gordon acknowledged the polarised views on MOOCs and posed the question: Would attendees change their views as a result of the day?

Damien Lodge, Vice-President/President elect of ALIA is a practising academic in library studies. He noted the challenges of his class size of 200 students and the issues associated with even larger scale student cohorts in MOOCs.

A series of short videos provided the views of three senior university administrators and their motivations for entering the MOOC market. Marnie Hughes-Warrington, DVC (Academic) from ANU observed the moves towards openness in many fields and noted that some librarians were 'open access warriors'. MOOCs provide an opportunity to challenge copyright laws, she said.

Beverley Oliver, DVC (Education) at Deakin highlighted their university strategy of providing a consistent experience and trust in all their courses. She cited an example of a recent project at Deakin where students utilised 'badges' for peer credit. She emphasised the integrated nature of their strategies of which MOOCs is but a part. Her catchy tag of 'rewiring the mothership' symbolised the desire to apply learnings from MOOCs in all their academic offerings.

Margaret Sheil, Provost, highlighted the University of Melbourne's motivation to experiment and learn from MOOCs as a component of their institutional elearning and online learning strategy including plans for wholly online postgraduate offerings. The invitation to be the first Australian university to join Coursera provided an opportunity to learn from some of the finest universities in the world. Seven MOOCs offered by Melbourne in 2012 touched some 350,000 students worldwide.

Philip Long from the University of Queensland lived up to the learning analytics tag in his title through his detailed examples that offered insights into learning behaviours of students. He indicated the educational value of feedback and evidenced the limited learning that comes from using highlighting pens! He reported on UQ's early experiences with EdX and flagged cultural problems in some academic discipline groups in embracing online delivery. A shift away from traditional semesters was a small but palpable example. A video clip of an underwater academic demonstrated the creative and captivating opportunities of MOOC topics.

Merrilee Proffitt from OCLC Research reported on her ongoing research into library activities worldwide to support MOOCs. She posed the question: 'where is the open in MOOCs?' Her research evidences lack of resources and organisational support provided in many libraries when assisting the development of MOOCs. Merrilee highlighted the development of the Penn State World Campus library site where online students were treated as a special campus cohort. Large scale student numbers may result in increases in electronic resource subscription rates. The benefits of the community of practice for EdX librarians could be extended to other platforms and poses the question of how we share library learning across MOOC platforms.

Bob Gerrity, UQ's University Librarian reported on a brief survey conducted via CAUL late in 2013 on library involvement in MOOCs in Australia and New Zealand. While 68 percent of universities

participate in MOOCs, library practice varies and roles are changing. Rapid change in this space provides opportunity for ongoing research and he will be creating an open database for CAUL members to share developments.

Roxanne Missingham ANU's University Librarian spoke on opportunities to develop new content to support open education including scholarly publishing developments and the digitisation of primary sources. A new online text the 'Joys of Sanskrit' has been developed to support ANU's Hindi MOOC. Roxanne continued the recurring theme of opportunities for new approaches to copyright.

Cathy Stone from Open Universities Australia reported on an initiative to provide local support for online students through an alliance with public libraries in areas where students reside. This non-compulsory service is in addition to distance library services from the host universities. Local 'meetups' using public library facilities have resulted including forming personal contacts between students and additional library memberships. In the same vein, Philip Kent, University Librarian at the University of Melbourne reported that a 'meet up' in the Baillieu Library in late 2012 was attended by 20 MOOC students and their academics. Streaming of the session reached a broader audience.

A panel of three library practitioners provided good insight into experiences in three MOOC universities. Astrid Bovell from Melbourne expanded on her experience in managing copyright. 2000 items had been cleared for use in MOOCs involving 400 hours of unplanned work. Sandra Rothwell from UQ Library provided examples where it was necessary to have a "Plan B" in reserve if hoped for permissions don't materialise in time. Unforeseen delays close to deadlines required use of personal contacts within publishers. Sue Owen from Deakin spoke from their long experience within an online learning institution. Research skills and digital literacies are necessary to attain appropriate digital skills and expected learning outcomes. Links to graduate outcomes are vital.

In closing the following publication was highlighted as a thorough and objective literature review on MOOCs.

*The Maturing of the MOOC*. Literature Review of Massive Open Online Courses And Other Forms of Online Distance Learning. (BIS Research Paper Number 130) London: Department for Business Innovation & Skills, September 2013.  
[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/240193/13-1173-maturing-of-the-mooc.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/240193/13-1173-maturing-of-the-mooc.pdf)

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