

“Finding the Balance”

Motivating Factors behind Arts Faculty’s Choices regarding MOOCs

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what I did

- combination of convenience and snowball sampling
- semi-structured interviews with 16 arts faculty
- from four different colleges and universities
- 25% of participants taught a MOOC.
- 50% of participants worked at a school that hosted a MOOC

	Fine Arts Focus	Non-Fine Arts Focus
Has hosted a MOOC	Afton University	Emberton University
Has not hosted a MOOC	Oribel College	Macintosh College

Artistic Discipline	# of Participants
Dance	3
Film	2
Music	11
Theatre	6
Visual Art	4
Total	16

what I found

personal

- faculty’s opinions on technology
- time (as proxy for priority)

Participants’ views pre-determined by own opinions about technology. Specifically, they saw technology influencing:

- American culture
- higher education writ large
- their own lives

Also spoke about personal and professional priorities and how secure they felt in their career path.

pedagogical

- arts pedagogy
 - in theory
 - in practice
- MOOCs vs “real” classes

All respondents had clear ideas about quality art pedagogy 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 be (or not).

political

- school motivations
- leadership
- resources

The explicit and implicit messages conveyed by their home institution influenced participants’ meaning making, such as:

- resource allocation,
- school’s fiscal health
- current technology policies(both written and unstated)
- priorities of leadership.

what do we do now?

leaders

- create explicit and fair policies with regards to working in online spaces
- strengthen IT infrastructure
- approach conversation adaptively, not technically

arts faculty

- rethink the definition of a “real” arts course
- online detractors and proponents engage in conversations

online content providers

- update platforms to support artistic collaboration
- influence copyright & permissions conversation

a quote from a 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.”

Afton University arts professor