

## Forum éthique sur les MOOC

Thank you Mister Gevers and hello everyone,

I'm a student in second year in the Catholic University of Louvain on the site of Mons. I study information and communication and I'm really pleased to be here with you today. Last year, within the framework of the lecture of Political Sciences, we had to take a MOOC in addition with a lecture, in auditorium.

So, this MOOC was built by four professors and covered different subjects of Political Sciences. The project lasted five weeks; we had to watch on several videos of more or less ten minutes, to answer to different quizzes after each video, to take part in forums and wikis. All these different activities permitted us to progress and to learn.

The MOOC was for me an interesting and rewarding experience because it's really a new way of learning. So there are many benefits to this programme but of course, there are also a few disadvantages. Begin with the different advantages because I think it's greater! First, the way of learning with a MOOC is more interactive because you take part in plenty of activities with people from all over the world, and it's really interesting to see how people can differently understand and illustrate the same phenomenon. You can exchange with them, have opinion different from yours. I think it's a real plus that you don't have in a traditional lecture. Then, all the quizzes are, for me, a kind of motivation because during the five weeks, you can see your progress and so you're motivated to improve it. In addition, at the end of the project, if you have successfully done the work, you receive a diploma from Harvard and MIT universities! Believe me, it was an enormous motivation for most of the students. Another advantage compared with the lecture in auditorium is that you can deal with your time as you want. It's a freer and more personal way of learning; nevertheless, the work had to be completed for the end of the week. It's also important to know that in addition with the MOOC, we had, at the end of the week, a lecture in auditorium called "Inverse class". Actually, after each week of videos, quizzes, forums, etc. , we took a lecture in auditorium where students "gave the lecture" to the professor. In fact, students provided the subject to the professor and not the opposite. The professor just prepared a few questions, cases and illustrations and then, students had to do the lecture. I think it was a good and interesting way to remember the subject and to handle it. Of course, it was also the moment of the questions. If we didn't understand a part of the subject in the videos, we could ask it to the professor, so it was an important and good advantage for us, in addition with the MOOC!

About the biggest disadvantage, I think that this way of learning is time-consuming. In fact, we had to take notes during the videos because the subject was in our exam of June so I think that, per week, I worked on that, more or less, six or seven hours. So, it takes a lot of time but if you really take the time to do this well, there is a real interest, you learn different things and remember it.

So now, what about the ethical question? Is it a good idea to introduce MOOC or online courses for all the subjects in universities? Is it more interesting and more efficient?

No, I don't think. Online courses constitute a very good experience because it's really different from a traditional lecture and you do a lot of thing that you don't usually. But this kind of lesson erases the human aspect. You don't have a person in front of you any more, you have a computer. And I think that one of the goals of University is to socialize the student, particularly in human and social sciences. So in this case, I Think those online courses aren't a good idea, a good system. In addition, certain courses would be really difficult and uninteresting as online courses, for example mathematics or economy, etc. Another problem is for me that if you just have online courses, you can't ask questions to a professor, to a person. So, you stay with your problems and that's all.

In conclusion, I think that MOOC is a great experience if you have a lecture in auditorium in addition, in complement. But I hope that universities won't introduce online courses for all the subjects and for all the year! We can't empty the auditoriums, the human and social aspect is essential to the university.

Sarah Cardinal