Open Education, E-Learning-Plattformen und Micro-Credentials

Verändern diese drei Konzepte *nachhaltig*, wie wir lernen, lehren *und Bildungsprozesse betrachten?*

6. September
17:30-19:30
Winterthur

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Introduction

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen and welcome!

It is humbling to see so many of you joining us tonight on-sight and online to jointly reflect on the interconnected topics of open education, Microcredentials and technology.

My name is Patrick Hunger and I'm heading the academic affairs department at our university.

We have an eyewatering lineup of experts tonight and it is my great pleasure to setting the scene for what is about to unfold on stage.

With that, let's gradually dive into the topic and quickly recap the essentials:

What we would like to discuss tonight is the influence of micro-credentials and learning platforms on the teaching and learning behavior and the effects on universities in the context of open education.

So far so good …

Now, let's break this down and Barbara will explore in her key note the submerged parts of this colossal 'future of education' iceberg in greater scientific details whereas it is my privilege to balance casually on the tip of this iceberg:

First things first, definitions …

>Open Education

Open education refers to the philosophy and practices that aim to make education more accessible, flexible, and available to a wider audience.

>Microcredentials

Microcredentials are small, focused units of learning that validate specific skills, competencies, or knowledge in a particular subject area, against transparent standards.

>Technology

Technology, particularly online platforms, plays a pivotal role in the evolution of higher education. It facilitates the creation, distribution, and assessment of educational content, enables interactive and engaging learning experiences, and provides tools for personalized learning and collaboration.

If we then turn to the interplay between these now defined forces, the following connecting elements appear relevant:

1. Accessibility and Flexibility
2. Customization
3. Lifelong Learning
4. Credentialing and Recognition
5. Cross-Industry relevancy
6. Incentive systems to stimulate the uptake of new credential models, and
7. Qualification frameworks

Drilling deeper and adding players or interest groups to the equation, it becomes even more convoluted and further core topics surface, such as:

1. Quality assurance relative to the credential itself (i.e. the envelope) and the learning experience (i.e. the content)
2. Credibility and recognition (e.g. of non-formal education providers) and the means to certify knowledge and competencies
3. Equity and access and the role digital platforms play
4. Integration with or complementing traditional degrees
5. Standardization and portability, i.e. issuing, storage and sharing
6. Costs, funding and sustainability
7. Skills assessment and grading
8. Changing pedagogies
9. Learning dispositives, and
10. Regulation and oversight

Finally, and trying to frame some of these topics more tangibly in anticipation of the panel discussion, the following questions prevail:

1. How can Microcredentials gain widespread recognition and acceptance from employers and traditional educational institutions?
2. How can we address the digital divide to ensure that individuals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to technology and online learning opportunities?
3. How are teaching methods evolving to accommodate the personalized, modular nature of Microcredentials and open education?
4. How can policymakers strike a balance between encouraging innovation and ensuring quality control in the EdTech landscape?
5. How can higher education institutes change the pattern from compartmentalization to connection, building distributed leadership, participative and transparent culture, to ensure the university is dynamic, open and permeable to its community? or
7. Do we understand the drivers of the complex interplay between technical architectures, pressures on existing education business models, and opportunities to create mass user activities in the context of the accelerating platformization of higher Education?
8. Are we doomed to create "monstrous moral hybrids" by undulating between learning governance deriving from a concerted effort to act as the keeper of a process and learning governance bubbling up from a distributed system of interactions?

It is without any amplification an unsettling place we are in today and especially higher education institute struggle to re-think the paradigm of Higher Education and to find timely answers to the questions in the context of our iceberg.

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I luckily have experts with me tonight that have substantial knowledge on our topic and who dedicate their work to shaping this intersection between open education, Microcredentials and technology.

As such, Barbara, Kathy, and Christoph will help us tonight building conceptual and practical bridges for all of us to improve our literacy on

- What the intersection is all about?
- Why educational platforms exist? and
- How Microcredentials enhance and enrich the individual educational journey

With that, I thank you again for attending this event and I wish us all valuable insights and enriching discussions, thank you!

… back to you Claudia