

## More Than a Moment: Contextualizing the Past, Present, and Future of MOOCs

Steven D. Krause

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Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are a recent phenomenon within higher education and have weathered a tumultuous existence since their inception in 2008. In *More Than a Moment: Contextualizing the Past, Present, and Future of MOOCs*, Krause examines their brief history while offering incisive commentary on these courses from a variety of perspectives. Readers interested in the historical rise of MOOCs, how faculty and students have interacted with them, or the decidedly murky future of these courses—and potential attempts to integrate wide digital connectivity into education—should enjoy Krause’s thoughtful text.

Krause begins by examining the original MOOC, a seemingly obscure Canadian course that blossomed into a purported instrument of disruption within higher education. A thoughtful discussion of the economic activity that accelerated interest in MOOCs follows, along with a larger discussion of their inability to gain wider traction. These reasons include an inability to replicate institutional education in an online environment (authentic interaction with professors and peers), a chronic underestimation of higher education’s ability to withstand market forces, and a critical misunderstanding of student preferences.

With this context in place, Krause examines MOOCs from three viewpoints: as a natural continuation to current distance education technology, from the perspective of students, and from the perspective of faculty members. By outlining the technological forbearers of MOOCs—correspondence courses, courses employing radio and television, and traditional online coursework—it is much easier to understand the meteoric rise of MOOCs. Similarly, Krause’s personal experience as a student and instructor within this style of coursework imbues the text with authentic insight.

After reviewing these perspectives, the text ends by speculating on the future prospects of MOOCs within higher education. Krause is particular to note that although MOOCs have not been entirely successful in higher education, “it would be a mistake for distance education skeptics to assume. . . that the MOOC moment is over and there is no reason to pay attention to them anymore” (117). At the same time, *More than a Moment* does not imagine a future where MOOCs are the dominant modality for higher education, but rather where they are a continuing facet of the larger educational landscape.

Any faculty member who seeks to learn from past attempts at innovation within online learning would be well served to read *More than a Moment*. As universities grapple with providing a high-quality, socially-distanced education, administrators would also benefit from the concise, authoritative appraisal that Krause offers in his text. Though written before the COVID-19 pandemic, his conclusions are prescient and timely. While the broader world has been upended from the fallout of COVID-19, faculty members must continue reimagining what education can be and should be for their students.