Quality, Cost and Access: How Can QM Address the Dilemma of the Iron Triangle?

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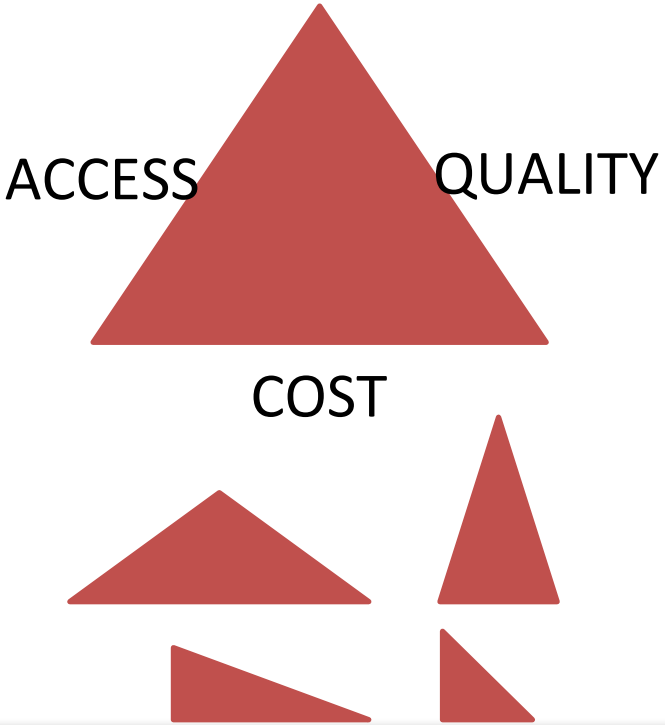
Our aims for this conversation . . .

1. Describe the Iron Triangle concept
2. Explain the interplay between quality, cost, and access in education
3. Discuss how levels of QM implementation address conundrums suggested by Iron Triangle
4. Discuss possible research projects related to Iron Triangle

The Iron Triangle



- ✓ Continuous tension between quality, cost and access
- ✓ Increase in quality frequently means reducing access and/or increasing cost
- ✓ Technology as disruptive agent

Technology: The holy grail to break the Iron Triangle?

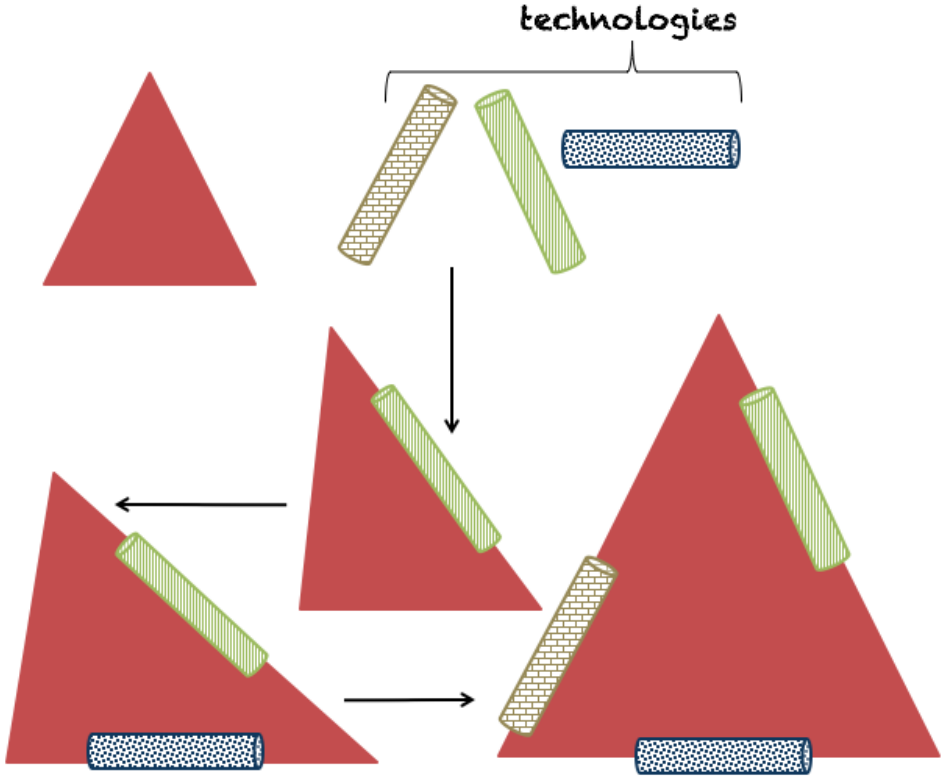
- There are continuous costs to technology
- Effectiveness in the use of technology is key

DESIGN needs to be at the forefront

Course design considerations: Iron Triangle at a‘micro-level’

Effective course design is crucial in order to actually have technology become an agent to reduce the tension between quality, access and cost.

- ➔ Different technologies affect distinct aspects of the iron triangle
- ➔ We need to consider beyond ‘teaching technologies’



How Can QM Standards Connect to Quality, Cost, and Access?

For example:

5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.

6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives and competencies.

6.4 The course technologies are current.

How Can QM Standards Connect to Quality, Cost, and Access?

For example:

5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.

Interaction might require more time from instructors, which increase cost.

How Can QM Standards Connect to Quality, Cost, and Access?

For example:

6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives and competencies.

Tools used for specific course goals could reduce access for specific students and/or increase cost.

How Can QM Standards Connect to Quality, Cost, and Access?

For example:

6.4 The course technologies are current.

In many case, more current technologies might reduce access and/or cost.

Institutional considerations: Iron Triangle at the ‘macro-level’

Micro-level perspective = Focus at the course design

Macro-level perspective:

- Policy and procedures related to implementation of QM
- Technologies that work at the backend and affect institutional processes

What QM offers to deal with conundrums? Micro (for example, quality standards/Rubric) to macro level (for example, Program Certification)

Institutional considerations: Iron Triangle at the ‘macro-level’

- How can the tension of implementing QM institutionally be reduced?
  - Training of personnel
  - Models of implementation?
  - Tools for implementation?
- How can new technologies reduce cost of implementing QM?

Possible Research Questions

1. How might they all be considered in light of the costs of increasing access to education while still assuring quality?

2. How can Quality Matters and more specifically the Quality Matters Program Certification contribute to assuring quality for all the stakeholders?

3. What are the relationships of QM standards and the Iron Triangle?

4. How might the concept of the Iron Triangle be used in a research study?

Thank You!

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