Competency-Based Education

Craze or way forward for online learning?

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Quality Matters
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Agenda

• Adult & Online Enrollment Trends- what is going on?
• CBE- solution or craze?
The rise and fall of adult higher education enrollment

Source: IPEDS and BLS
Online enrollment up very strongly over past decade

Source: Eduventures and IPEDS

Online Headcount - Undergraduate & Graduate

Est. Online Enrollment (headcount) millions:
- 2005E: 1
- 2006E: 1.2
- 2007E: 1.5
- 2008E: 1.7
- 2009E: 2.1
- 2010E: 2.4
- 2011E: 2.7
- 2012E: 3
- 2013E: 3.2
- 2014E: 3.4

Up over 200% since 2005
**Context:** online growth slowing. Is online adding enough value?

**Another Gap Closing** between consumer first preference for wholly online study - c.20% (flat over time) - and online market share (c.15%).

Source: Eduventures and IPEDS
Maybe flexibility is not the problem?

**Figure 11. Six-Year Outcomes by Age and Enrollment Intensity (N=2,658,444)**

- **Source**: National Student Clearinghouse - Signature Report “Completing College” (2014). Fall 2008 cohort
Agenda

- Adult & Online Enrollment Trends- what is going on?
- CBE- solution or craze?
What is Competency-Based Education (CBE)?

- Outcomes driven (backwards design)
- Values learning prior to, during, and outside a program
- Assessment of the application of knowledge and skills—readiness over time
- Can be self-paced and personalized; mentor rather than cohort/class
- Can be low cost
- More explicit reliance on third-party input and frameworks (details vary)
- Often wholly or primarily online
What problem is CBE trying to solve?

- Vague Outcomes
- Expensive
- Inauthentic Assessment
- Takes too Long
- Insufficiently Individualized
Prospects say they want faster/cheaper; downplay social

What would increase your interest in going/returning to school?
(survey of 7,587 prospects, primarily aged 25-54- 2013)

CBE seems to be responding to demand. But do consumers really have an informed view?
Mapping the higher education landscape

Explicit, Standardized Outcomes

Cohort Lock-Step

- Bootcamps
- Olin
- U Dayton
- Ball State
- Capella

Self-Paced

- WGU
- UW Flexible Option
- CfA
- FlexPath
- Tempo
- NAU
- Pioneer CBE/CPL Schools
- MOOCs

Conventional Online Programs

Conventional Programs

Bigger circle = higher price
Tensions at the heart of many CBE programs

**Self-Paced & Low Cost**
- no cohorts
- little student interaction
- wholly distance
- atypical self-discipline

**Pedagogic Good Practice**
- mixed delivery mode
- value of cohorts
- cost and “inconvenience”
Trying to assess claims of new/old breed of CBE providers...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim</th>
<th>Reality?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic assessments</td>
<td>As many references to research papers as anything else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and assessments backed by employers or other external standards</td>
<td>Which employers? Which standards? Comparability between institutions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter, cheaper</td>
<td>Offer conventional degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from faculty and mentors</td>
<td>Hard to gauge reality for typical student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet student demand</td>
<td>Patchy enrollment data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earn high quality degrees and certificates</td>
<td>Hard to find graduation rate data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream</td>
<td>Specialized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online v. CBE: what’s missing? Why CBE risks being a craze

Gains for CBE on Access

Stronger

Weaker

Best way to revive adult demand and improve outcomes

Gains for CBE on Outcomes

Access

Student Experience

Outcomes

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Make an Impact
Nanodegree
Industry credentials for today's jobs in tech

Enrollment is Open! Get Started Today.
Enrollment Closes on 9/25
Explore different territory? Missing axes?

Explicit, Standardized Outcomes

- Bootcamps
- Olin
- U Dayton
- Ball State
- Capella

Implicit, Local Outcomes

- Conventional Programs
- Conventional Online Programs

Cohort Lock-Step

Self-Paced

- Galvanize

Bigger circle = higher price

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Thank you

To discuss today’s deck or related matters, please contact:

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Questions...

• Does new-generation CBE really have the fundamental problems I mention, or is it a marketing issue?
• Are there CBE instances that sidestep my critique?
• What choices are available to combine CBE-style assessment and elements of personalization with pedagogies that transcend atomization?
• How is your CBE program going? Are you planning a CBE program?
Galvanize—pedagogically powerful degree alternative; unlikely to scale?

- **Name**: Galvanize
- **Founded**: 2012
- **Location(s)**: 6 US “campuses”, plus London
- **Focus**: workshops, short or long courses (e.g. 24 week “Full Stack”) and 12-month Master’s degree. “Data science” concentration. Plus start-up accommodation. Position the combination of education and start-ups as a virtue. Longer programs culminate in “hiring day”. Commitment to hiring under-represented groups; offer financial aid
- **Price**: US$21k for “full stack”; c.40k for Master’s
- **Scale/Outcomes**: claims 98% placement rate and 73k US$ mean starting salary
- **Relationship with HE**: Master’s degree partnership with University of New Haven- “appointed faculty”. For non-degree offerings, no requirement beyond a high school diploma
Udacity- addresses time, cost, relevance and scale challenges? But too individualized?

- **Name**: Udacity- Nanodegrees
- **Founded**: 2014
- **Location(s)**: CA- wholly online
- **Focus**: computer science. Curriculum built and taught in partnership with technology firms. Project-based. Independent, self-paced online study with peer/coach support; 6-12 months to complete at 10 hours a week. Companies offering internships. Lifelong learning
- **Price**: $200 a month. Scholarships available from Udacity and sponsor companies. 50% of tuition returned if complete on time
- **Scale/Outcomes**: claims 60,000 students “at any one time”; no outcomes disclosures so far
- **Relationship with HE**: none, but Udacity also working with Georgia Tech on a low-cost online Master’s in computer science for <$US7k