International Forum of Open and Online Education

2nd and 3rd of October – University of Ottawa FSS4007

Theme

Since the 1970s, technology has been involved in streamlining the entire society and the university's education system. In fact, distance engineering has developed a mass education accessible to all. Moreover, engineering processes have helped reduce costs and standardize quality by streamlining the training process. Computers and networks have democratized learning in universities. Educational resources are always more accessible and open to all communities. However, new issues arose, which are related to the semantic of big data produced during the interactions in these training systems and instructional challenges. This conference will attempt to address these issues, particularly for the francophone context, by presenting an overview of the research and practices in the field to ultimately participate in the development and technological transformation of higher education.

Thursday October 2, 2014

SESSION I : TENDANCE OU MUTATION INSTITUTIONNELLE

Julia Colyar

Senior Policy Analyst, Council of Ontario Universities, Canada, The Ontario Online Initiative: Transformation through Collaborative Practice

Transcript

00:00 welcome back I hope you enjoyed your
00:02 your lunches I'm glad to see everyone
00:05 back now it's my pleasure to introduce
00:08 Julia Collier Julia is a senior poly
00:12 policy analyst at the Council of Ontario Universities she's a senior prior to
00:20 working at the COU she was a faculty
00:22 member in the Department of Educational Leadership and policy at the University
00:26 I've had the pleasure to know
00:28 Julie a little bit this last year
00:30 working around issues of the COU in the
00:33 caller from Ontario online and it's a
00:35 real pleasure to work with her and I'm
00:36 really glad that she could make it here
00:38 today so Julia please come up thank you
00:58 everyone well good afternoon I think
01:04 the after lunch spot is a little rough
01:06 but I'm sure you're all going to be
01:08 mesmerised by this topic I'm really
01:12 happy to be here today to talk about
01:14 this project and I really want to thank
01:15 Richard and Emmanuel for for inviting me
01:19 here it's already been a really great
01:21 learning experience and I know there's
01:23 much more that I have to learn as
01:25 Richard said I'm at the the Council of
01:28 Ontario Universities and I should start
01:31 by saying who we are COU is a member
01:34 organization and we represent the 20
01:36 different publicly funded universities
01:38 in Ontario and our purpose is to
01:41 facilitate communication to provide a
01:43 little bit of of infrastructure to
01:47 enable collaboration sometimes and to
01:51 help shape advocacy efforts both to the
01:54 provincial government and also to the
01:57 public in the context of the Ontario
02:00 online initiative our role has been sort
02:04 of again to provide a little bit of
02:06 infrastructure and organization to help
02:09 bring information from the Ministry
02:11 about
02:12 funding guidelines and opportunities to
02:14 universities but also to take
02:17 information from University members and
02:20 bring it back to the government to say
02:22 hey don't you think that we should be
02:24 doing this we're more or less successful
02:28 I think in that way so you can see that
02:30 we're situated outside of universities
02:32 and outside of the provincial government
02:34 and that's the perspective from which
02:36 I'll be talking today I've been working
02:42 in higher education for a number of
02:43 years as Richard said as a faculty
02:46 member before that as an advisor and a
researcher an administrator and in all of that time I had very little experience with online education I've never taken an online course and in fact as a faculty member thinking about online was really scary and not something that that I or my department felt was a real priority even though it's been emerging for quite some time I had probably even less experienced thinking about collaboration I remember as an assistant professor in my first few days I got this advice keep your head down close your door get your research done so this might be really good advice for a faculty member but it's not great advice to inspire collaboration what I did bring to COU despite these gaps in my background and experience with an interest in post-secondary institutions and their contexts policies that shape the work of universities and faculty and thinking a lot about student experiences and I've learned a great deal in my time at COU so I want to talk today about some of these things that I have learned and our initiative in particular I'll start with a little bit of background about the Ontario context talk about approaches to online in the fast last few years leading up to this current initiative and then spend some time thinking about this new consortium which is being called at least for now Ontario online and if you hang around our office is enough here really you will hear different phrases being used to describe this new thing I guess that's just the way it is I also want to confess that I was I was telling my good colleague Nancy Walton earlier that I was feeling a lot of anxiety about this presentation in the last several weeks because what I was wanting to do was come here and say this is our consortium
04:51 this is this great new thing but in fact
04:55 when we don't even have a consortium yet
04:57 we have we're working toward it it's a
04:59 work in progress but I'm mindful of I'm
05:05 increasingly mindful because of
05:06 conversations from earlier today that a
05:09 consortium is always going to be an
05:11 involved evolving thing we will probably
05:14 always be working towards some kind of
05:16 progress and I think that it's our job
05:19 to take good care fulfill steps and I'm
05:23 sure that you have good advice for me
05:24 today so I will appreciate that so a
05:28 little bit about our context first just
05:36 quickly so in Ontario we have 20
05:38 universities that are publicly funded 24
05:41 colleges that's about 450,000
05:44 undergraduates and about 60,000 graduate
05:47 students in Ontario and then another 220
05:50 college students what's a pretty big
05:52 pretty big group of students colleges
05:56 and universities were established with
05:57 very different missions and mandates and
06:01 there was at the time there was not a
06:03 goal of having students move from one
06:05 sector to the other they were different
06:08 animals in many ways they still are both
06:11 have grown tremendously in the last
06:13 number of years and there has been this
06:15 kind of mission creep so there are some
06:18 colleges that offer bachelor's degrees
06:21 applied bachelor's degrees and
06:22 university is increasingly think about
06:25 internships and co-ops and the kinds of
06:27 experiences that lead to sort of direct
06:29 prepare for work kinds of programs
06:35 in the summer of 2012 the Ontario
06:38 Ministry of Training Colleges and
06:40 Universities that's MTCU for me a lot
06:42 of acronyms so I apologize MTCU they
06:46 initiated a process for the development
06:48 of strategic mandate agreements which
06:50 are SMAs these are bilateral agreements
06:54 negotiated between each university and
06:56 college and the government and they are
07:00 intended to support MTC use interest in
differentiation so each University and College set out to describe themselves to the government including things like program strengths areas for growth each of the agreements includes a section addressing the same section so sections like teaching and learning research fiscal sustainability that kind of thing and each of these different sections teaching and learning research etc they each have a set of metrics in them that universities will have to use in order to sort of measure their progress you're sensing my hesitation because it's still unclear how these SMAs are going to be used in the world we know they're going to be used for things like program growth or program development new programs perhaps and they will be used for the allocation of graduate spaces may be other things the ministry's goal for these documents is to help support student access and success to build on University strengths to avoid duplications and to maintain an efficient and financially stable post secondary sector so if we know who has strengths where then funding can be directed in particular ways now in many ways Ontario's context is already differentiated there are colleges and universities quite different there are also different kinds of universities there are larger universities and smaller universities are francophone institutions we have an art and design university we have a technology-focused institution so there's already a great deal of diversity across the province but the government is looking for something a little different there's also a lot of overlap across universities of course but the SMAs and this differentiation agenda asked universities to commit particular kinds of goals and areas of
growth this process has been taken have taken more than a year and it's my own hesitation and also the anxiety of lots of people may be in this room because we don't know exactly how the SMAs are going to be used and in particular if they'll be used to make funding decisions for universities and any kind of concern around fundings you know is is magnified and lots of interesting ways I wanted to spend a little bit of time talking about this framework because it is the backdrop upon which online and this new initiative sort of emerges and it's not neutral and because while the principles make good sense in many ways they don't always agree with the efforts of the online space and so the result is that it's very complicated another important element in the Ontario context and maybe your context as well is this issue of Graduate outcomes I don't think I there's a day that goes by that we don't see something in the paper about university graduates getting jobs at Starbucks and the ways that the labour market doesn't match kinds of graduates that university of produce so the this focus at times to me seems quite instrumental but this is a narrative that is present it's one that we have to figure out how to disrupt universities are then working to define themselves to articulate graduate outcomes may be worried about future funding decisions and on the horizon we see a flattening of enrollment so we've been in a period of growth for a number of years now we're going to see that flattening off and maybe even we're going to see it decline so one way to think about this I think is that universities are competing for a shrinking pool of students in fact universities may be competing for students with colleges and
universities especially as students and families are worried about what their graduates are going to do in the labor market and families and students may be looking for applied programs that lead to a specific kind of career path and of course if with declining students or declining enrollments comes declining tuition so this is this is kind of a big deal I'll put it that way to make things even more complicated I know you're wondering could it get more complicated yes it can we had a recent election in Ontario and we now have a majority government and that gives a lot of us some confidence about stability over the next save for years but one of the signals we get from the ministry is that we're in a time of fiscal restraint so they're not going to be listening when we come to them every year and say we really would like some more funding they're going to be saying to us actually no think about the ways that you can use the funding that you already have or maybe a little bit less so I hope that I've made clear that taken together these contextual factors point to a couple of themes one is the question of competition University of an Ontario compete for students University of sometimes compete with colleges for students and in so doing they compete for funding the second is collaboration actually it's more the promise of collaboration because the SMA process is intended to provoke a kind of collaboration in a systemic way so that parts are fitting together in a way that seems harmonious at least to the ministry and and universities need to be thinking about the ways that they might specialize to fit in to this new integrated system but these two themes are definitely at odds and we're kind of in a space of what I've been calling
13:01 collabortition which is an uneasy mix not
13:06 sure how you'll translate it between
13:09 collaboration and competition and it's
13:12 as
13:12 awkward to say you can try it
13:14 collaboration it's as awkward to say as
13:17 it is to be in in terms of our
13:20 experiences it's a time of tension it's
13:25 a time of opportunities I think there's
13:27 a lot of work to be done so into this
13:32 context comes a new initiative and
13:35 online education but it's certainly not
13:37 new for years now online opportunities
13:41 have been around in Ontario distance
13:43 education has been around a long time
13:45 once it was called correspondence
13:47 courses or programs they've been around
13:49 for probably a generation or longer and
13:51 they've evolved into very robust to
13:53 online programs both the colleges and
13:56 the and the University of have have
13:58 invested a significant amount of their
14:00 resources into online development in
14:02 separate ways there are lots of
14:04 continuing education efforts across the
14:07 province there are currently more than
14:09 3,000 online courses available at
14:12 Ontario University is almost 200,000
14:15 course registrations and about 133 fully
14:18 online programs mostly at the
14:20 undergraduate level there are also a
14:23 number of online partnerships developing
14:26 and/or are well established for example
14:29 the Ryerson York exchange which is an
14:31 online platform hosting about 40 courses
14:34 that are eligible for transfer across
14:35 York and Ryerson it's also worth
14:38 mentioning that the college secretary
14:40 Ontario has a very robust consortium of
14:43 its own I'm called Ontario Learn which
14:45 facilitates transfer opportunities for
14:48 students and I'm sure there are other
14:50 partnerships that I don't know anything
14:52 about yet the development of online is
14:55 also very uneven so some universities
14:58 have invested a lot of resources and
15:00 have incredible programs and some
15:02 universities are just getting started so
15:05 the playing field is quite different
15:08 evenness isn't even part of the
15:11 conversation right now universities in
15:14 Ontario started thinking about a
15:15 consortium approach just with
15:18 universities about two years ago and
15:21 this was the Ontario Universities Online
15:25 and this idea came out of a provincial
15:28 speech a speech of the provincial level
15:30 when we had an idea that the ministry
15:32 might provide some direction and so the
15:37 goals of this Ontario Universities
15:39 Online were to support collaboration in
15:42 the development and delivery of
15:44 technology-enabled learning so to start
15:47 with this this consortium seven
15:50 universities got together there were
15:52 some working groups many of the
15:55 conversations focused on how will the
15:58 budget be figured out what's the cost
16:00 and revenue model probably every
16:02 conversation the one that started with
16:05 quality standards ended up with whose
16:07 house it how's the money going to go we
16:12 worked on a vision statement we thought
16:14 about a business case we talked about an
16:17 implementation plan and how it might
16:19 unfold we looked at other models across
16:23 Canada and internationally to find some
16:25 best practices we looked at BC campus we
16:28 looked at what was happening in Manitoba
16:31 all over Australia and England etc and
16:35 we had a lot of good conversations and
16:37 just as we were sort of thinking okay
16:39 what's what's the next step then the
16:41 Ministry came in and said here's some
16:44 funding and the conversations around the
16:47 OUO to completely stopped and we said
16:51 Ah-HA funding funding has its own
16:55 inspiration and this this new initiative
17:01 from the Ministry provided commitment
17:04 for three years and we are in the middle
17:06 of that three years right now so I
17:10 wanted to provide all this background
17:12 for you because the current online
17:14 initiative hasn't disappeared in this
17:17 nice empty vacuum we are trying to build
17:20 a consortium in a landscape populated
17:23 with all kinds of online things both
17:26 that are happening at our own
17:28 universities and all over the globe
17:30 there are MOOCs I guess there are also
17:32 Spock's I never heard of that until
17:35 today
17:35 I think that's the right word there
17:38 are private online developers and
17:41 providers there are online programs that
17:44 are being run by universities in the US
17:47 but delivered to students in Ontario and
17:50 as I noted earlier the online initiative
17:54 which is in some way about coming
17:55 together aims toward collaboration at a
17:59 time when universities are also being
18:01 pressed for differentiation so
18:04 universities are being asked to do a
18:05 couple of different things at once I
18:08 don't mean to say that we're unique in
18:10 Ontario and that our problems are really
18:12 special and we can't do it because it's
18:14 just harder for us that's not that's not
18:17 my intent I think that part of our
18:19 transformation is to get a hold of this
18:22 history and I think we need to think
18:25 about changing the way we talk about our
18:27 landscape highlighting different things
18:30 about our landscape and we're working on
18:32 that but I'm mindful that as I talk
18:34 today I'm reifying some of the things in
18:37 the narrative that I think we need to
18:39 disrupt our own history makes it sound
18:42 like we can't move forward that's a
18:45 challenge so at COU we have been
18:48 wondering how can universities use this
18:51 ministry funding and support in
18:53 productive ways given this context given
18:56 the previous investments given the
18:58 strengths that are already there how do
19:01 we move forward how can universities
19:03 work collaboratively in collaborative
19:06 practice so that we are able to make
gains in efficiency which we need to do
probably and make gains in student
access and maybe most importantly how do
we work toward excellence so that brings
me to the current initiative which is
now called Ontario Online as I noted the
ministry started with a three-year
commitment to fund an online project the
goals were both immediate and tangible
and also sort of forward-thinking
intangible and very ambitious and I don't
think I'm talking out of turn when I
tell you that some of the things that
universities think are really ambitious
the ministry
links are really simple like the
low-hanging fruit so there's some
miscommunication to be thought through
the ministry's goals in this initiative
include leveraging existing online
strengths and developing new
opportunities improving institutional
productivity and the efficient use of
resources so you're hearing some of the
funding issues sustainability concerns
coming through but then also providing
high quality online learning
opportunities for students and enhancing
student access and mobility across the
province I think universities would also
add to this saying that an initiative
like this is about using technology and
online tools to enhance student learning
that a consortium is not an end in
itself it's a vehicle to get somewhere
it's a tool to be used to improve and
enhance student learning opportunities
in doing all of this the ministry seeks
to enhance the national and
international profile of Ontario in this
world of online education and that's a
very ambitious and future-oriented goal
I think I think what underlies all of
these goals well that's not directly
stated but I think is existing there is
this fact that if we're going to move
forward we have to move from this sort of this some collaboration as as I've been calling it this uneasy state of collaboration and competition together moving to something more productive in terms of our collaborative practice and I think this is going to require a cultural change of the kind that David talked about with what we mean by open it's a movement toward communities of practice two collaborations that change the way we do business not just in the cost and revenue models that we use to think about courses and who takes them but in the ways that we think about universities and university work about faculty and how faculty work is defined and redefined thinking about faculty incentives as well but to be totally honest I don't know what it means to say that we have to do business differently because business has looked the same for an awfully long time so I think we're going to get there but I think that's where the transformation also lies and how we think about what we do so back to this ministry funding the ministry has has provided funding the first year so for fiscal 2013-2014 colleges and universities each got just a little bit over four million dollars for the purpose of developing online courses so in the university side we developed about 67 new or newly newly redesigned online courses these were mostly introductory in a variety of disciplines sort of the foundational courses these were chosen because the ministry wanted us to work toward scalability so we have introductory courses that might bring in thousands and thousands of students it's important to note that these courses are not open they weren't designed to be open and they for the foreseeable future openness is not a goal openness and the way that David
talked about it you must be Ontario student to enroll in one of these courses and it's possible that you could enroll in a course and not have it transfer the way that you want it to to your home institution so if you're a student at Ryerson and you take an online course at University of Ottawa you may or may not get credit for that depending on the agreement between those two institutions so that's pretty complicated funding was also made available at this time for the development of the Centre of Excellence which is now being called Ontario Online this is sort of the consortium space this is what we are thinking of as the consortium this is going to provide some structure a bit of organization some kind of an actual center from which networks can stretch so with the funding from the government from 2013-14 a steering committee got together and they are currently working on getting this whole operation staffed we'll have a board of directors eventually maybe next week it will be incorporated fingers are crossed the steering committee has included college and university representatives and other folks from around the sector that had an interest and bringing those two sectors together in productive conversations has been an interesting challenge but a good one and I think they're making great steps for fiscal 2014-2015 the ministry has set aside about the same amount of money for course development again college and university pots of money are separate and again a little bit of money for this Ontario Online centre we are right now literally I think the guidelines may be in my email we're finalizing the guidelines for new course proposals and we hope that universities we are going to develop a great variety
of amazing plans and I'll get to those proposals in another second here those proposed those the guidelines come from the ministry COU has developed sort of a clarifying document and those two things taken together will help guide University proposals in the next a handful of weeks the ministry has developed a conceptual model which is too small for you to read really what's the pay I'm going to tell you all about it to provide some guidance to colleges and universities in this whole initiative so this is sort of the center of Ontario on online there are three hubs of activities in this model you'll see the top there's the board of directors that we haven't yet figured out yet and then there are these three hubs of activities the course hub is where course will be housed or listed or advertised not quite sure yet the ministry imagines that online course will be transferred both within sectors and across so you can see there's a little circle there for university courses and one for college courses and there's a big giant orange arrow that makes it look like the transferability simple because there's a big pathway not so not yet i should say it's worth noting here that the ministry has in mind something very particular about shared courses what they mean is that there will be an intro to psychology course that somebody develops and it's going to be amazing and excellent and all the students in the province of Ontario who need intro to psychology will take that course so little having a 5,000 students let's say that's what shared course means to the province and maybe they think that'd be great for the whole slate of first-year courses and maybe first and second year courses things that are
foundational maybe general education
these can be offered online excellent
courses right and students will just
take all their courses online for the
first two years you can imagine that
universities find this to be really
confusing and that's the nicest way to
put it probably first of all this is
very concerning because universities
rely on their tuition revenue from
introductory courses which are large
sometimes and that tuition revenue helps
support other smaller courses and
programs so with the internal economies
being so complicated universities are
not willing to go with this model of
shared courses the other problem with
this is that the idea of bringing all
students all together for their intro to
psych courses and everything else maybe
in their first year this to me works
against the idea of differentiation in
really important ways you're saying
government is saying
something like doesn't matter where you
go these are the courses it does matter
where you go
I think so it's hard to figure out how
to resolve this idea of shared courses
and this the differentiation framework
they're not completely antithetical but
there enough antithetical to make me
feel uncomfortable maybe you two
confusing so this course hub
box it's the biggest one in the in the
model that the ministry has given
us it is certainly the one with the most
concerns attached to it the knowledge
hub is another one of the boxes and it's
it's going to be a space for research
activities so there may be lots of
interesting maybe of course there is
lots of interesting data that derives
from online courses maybe research about
pedagogy the ministry thinks and we
agree that it'd be great to use some
resources to gather information that can feed back into this new online center to improve courses and student experiences maybe just our understanding of student pathways would be helpful and then finally the support hub which would gather technology supports in an online environment for students maybe their academic supports like basic writing basic math or writing supports and this is the space where they imagine that this portal is going to go the portal would be a resource for students so they could go online find a course they want to take see how it will transfer register for the course right there and boom there in an online course I want to mention that as I was typing up my notes about this I kept 'miss I'm not a good typist I kept typing hug instead of hub so it you know like it look the support hug and via the Course hug seems quite friendly that seems optimistic and so I'm going to stick to it but but these are the hubs for the ministries model the interesting thing about a conceptual model at least for me is that once you have seen it you cannot unsee it and I'm not saying this is a bad thing but I am saying that it means that our work has been defined may be limited in specific ways but now we are working toward this thing because we can't unsee this model I think it's a pretty good model the things are there we like but it's possible that a collaborative group of community members might have come together and put something else together as a model you don't know so that's where we are right now in Ontario we're just at the beginning of this project we're in the middle of funding for it we're trying to keep the long view in mind we're trying
to remember that this is part of a good long story we're working within limitations and possibilities there are constraints there are opportunities the challenges to collab to practice for us are many and they're easy to see some of them came up earlier in the presentation and we're trying to rest our weight on the opportunities but you can see it's evident in my slide even the constraints and the challenges are there three of them and just the one bullet about moving forward but you've heard about the challenges so I'm not going to say those over again I want to talk about how we're going to move forward what's next for us the first thing is that I want to emphasize that are moving forward we think has to be as a system and that means that we're not just a set of universities we are a system that has some kind of interdependence maybe even in the way of our strategic mandate agreements a little bit and that we move together that collaboration in a system is not just our goal it's an assumption that we have as a starting point it's pretty hard I know I think that transformation does need to occur in order for this to happen together the system of cooperation or collaboration so here's what we're doing I'm going to highlight just a few of the priorities as we go forward the the new funding guidelines that we're working toward now there's a number of different things but a couple of them I think are small steps toward getting to collaboration so in the second round of course finding which were right now finalizing the the kinds of the categories of funding are going to include online courses and online modules now I know that you're thinking to yourself wow that's really innovative you can say it sarcastically because
modules how they've been around a long
time but modules are not something that
we're used to not in the way that sort
of as an open resource right we actually
in thinking with the ministry about COU
you and thinking with the ministry about
what might be included in these
guidelines we said modules and the
ministry said what we said yeah we've
taught them something so the modules are
intended to as you know they're portable
they include academic content and for
our purposes they would be made
available to all publicly funded
colleges and universities for use this
is where we are with how open things can
be right now this is the extent of
openness for us and it's actually a
pretty big step in in talking with our
colleagues around the province about
this idea we have had the range of
opinions and feedback some people say
love it let's start now let's do it
yesterday and some people say why who
would use a module why would any faculty
member grab somebody else's module
so that's where we are I think though
that this is where some good
efficiencies can be found I think that
these are really small steps and I think
that we need to work on sort of bigger
transformations but we have to work with
within this context of university
autonomy faculty what sort academic
freedom there it is so we can't just
take a step into an open course right
now we need something sort of to bridge
our steps along the way so we're going
to start with modules the second round
of funding also includes a category of
online courses that we're talking about
as being low enrollment upper level or
graduate level courses the key here is
now we want to focus on low enrollment
courses because we think that this can
actually help with sustainability for
niche programs or small programs the idea here is that a program in say foreign language or philosophy or whatever else that might enroll a smaller number of students if they worked if a couple of different universities work together to create a course build a course that each could include in their curriculum as an elective as a requirement that this would actually broaden the list of courses available to students at both of those universities there may be three or four for twenty this means that programs could include a larger suite of opportunities for students and it leverages the experience of faculty at a couple of universities or more so smaller programs could be more viable sustainable because faculty time and talent could be shared so now we're talking about sharing differently sharing faculty time and talent rather than sort of sharing courses although I recognize that the overlap is there this is not the kind of sharing the ministry has in mind but we think it makes a lot of sense I think there's a lot of promise in there that could transform programs in important ways it's not exactly resonant with differentiation goals but we think it would certainly work toward the goals of student access and excellence as we work on these next steps there are some opportunities we want to maximize first we're trying to recognize and celebrate the great collaborations that are already happening in our system and there are many just as a couple of examples ONCAT which is the Ontario Council On Articulation and Transfer which is sort of the credit transfer group they are a member organization representing all of the colleges and universities and they have been around
for about four years and they're doing amazing work and helping develop pathways and agreements across universities for student experiences student mobility student success we also have a scholars portal which on the University side is a consortium of universities to support scholarly materials made available to students in the province we have an application centre which is a collaborative enterprise for universities colleges have their own the application centre is a space which applications are collected and processed and then distributed to the various universities so there are examples now I know that these are outside the academic enterprise but there are examples of collaboration that makes sense and that have been very successful other kinds of collaborations that we're thinking about one is our collaborations with the Ministry we have to be in good productive conversations we can't always be defensive we can't always be reserved or suspicious we tend to approach them with great caution and I think we're working toward a partnership there we have been working to help create collaborative conversations with colleges and with colleges sort of within colleges and sorry not colleges colleagues university colleagues between campuses and across campuses we've tried to engage colleagues from the sector in order to get our guidelines together to figure out what kind of courses to be funded we know that these are experts they are experienced they know an awful lot about universities that we don't know so we need their help and we need to make sure that they're helping each other we think that there are creative ways to leverage resources on various campuses so for example why not have somebody who's in
media and expert in media and technology. Work with a campus that doesn't have as many resources to develop modules or online courses to make a really robust and excellent online course that's the kind of partnership that we haven't talked about in the past. I also think that there are partnerships within campuses that we should really work to capitalize on so for example we're thinking in this new round of funding what if different departments on one campus got together to create an online statistics course? Lots of programs require statistics. I bet on many university campuses there are four or five or eight or ten different statistics courses that are at the basic level. Maybe there could be one maybe they could have some modules that they would insert specific to their disciplines. We think this makes a really good sense. We also want to continue our collaborative conversations with colleges because they are partners in this. You can tell from the conceptual framework but here to fore we've been working in parallel rather than trying to talk across there are some excellent partnerships between universities and colleges right now. Absolutely a hundred percent but we're not at the place where we're talking really openly about how courses might be developed in partnership and how students might move in meaningful ways. We think that there are opportunities in the knowledge hub and the support hub. We're going to keep working on it these are really tough conversations to have. Because of our collaboration we think that there are lots of different ways that efficiencies can be accomplished. We are going back to the Ministry to talk about money that can be spent over a couple of different fiscal
years because one problem maybe this is
going to sound familiar to you the
academic year and the fiscal year do not
correspond so we are in the middle of
fiscal year 2014 2015 and we're just
going to get the money enough in a
couple of months so let's say funding
for the current end of funny is going to
arrive well to be optimistic let's say
December the fiscal year is over in
March that's a couple of months to get
things done so that's a really big
challenge we meet some way to have
flexibility and how we can use funding
resources from the Ministry and if we
had that kind of flexibility we could
use we have multi-year projects that are
ambitious that can be cross-disciplinary
we can get learning communities together
working toward open textbooks your suppose
a much faster process than the fiscal
year but we're going to need some time
for the developments of resources for
all kinds of classrooms virtual and not
so systemic change is going to be very
difficult that's my theme of my talk I
don't think it's quite like one step
forward and two steps back because that
has a linear kind of feel to it I think
we're in like a very complicated waltz
and maybe it's going to be beautiful but
I do think that transformation is going
to come and I hope that it will and I
think that it will be through
collaborative partnerships and
collaborative enterprise we have learned
this from many of the programs that are
already out there some of you are
representing those programs today and we
see it in small ways with each of our
difficult dance steps so I thank you for
the opportunity to talk about this it is
the thing that I've been thinking about
endlessly the last year or so and it's
nice to be able to say it out loud and
I'm happy to take advice and any sorts
43:36 of questions
43:47 for your speech my main question is
43:50 about up Ernest I think the government
43:53 is spending all of this money I thinks
43:55 about 42 million dollars or something
43:57 like that yeah why would it would it not
44:02 be have it often instead of having what
44:05 is the benefit of having it not open
44:07 that's my question it's a great question
44:11 I'm not sure that I can talk about you
44:16 know that sort of the downside of
44:17 openness I I I think the bigger question
44:20 for us is whether we can convince
44:25 faculty that this is a good idea and I
44:30 can tell you that probably the answer to
44:32 that is we're going to have to do a lot
44:34 of work around that maybe in a number of
44:36 years the ministry I mean I agree with
44:39 you that if it's public money then
44:41 openness seems like a reasonable request
44:44 it's all public money these are all
44:47 publicly funded universities so so I'm
44:52 not sure that this funding is a whole
44:54 lot different than funding that
44:56 universities have received so far and
44:59 they haven't been asked to be open the
45:02 concern for us in terms of openness is
45:04 is really about faculty autonomy faculty
45:09 need to be able to make that decision
45:10 and they may come to it in some time but
45:14 but I think it will take a while to get
45:16 there yeah
45:23 it's not a very satisfying answer I know
45:26 thank you for the question hi Julia hi
45:31 I'm Patrick Lines from Carlton
45:32 University we've talked before indeed I
45:35 just have a quick question is it there's
45:38 a couple of things that you raised that
45:40 I'm wondering is it see you use
45:42 perspective that Ontario is not ready
45:46 for open educational resources in terms
45:49 of the Ontario Online initiative is it
45:52 the ministry's perspective I'm just
45:54 trying to get a sense of the context
45:55 where there might be resistance yeah I
45:59 don't think it's the ministry's
46:01 perspective I don't think the ministry
46:03 has a clear idea of what open really
46:07 means and so in that way I don't think
46:10 what I'm reflecting is there their
46:12 concern I am reflecting what COU has
46:16 heard from our members in terms of some
46:18 resistance to open educational resources
46:20 it is it for the folks that we have
46:23 talked with again we have a range of
46:26 responses some who say they must be open
46:29 they must be interoperable they should
46:32 be they should work across every
46:33 platform and that's the only thing that
46:35 makes sense and we have folks who say
46:37 under no circumstances what I ever
46:39 submit a proposal that would be open so
46:41 trying to develop consensus in there I
46:43 think it's really difficult the part
46:45 where I think that's going to that's
46:47 going to help us move forward is that
46:49 funding gets attached to it of Course
46:52 right and also that I think increasingly
46:55 we're going to see that there are ways
46:59 in which there are cost savings of all
47:01 kinds for universities but but I'm
47:04 sensitive to the fact that that's a long
47:06 time line to get to the point where
47:09 faculty are recognizing that these are
47:10 actually efficiencies and cost savings
47:12 that makes sense and can help keep
47:15 universities sustainable viable
47:17 excellent all the rest that make sense
47:19 it doesn't I think it also points the
47:22 challenge that COU faces in terms of
47:25 straddling and interesting balance
47:27 between the
47:29 you know the 20 different universities
47:31 in Ontario as well as what the ministry
47:34 is looking for right yeah I recognize
47:36 that and I'm always interested to see
47:39 how COU can advocate for institutions in
47:42 the ministry to get a balance for that I
47:45 do appreciate faster oh yeah thank you
47:48 so there's just it's uneven it's back to
47:50 the unevenness across the system yeah
47:52 that's Hu Brennon from Contact North yes
one of the things that surprises me and it probably comes out in every one of your size is the seeming impossibility for creative destruction the contrast with what we heard from example from BC Campus this morning is that it seems to be to create some open open space you do have to go to crave to destruction if you're trying to work within all the confines of departments of ministries of faculty of institutional interests at some point you just get all you can do is sigh and say yeah okay but I'm curious to know with even within a context of the Council of Ontario Universities because you're trying to to keep a system approach how can you imagine that the needed creative destruction to move the system forward in a context of a system that is so hidebound yeah mm-hmm that's my answer hahaha I don't know it's a writ so it's a major concern yeah for sure I appreciate the it's a question but it's really a comment right one that we certainly have been thinking about yeah very interesting to see how all of these is layered and to recognize that you know it's a flashback of two decades for a lot of these issue I'm curious about something you know those programs always have embedded in them a little bit of social engineering and that they their criteria will transform how universities organizations in this case university works one of the criteria was for selecting the courses that would be funded was about sharing of credits and universities were very very good at responding to criterias you know for that says jump and we say oh hi and we try to jump higher than everybody else to be the selected one and at the same time we're very good at evolving with the criteria I'm curious to see your
50:08 perspective on how this transfer of
50:11 credit will evolve - you know already you
50:14 mentioned York and Ryerson recognizing
50:16 40 courses there's another consortium
50:18 that five universities that have signed
50:20 before even the call do you see that
50:24 this call is moving universities towards
50:27 more credit transfer or is the inertia
50:30 of losing enrollment and high enrollment
50:33 courses meaning high loss of revenue is
50:37 it an inertia that's too big - mm-hmm
50:44 I think that the threat of losing high
50:48 enrollment courses or having students
50:50 leave high enrollment courses at your
50:52 institution for somewhere else I think
50:53 it's very real and it's a really big
50:55 concern and that may be the thing that
50:56 keeps university is from accepting
50:58 transfer credit arrangements down the
51:02 road I think that that there's already
51:05 momentum around credit transfer because
51:07 of on cats work and I think that will
51:09 continue and will evolve but I do think
51:12 that one of the most not even one of the
51:14 most the most important thing that this
51:16 new center has to do is figure out the
51:19 variety of cost and revenue sharing
51:21 models available it won't be one I don't
51:23 think I don't think we'll be able to say
51:25 well here's how we have money in our
51:28 in our consortium this this is the
51:30 arrangement that you have I think we're
51:31 going to have a variety of different
51:33 models that universities are going to
51:35 choose from in their own negotiations
51:39 with with partners in order to make that
51:41 possible to make it financially possible
51:44 so I don't yeah it's going to be hard
51:49 thank you
51:56 wondering Julia if there was any
51:59 consideration for this entity being
52:02 something other than say a legal entity
52:06 just step back to my role at BC Campus
52:09 that organization was configured to be
52:12 agile so it was configured as a research
52:15 project of a university rather than an
entity and that way it was able to push
some boundaries including such policy
initiatives as well here is a funding
program for the development of open
resources if you don't want to do it you
don't have to apply for it but that's
the condition of the funding program and
so I wondered if any of those ideas have
been kicked around and what kind of
response there was well we didn't have
that idea until I talk to you a few
weeks ago and then I went ah what a good
idea um you know again the idea of this
sort of incorporation the member
organization came on the heels of real
success with ONCAT and seeing how that
that group has worked has provided good
motivation and foundation for another
member organization I agree that there's
some flexibility and agility problems certainly and of
course we have this conceptual framework
that's laid over top of it that's sort
of telling us how to be but we really we
didn't come across this as an idea
frankly yeah and I think it addresses
one of the fundamental problems you
raised as well and that is being
configured as a research project means
that funding can be disbursed over
multiple years as opposed to with a
fiscal framework which allows the kind
of flexibility there faculty and staff
me so I just want to throw it out in
case it's not too late yeah i think the
paperwork for incorporation was
submitted yesterday
many thanks