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# Mixing MOOCs and Modules

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## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Professor Philip Schrag suggests that legal education has not yet engaged with MOOCs, and also outlines three views of the future for Law School MOOCs:

- 1) Law Schools might resist MOOCs to the Death (of most law schools);
- 2) A small number of elite schools will serve nearly all law students through MOOCs; or
- 3) Law schools may survive... by incorporating MOOCs

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Pistone and Hoeffner in 2013 expressed a similar view to Schrag:

*“We predict that traditional law schools will share [a] sad end... should the schools fail to understand that technology will enable—indeed, is now enabling—new legal education competition to emerge.*

*The new competition will be highly flexible, unencumbered by expensive legacy costs and, because it will reside mainly online, so scalable that no traditional law school will be immune from its impact.”*

One of the approaches they advise for law schools to adopt is “experiment, experiment, experiment”

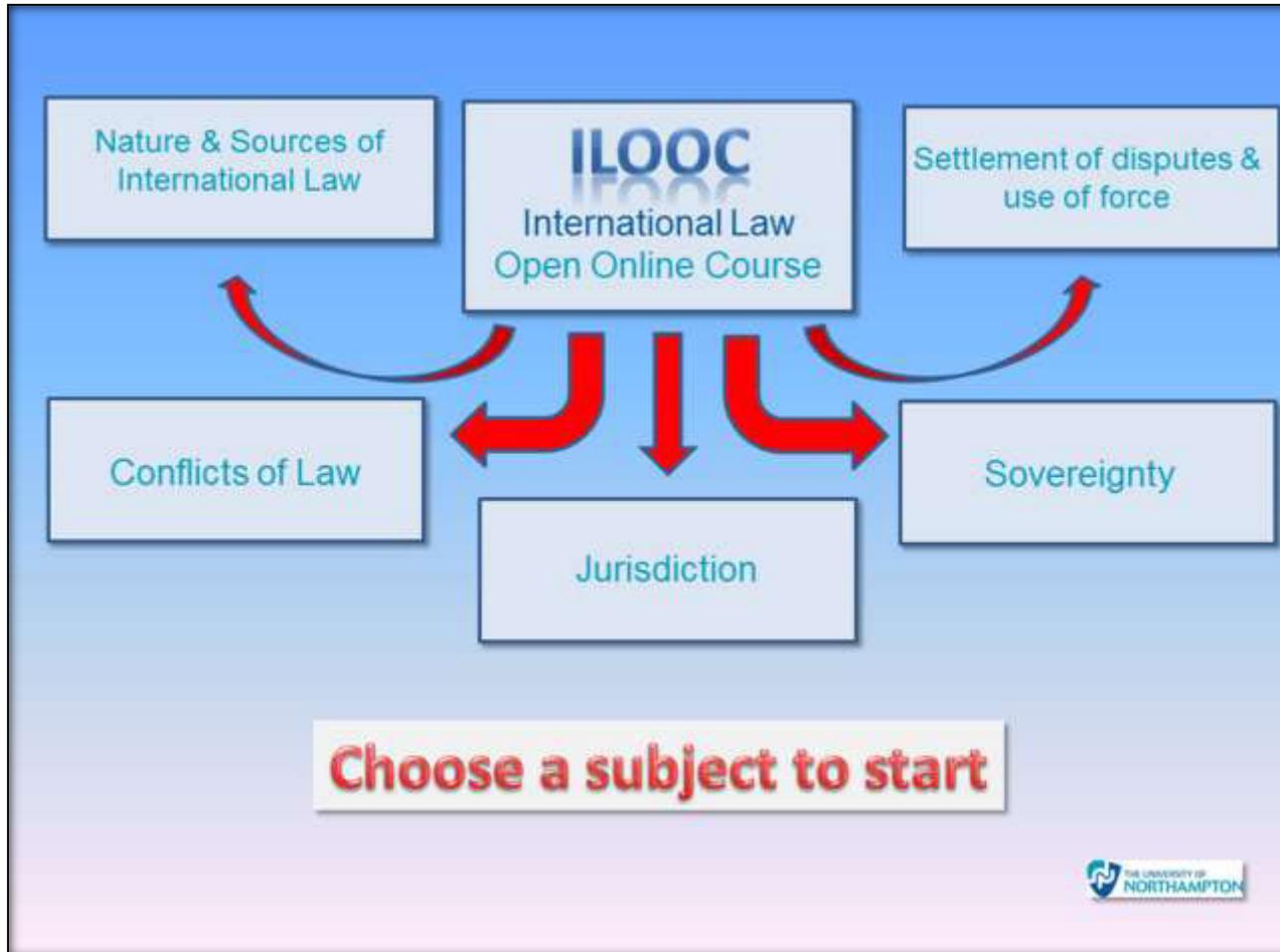
# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

# ILOOC

International Law  
Open Online Course



# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES



## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Designed to be much more than a simple online resource, or “xMOOC” – the “glorified correspondence course”

Rationale was facilitation of P2P discourse, thus encouraging the creation of a network of learners so that learners become actively engaged with each other and the content

In other words, it is a “cMOOC”

Non-linear course, no set order for subjects, though completion of some does unlock new areas

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Downes set out four key design principles for a cMOOC in 2014:

## **Autonomy**

People make their own choices, select their own path;

## **Openness**

Content in and out, people come and go;

## **Diversity**

A mosaic not a melting pot. Overt recognition that people have multiple motives, objectives, values. Includes but not limited to culture, language, technology etc.; and

## **Interactivity**

Knowledge that scales. Not a transmission model of learning, but learning as the result of growth and development

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Siemens, 2005:

Connectivism has implications for the design of learning environments.

Siemens (2011)

“content is easily duplicated and has no value”

Stephenson:

*“Experience has long been considered the best teacher of knowledge. Since we cannot experience everything, other people’s experiences, and hence other people, become the surrogate for knowledge”*

What is valuable then is the creation of a community of learners, and that is why ILOOC was developed the way it was – using various online platforms

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

### Siemens' 8 Principles of Connectivism:

- Learning & knowledge rests in diversity of opinions.
- Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources.
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances.
- Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

### Siemens' 8 Principles of Connectivism:

- Nurturing & maintaining connections is needed to facilitate continual learning.
- Ability to see connections between fields, ideas, & concepts is a core skill.
- Currency is the intent of all connectivist learning activities.
- Decision-making is itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn & the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision.

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

MoocGuide identified five possible challenges that were associated with MOOCs:

It feels chaotic as participants create their own content

It demands digital literacy

It demands time and effort from the participants

It is organic, which means the course will take on its own trajectory (you have got to let go).

As a participant you need to be able to self-regulate your learning and possibly give yourself a learning goal to achieve.

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

ILOOC was not very successful – needed very large numbers for asynchronous cMOOC in order for participants not to lose interest

(Connectivism won't work if there is no-one to connect to)

New idea...

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Year 3, Level 6, optional law module (45 students)

Deconstructed ILOOC, inserted 3 sections into the module

Some mandatory and tasks formed part of seminar work (though closed, not open)

Some voluntary and open

Some voluntary and closed



# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Level 6 module

Closed cohort

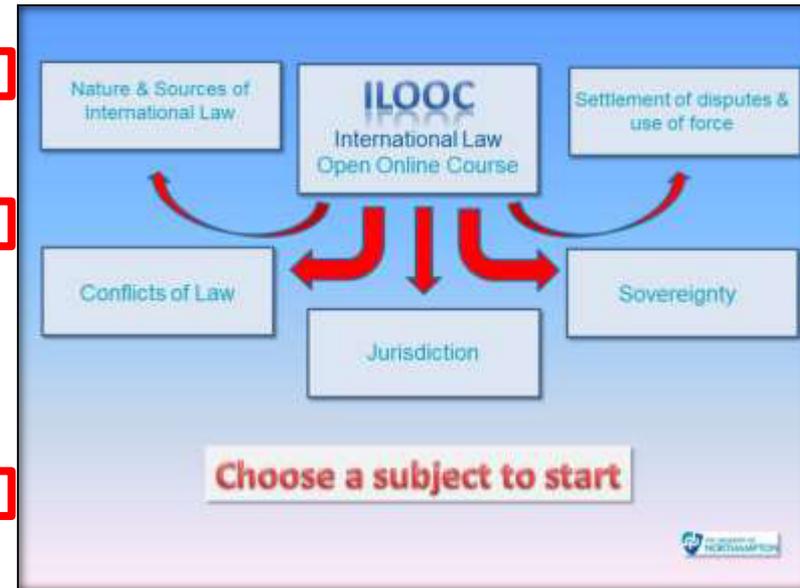
Week-by-week

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshops

LAW 3021 TERRORISM 2014-15		
Week	Commencing	Topic
1	29/09	Module Intro & Development
2	06/10	<b>RESEARCH EXERCISE</b>
3	13/10	The Nature and Definition of Terrorism
4	20/10	Methods
5	27/10	Financing Terrorism I
6	03/11	Financing Terrorism II
7	10/11	Financing Terrorism III
8	17/11	Relationship between Municipal, Regional & International Law
9	24/11	Relationship between Municipal, Regional & International Law
10	07/12	Relationship between Municipal, Regional & International Law
11	08/12	Regional Responses to Terrorism
12	15/12	PIL
22/12 – 05/01		
13	12/01	PIL
14	19/01	Case Study: Cyberterrorism
15	26/01	Case Study: Cyberterrorism
16	02/02	Case Study: Gaza & Israel
17	09/02	Case Study: Gaza & Israel
18	16/02	Case Study: ISIS
19	23/02	Case Study: ISIS
20	02/03	Case Study: Nuclear Terrorism
21	09/03	Case Study: Nuclear Terrorism
22	16/03	Role and Control of Security and Intelligence Services
23	23/03	UK Counter Terrorism
24	30/03	UK Counter Terrorism
06/04 – 13/04		

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

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24	30/03	UK Counter Terrorism
06/04 - 13/04		



## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

### Task 1:

Mandatory (part of standard seminar work)

Closed (only available to module students)

5 teams, each a UNSC member

Meeting, plus 15-minute video outlining that country's response to a fictional draft resolution of the UNSC relating to the conflict between Israel and Palestine

Completed by 32/45

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Task 2:

Voluntary

Open (alongside any ILOOC participants who were online at the time)

Public International Law, Private International Law, and knowledge-check (multiple choice test)

Completed by 15/45

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Task 3:

Voluntary (same group as Task 2)

Closed

Similar activities to Task 2

Completed by 15/45

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

## Feedback from students:

- Idea & signposting were good
- Limited interaction with network (focus was on content/level at this stage)
- Risk of who is involved outside class group
- Got more of a sense of belonging in a classroom setting. Pychyl:  
“There’s no doubt that not being in a social context changes a learning environment, and you’re going to lose some things”

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

### Feedback from students:

- Online session lonely (some “alone in company”)
- More obvious if people aren’t engaging:  
“in a classroom setting, a room full of 25 people may contain 5 participants, but the rest of the group feel, and are felt to be, “present”, whereas in an online environment, even with the same proportion of participation, it feels as though only 5 people are there”
- Lack of contact with tutor –online contact didn’t “count”
- Level was fine – ILOOC was designed partly as one element of a bridging course to M-level

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Are Schrag et al right that this is the future of law schools?

In 1968, Norman Dalkey wrote:

*"The notion that the future is hidden – that prediction is in the realm of seers, necromancers and other unsavory types – is part of our cultural heritage.*

*It makes the engineer qualify any comment about twenty years from now with great caution; and when it comes to predicting social change, it keeps the eye of the social scientist on day after tomorrow.*

*Of course, there are better reasons than the traditional distrust of the fortune teller for circumspection.*

*Technological breakthroughs, or major social events, involve enormously complex processes for most of which we only have a dim understanding."*

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

As it was in 1968, so it is today.

The time of the pure MOOC may be now, or tomorrow, though most likely it was yesterday.

Kolowich (2015)

“The MOOC hype has been flagging since mid-2013, when it started becoming clear that this particular breed of online course would not transform the economics of mainstream higher education”

Equally, it seems probable that legal education tomorrow will not be the same as it was yesterday – notwithstanding the LETR.

## MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

Can MOOCs be monetized and still MOOCs?

Smith (2015) talks of “freemium” approach – MOOC is free, certificate costs

Also says that Udemy have successfully monetized MOOCs

Have they?

Their courses are massive and online, but are they truly open if they cost?

# MIXING MOOCS AND MODULES

## **Conclusion**

Small group of students & tailor-made cMOOC – would impact be different with more students and existing xMOOC?

Does not meet Siemens' 1<sup>st</sup> principle very well

A blend of MOOC elements alongside more traditional learning and teaching allows students to explore the network from a structured platform – it is a compromise, but a useful one