Application Form 'Innovate Your Education' - EDUiLAB

Personal details
Applicant:

> Hans Dooremalen
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> I am the course coordinator of the Philosophy of Science for Psychologist course (course code 425034-B-6). I teach this course together with Michael Vlerick.
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School & Department:

> Department of Philosophy
> Tilburg School of Humanities and Digital Science

Project details
Project Name:

Pilot MOOC Philosophy of Science for Psychologists

Problem Analysis / Motivation:

The initiative of the proposed project stems from the desire to democratize education.

The co-teacher of this *Philosophy of Science for Psychologist* course – Michael Vlerick – has recently written a book *The Second Alienation* (in Dutch, *De Tweede Vervreemding*, 2019, Lanoo). The book contains a plan for tackling the major challenges humanity faces, like climate change, poverty, and mass migration. Without going into details, part of the solution is to *democratize education*. This means that we should make education available to everyone. Part of the democratization of education is to develop MOOCs that are available to anyone with a mobile phone and access to some telecom network. I quote from Michael's book:

'So-called MOOCs or *Massive Online Open Courses* offer online education that is usually of very good quality. These online series of lectures are often offered for free and today already reach six million people (and that figure is increasing very quickly) who would often otherwise never have access to education at such a level. [...] Providing the opportunity for self-development to everyone, regardless of the country and the economic situation in which one is born, starts with giving everyone access to quality education. Until recently this was a utopian idea, but today it is increasingly a realistic prospect. Online education offers the opportunity to make Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to education", more than just an empty promise.' (Vlerick, 2019, p. 212, translation mine.)

This is in line with the idea that we at Tilburg University do not only want to understand society, but that want to use that knowledge to advance society. Developing MOOCs fits our university's mission: 'We strive to advance society by deepening our understanding of society. We educate our students with the aim of developing the knowledge, skills, and character they need in order to confront today's challenges. Connected as we are with society, we engage in excellent research for the sake of the "good life" for all.' (TiU, Connecting to Advance Society, Strategy 2018-2021, p. 8) Developing MOOCs at Tilburg University would be a small contribution to bring about the good life for everyone on the planet.

At this moment there is – as far as I know – no MOOC at Tilburg University, other than the one by Marie Postma, which is not hosted at our own university. This project is intended as a pilot that has two goals. The first goal is to actually turn the course into a MOOC. The second goal – which automatically will be fulfilled if the first one is - is to answer questions like: what does it take to turn a course into a MOOC that will be available globally, what is the best protocol for testing participants and can they obtain a certificate to show that they passed the course? Can we do this at low costs? Can the university host the website itself?

We expect – hope – that if we have successful pilot, other lecturers might also want to turn their courses into MOOCs.

Action Plan / Solution:

We need to hire a couple of assistants who can help us with both this project and with our regular work, so we free up some time for Michael and me to look into many of the details involved in turning the course into a MOOC.

First, an inventory needs to be made of the practical problems we face and what the possible solutions are. We do not need to do all the research ourselves, but can look at universities that already have MOOCs and how they solved practical problems (like: how to give access to the course without actually being enrolled as a student at out university? How to separate students that can take the course for free because they are actually poor and the ones that can pay for the course?)

Second, we need to see how we can implement this (or any other) MOOC at out university.

Initial solutions to obvious problems
We need to have examinations for the students of the MOOC. One way to do this is to have a large database with multiple choice questions & generate different exams for different students (also by mixing up the answers of the questions). Since we have been making exams with MC-questions for this course, and make new ones for every new exam, we already have quite a large database with questions. The database could easily be updated each year with the new questions we used for the regular version of the course.

Communication with the students
We would probably never have proposed to turn our course into a MOOC, if our COVID-19 version of the course did not have such an overall overwhelmingly positive evaluation. We never made our recordings with the idea of turning them into a MOOC. Part of reason why we had such positive evaluation was probably the way we communicated with the students. Many students have emailed us & we emailed them back, and we had several Q&A sessions. It looks like this is important, and it is

something we should look at how we could also provide this service to the students of the MOOC. At least the Q&A sessions should be made possible. This does not take up much time, for it does not require any preparation for the lecturers. So, this would be just a couple of hours each year.

A way to respond to questions that come via email, is to make knowledge clips in which we answer these questions. This can easily be done with a mobile phone & access to the platform to upload these additional knowledge clips. They could be posted in a FAQ part of the course, which over the years then would naturally expand.

Course material
Clearly the material for the course should be digital. We need to look into this. At the moment Michael has his own pdf's on Canvas (but he wants to turn that into a textbook), and I have a textbook that is at the moment only available a hardcopy & copyrights are shared with the publisher. We need to figure out a way that we have free online course materials.

We have some quizzes & puzzles that students can use to check whether they have a good grasp of the course material, so they can prepare for the exam. For now these arte in Canvas, but they can easily be modified for another platform.

Intended Results (with respect to educational relevance, sustainability, dissemination, innovation):

Intended result #1: the Philosophy of Science for Psychologists course actually has been turned into a MOOC & students can enroll from academic year 2022-2023.

Intended result #2: generating and answering all the questions that need to be answered pertaining to how MOOCs could be created at Tilburg University. This might be helpful for any lecturer that wants to turn their course into a MOOC.

Intended result #3: the course should be available at low-cost & low-maintenance.

Description of planned project activities and timetable:

Activity	By whom	When	Number of Hours
Make a course design for the MOOC	HD, MV with help from instructional designer	September 2021	
Making inventory of practical problems and possible solutions	HD, MV, assistants	September 2021	
Looking at recorded lectures to see whether they need change	HD, MV, assistants	October 2021	
Talk to IT to see how we can host the clips & the exams	HD, MV	October 2021	
Putting all MC-questions of the last years into one big file that we can later use	assistants	October 2021	
Changing the recordings if needed	HD, MV	November, December 2021	
Developing the website	IT	November, December 2021	
Putting everything on the website (not publicly available)	IT		

Amount requested / draft budget:

We are applying for funds to appoint student assistants who will, on the one hand, perform tasks in the project (see above) and, on the other hand, can take over tasks from both teachers so that we ourselves can create space to work on the project.

During the months of September, October, November and December 2021, we request 2 times 125 hours of student assistant, a total of 250 hours: **250 hours * € 25 = € 6,250**

In addition, we expect to need a budget for professional development of the MOOC. This could include costs for professional video recordings and/or website design. For this we estimate **€ 3000,-**

Total requested budget: € 9,250.

GDRP: will personal data be recorded from students[1]?

> No data will be recorded from students.

[1] The general Data Protection Regulation came into force on 25 May 2018. When you work with personal data, you have to record what happens to these data. Personal data includes everything that can be used to identify a person, such as name, student number, email, gender or telephone number. Do you want to use new software or an online service in your education? Then it is possible that the provider will process one of these personal details. If necessary, together with EDUilAB, we will check whether sensitive data is stored and, if so, whether it is sufficiently protected.

By this signing the application, the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions as set out in the regulations in the Innovate Your Education Program.

Name Applicant	Name Innovation Coordinator
Hans Dooremalen	Petra Heck

Date	Date
19-05-2021	19-05-2021

Signature

Signature