

For this experiment, I enrolled and reviewed the edX course “Leading change: Go Beyond Gamification with Gameful Learning” (edX, 2017). This course was instructed by two professors who were subject matter experts from the University of Michigan. The course covered *“What makes games such good learning environments? What kind of “game” is school (and how can we make it a better game)? How do we support teachers in growing their skills for Gameful learning? What is the relationship between motivation and learning?”*

This was my first experience taking a MOOC and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The instructors did a fantastic job laying out the MOOC curriculum and expectations for the students. It had very clear learning objectives, quizzes to test for understanding, and created a “visual” course map so you understood how to maneuver your way through the curriculum path. Having read up on MOOCs in this week’s assignments, it kind of set my expectation on what a MOOC was versus wasn’t prior to starting the course. Setting my expectations made it hard for me to pick the course apart, as I experienced much of what was explained in the readings.

There are a few recommendations for the course designers that might make it more engaging and effective. The three areas I found they could make improvements on were the following:

- 1) There were no course materials that supported their video lessons (job aids, etc.). I would’ve liked to walk away with learning materials outside of the videos and script, that would continue to aid or support me in these learnings. I think that would be helpful for any MOOC. I plan to take more MOOC’s, so I will be able to see if this is something other courses provide and how they provide the supporting material.

2) When posting question's in the Q&A forum, you only got responses from other students if someone was interested in responding. If you truly struggled understanding a certain topic, you were not able to get a response immediately, and may not get a response at all. I believe one of the biggest issues of MOOCs, is the interaction between student-to-student, or teacher-student is non-existent or can vary significantly.

3) The courses provided too many discussions between the instructors which is great, but sometimes you felt you were getting their point of view on a topic in that type of forum. Discussions between the professors seemed more opinion-based vs. fact based. The course material discussed gameful learning in the classroom, but did not show you how to create gameful learning step-by-step in the classroom. Some of the discussions were good for a viewpoint, but dependent on if that's how you like to learn. Also, they could've made the course "gameful learning" to give you a true sense of what it feels like to experience "gameful learning." Newton (2015) discusses how having teachers watch their peers model classroom methods in real time has already proven to be an effective way of helping them improve their practice. "Being able to actually see teaching practices being modeled, as opposed to just being lectured on concepts, is a game changer."

Overall this was a great experiment as my first experience with a MOOC. I can see the advantages and disadvantages that were discussed in the readings for the week. Overall, I think it's a great way to learn if you don't have the money for higher education, and would like to learn a specific skillset, or more about a subject in general.

**Reference:**

edX. (2017). Leading change: Go beyond gamification with gameful learning. Retrieved from <https://courses.edx.org/courses/course-v1:MichiganX+GL101x+1T2017/course/>

Newton, D (June 23, 2015). The (accidental) power of MOOCs. Retrieved by <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/06/the-secret-power-of-moocs/396608/>