

## **Future Directions and Challenges of E-Learning: A Panel Conversation of E-Learning Leaders**

Want to know what e-learning will look like in 2020 or 2025? Interested in the untapped potential and emerging niche or growth areas? Or might you want to better understand the challenges awaiting each of these new possibilities of e-learning? The E-Learn executive committee, program co-chairs, and preconference symposium participants will come together to offer their sage insights, advice, stories, and projections about the paths and possibilities awaiting e-learning in the coming decade. They will also be interested in audience suggestions about the topics, trends, and tools that this particular conference might address or embrace in the next few years. Audience questions and suggestions will be solicited throughout this novel event. Come to this unique and timely invited panel and listen, learn, and share. Join us...we want to hear from each of you!

**Panelists:** Jon Dron, Sanjaya Mishra, Stephanie Panke, Thomas C. Reeves, Saul Carliner, Sheila Jagannathan, Paul Kim, Christopher Devers, Gjoa Andrichuk, Theo Bastiaens, Rajiv Jhangiani

**Moderators:** Curtis J. Bonk and Thomas H. Reynolds

### **Sample Questions:**

#### **Muddling Up OER and Open Education Confusion Craze**

1. Do you see the adoption of OER in your institution or in institutions you consult with as: (a) slow as molasses, (b) a tad pokey, or (c) refreshingly rapid?
2. In recent research reports, faculty seem slow in understanding, adapting, and sharing OER. What needs to be done to improve faculty participation? What barriers need to be removed? How might this be accomplished?
3. With the surging interest in openness, is the designation or labeling of something in education as "open" just going to become another meaningless label (akin to how "organic" is applied to food)?
4. Does David Wiley's 5Rs of openness (i.e., retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute) help frame the situation? What is missing from the framework? What is misunderstood?

#### **Binge, Bulk, and Informal Bit Learning:**

1. A September 22, 2017 article cites research that bingeing content may be highly effective. What can the field of online learning learn from Netflix, if anything?  
<https://news.elearninginside.com/binge-learning-online-education-can-learn-netflix/>
2. Is "binge learning" (or MOOC binge watching) online learning's next killer app? (e.g., see: <https://theumlaut.com/binge-learning-is-online-education-s-killer-app-84da18f8ae76>; see also <https://associationsnow.com/2014/01/will-binge-learning-become-the-new-binge-watching/>)
3. Some folks in Africa have been bulking up on MOOCs while they are free. Some have taken hundreds of MOOCs, for instance. Now that MOOC vendors like Udacity and Coursera are charging fees for the assessment or certification of learning from MOOCs, what impact might this have on developing country participation?
4. Binge learning lands us in the areas of informal learning and interest-based learning and independent learning. As informal, interest-based, and independent forms of learning accelerate, what happens to traditional e-learning?

### **Outsourcing Content Design, Delivery, and Assessment:**

1. **Outsourcing:** Is outsourcing of e-learning the new “in” thing? Have anyone on the panel been tracking this? Who are some of the reputable vendors (and less reputable ones)?
2. **Content Design:** Will the role of institutions of higher learning be altered to primarily design content? What about outside vendors? What is their role in this online learning gambit?
3. **Content Delivery:** Will MOOCs become the primary delivery mode for the learning of content? If not, what else do you envision emerging? What new forms of e-learning are beginning to surface now? Might delivery become outsourced as well? If so, what happens to all of us?
4. **Assessment and Evaluation:** Will the role of faculty and institutions of higher education increasingly focus on the assessment, evaluation and certification of experiences gained through study via MOOCs or other learning? Might there arise in institutions of higher learning assessment centers or some type of assessment fulfillment centers related to e-learning? Or might we increasingly utilize virtual graders/markers from India and the Philippines?

### **Welcome to the Future:**

1. Everyone here in the audience wants to know your prophecies or projections related to the future trends in technology and learning related to e-learning. If you had one crucial prediction that you think it can't be missed in terms of technology impacting learning, what would it be?
2. What are some of the areas or gaps that we have missed and are yet to be explored by anyone? Can any of you map out or describe the little known but fast emerging areas in e-learning or blended learning?
3. Will MOOCs, OER, and other innovative forms of e-learning eventually equalize educational access or move the needle in that direction? Can MOOCs or some other form of e-learning lead to more cultural tolerance and understanding?
4. What might learning look like not just next year but in the decade beyond 2020? What is in your crystal ball for the future?
5. What should the E-Learn conference begin to address so as to attract more people to it? What is missing? What is overdone?
6. Does anyone from the audience have any suggestions for the conference?