

Deeper Learning MOOC (DLMOOC)

A free, flexible, nine-week online course that will allow K-16 educators to learn about how deeper learning can be put into practice

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Posted on **January 11, 2014** by **Karen Fasimpaur**

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Form a DLMOOC group

*** Jan. 21, 2014 update: Lots of great DLMOOC groups are forming. [Join one here](#), or form a new one! ***

We think “massive” is great — it lends a diversity of perspectives and a breadth of new connections to learn from.

But massive also has its drawbacks. With thousands of participants in a course like this, it can be hard to keep up with all the great conversations and challenging to find others with similar situations to talk more in-depth with.

That’s why we’re encouraging DLMOOC participants to **think about forming small sub-groups with others in the course**. Those groups can be face-to-face or virtual and can be based on common interests. Groups can be formed among people you already know (like teachers at your school) or ones you don’t (e.g. secondary art teachers around the world).



Each group should have a facilitator. The group facilitator(s) will be responsible for setting up a place for the group to meet (either f2f or virtually), recruiting group members, communicating with group members about how they will interact, and coordinating group activities. These responsibilities can be shared with other group members (and we can help too), but we’ve found that having a designated facilitator is critical to group cohesion.

Virtual groups

One option is to consider forming a small virtual group that meets online. This could be with a group of others you know or ones you don’t, and group members could be in a variety of places around the world. Think about a common bond you might form a group around, like grade level, subject matter, or interests like PBL or the use of deeper learning strategies in higher ed classrooms.

If you’re interested in forming a virtual group and would like to connect with others, [add your name to this list](#). We will try to group similar interests together with a facilitator for each group, but you should also feel free to sort this spreadsheet to form groups with others with like interests. You can also join more than one group if you like.

F2F groups

F2F groups are another great way to participate in a MOOC together, providing that there are others in your area participating.

Groups might meet weekly for 1-2 hours and will probably work best if each meeting is at the same location and on the same time and day of the week. You could meet at your workplace, at someone’s house, or at a local coffeeshop. Each week you might want to talk about things like the readings, the panel discussion, and how this all relates to your own educational setting.

If you’re interested in exploring a f2f group and would like to connect with others in your city, [add your name here](#). If there are others in your area with a similar interest and if a facilitator is available, we will pass your information along.

Helpful suggestions

If you’re thinking of forming a group, here are some ideas that might help:

- **Make sure to have a group facilitator.** This person(s) will be instrumental in setting up a meeting space (either f2f or online) and helping to coordinate your group activities.
- **Give your group a name and hashtag** (e.g. Bay area middle schoolers, #baymsdlmooc) and use these whenever you post so you can find each others’ posts.
- A good group size might be somewhere between 20 and 40 people, give or take. Inevitably, some people won’t be able to participate, so this should give you enough to maintain a critical mass.
- **Set up an online community in G+ where your small group can connect.** Make sure to include DLMOOC in the description so we can all check out what different groups are doing. (Here is more information on [how to set up a G+ community](#). We’d suggest making it a public group that anyone can join.)
- **Plan some specific group activities that you think will help you meet your goals.** These might include watching the panel discussions together, weekly G+ hangouts, Skype calls, working through “Put it Into Practice” activities together, or something else. We will also suggest some group activities in our weekly emails and posts.
- Be flexible to meet your group’s needs.

Please let us know what you think about these ideas and how your groups are going as we proceed by posting a comment here or in the [DLMOOC G+ community](#). And if you have your own suggestions for successful grouping, share those too. We are anxious to see what you all do! As groups are formed, we’ll post links to them in the G+ community.

This entry was posted in [Uncategorized](#) and tagged [groups](#) by [Karen Fasimpaur](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

4 THOUGHTS ON “FORM A DLMOOC GROUP”



[Patrick Yurick](#) on **January 12, 2014 at 11:48 pm** said:

This is an amazing article and I think has implications to help in almost any other MOOC that is based in a qualitative, meaningful, learning experience intended for student participants. Thanks for sharing!

[Reply ↓](#)



[Dirk Mast](#) on **January 14, 2014 at 1:25 am** said:

Hello Karen: This is a great idea for making connections when the overall group size is too large. When there is too much information procrastination can set in, as often it is difficult to figure out what to do next due to the overwhelming volume of info.

Your post, however, was the mental nudge I needed to tie together some pedagogical concepts that I want to put in place for the school I am starting.

Covenant Global School (www.covenantglobalschool.com) has part of its structure the goal to build a database of support and resource people (see the outer ring of the wheel on my front page) and your post made me realize that DLMOOC’s are another method to develop connections with these people! Thanks!

Then, some other ideas clicked into place.

I have set up a subset of the school called Connexsis Educational Services that is setting up and providing expeditions, day trips, flash leaning events, hacking events, etc for CGS students, as well as for any others who wish to participate in these outings and activities, such as:

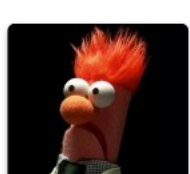
- home schooled kids
- gifted and talented kids attending public schools or even other private schools
- even adults!

So, now I can see that I can start developing DLMOOC’s for my students as well as encouraging them to connect with other students from all sorts of other educational institutions. It can be higher ed, or same K-12; it can be local or out of province; it can be international.

What an exciting insight for Covenant Global School. This can be another piece the puzzle to broaden and deepen the educational experience for our students!

Dirk

[Reply ↓](#)



Mark Arnold on **January 27, 2014 at 12:48 am** said:

Thank you Karen. Your article makes me think about this small group ideas translates even for school PLCs or even at the classroom level – paired with past thoughts about Critical Friends Group process. What benefits this holds as we extend our f2f learning environments with online learning environments.

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