From Distance Universities to Universities without Distance: Engagement and social commitment at UOC

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Engagement at UOC

"Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit."

NCCPE

Ultimate goal: to better connect the work of universities with society

How do we understand and promote engagement at UOC, a 100% online university?
Our roadmap for engagement
With special focus on SDG 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
Distance Learning Universities

- **Open University (UK) - 1969**
- **FernUniversität in Hagen - 1974**
- **Open Universiteit (NL) - 1984**
- **UOC - 1995**
- **Open University of Cyprus (OUC) - 2002**
- **Università Telematica Internazionale UNINETUNO - 2005**

1st Online

Online Universities (Virtual Campus based)
The university in the digital society

Incremental evolution

Most on-line universities
Audiovisual taping
60/90 minutes lectures
Face-to-face sessions are rewarded
The professor and the institution are at the centre
(synchrony when decided)

Disruptive change

UOC 1995
Re-engineered University
The students activity is central
100% asynchrony plus virtuality
Teaching resources "industrialized" with a common pedagogic pattern (no art-craft from the professor)
Virtual lecture-room plus accompaniment from tutor and collaborator professor
Continuous evaluation

UNIVERSITY

- Face-to-face sessions of 90 minutes
- The professor is at the centre
- The professor transmits his/her knowledge to the students
* Data for academic year 2016/2017

Graduates*  
64,512

Students*  
58,383

Teaching staff  
4,330

Tutors  
615
58,383 Students

93% study and have a job

61% are aged 30 or over

* Data for academic year 2016/2017
New enrolments in the Catalan HE system

Data for the academic year 2016/2017
93% of the graduates would choose the UOC again

Profile of UOC’s Graduates

Level of satisfaction
(On a scale from 1 to 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in professional skills</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in capabilities for professional activity</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment systems</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in communication skills</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

64,512 graduates

59.6% women
40.4% men

60.6% Catalonia
34.3% rest of Spain
3.4% rest of the world
1.7% European Union

93% employed
60% have a job related with the degree course

Why do they study?
84% To expand their knowledge and progress in their career

Where are they

After they graduate...
81% wish to keep ties with the UOC
53.1% are in touch with former classmates from the UOC

They choose the UOC
48% allows them to manage their own time
34% could study wherever they wanted

Data for the academic year 2016/2017
UOC students are based in 134 different countries
The Challenge

How to become a distance university without distance?

or

How to be a locally and globally engaged online university with social impact?
Engagement through a unique educational model

Dynamic and flexible

Continuous and Formative Assessment

Student Support

Educational staff

Tutor

Student

Coordinating professor

Course instructor

Provides individualized mentoring and guidance to students during their academic life at the UOC.

Tools and resources

Teaching support

Networked community

Competency-based assessment

Innovation

Research
Engagement as a contribution to widening access & offering quality online education for all

4.3 - By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4.5 - By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable.
Graph by Prof. Xavier Grau, Secretary of Universities and Research, Generalitat de Catalunya

**Evolution of European Research Universities and Students/Population**

**Sources:**
Expansion in global higher education ‘has increased inequality’, Times Higher Education (2016)
The demand for tertiary education is increasing globally. OCDE estimates that in 2009 it was of 100 million people and by 2030 will be of 400 million people. In order to satisfy this demand by 2030 it will be necessary to create 2 universities for 20,000 students per day during the next 20 years.

*www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/highereducationto2030vol1demography.htm
An Adaptive Trust-based e-assessment System for Learning

Total Budget: 7 M€
(6 M€ from EU)

18 Partners (130 members)
8 Universities       3 Quality Agencies
4 Research Centers       3 Enterprises
Facial recognition
Voice recognition
Typing patterns
Anti-plagiarism
Forensic analysis
Time stamping
Face antispoofing
Voice antispoofing
UOC works together with higher education institutions, higher education ministries / governments and quality agencies, sharing the experience made at UOC and promoting quality online education around the world.

System level and personalised approach (no one-size fits all solution).

Latest collaboration experiences: Jordan, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Ecuador.
Students with functional diversity at the UOC

The UOC is the Catalan university with the highest number of students with functional diversity.
Scholarship programme for refugees

1st call in Feb 2017

- Language courses
- 25 students aged between 19 and 34
- From Syria and Afghanistan

2nd call in September 2017:

- Language courses and Postgraduate specializations
- 36 students aged between 19 and 50
- From Syria, Sahara and other 10 countries

3rd call in September 2018:

- Language courses, postgraduate specializations and open courses
- 27 students aged between 20 and 46
- From Venezuela, Honduras, Colombia, El Salvador and other 8 countries

Lebanon welcome programme

- Spanish courses
- 17 students aged between 21 and 47
- From Syria, Kurdistan, Pakistan and Palestine
Engagement through global competences

4.7 - By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others [...] global citizenship.
Joint Master degree in conflictology

Starting date: 2013
More than 130 students from 69 countries
Virtual massive mobility programmes

The exchanged students study **one or more courses at UOC classrooms** while they continue studying the rest of their degree in their home University.

1<sup>st</sup> pilot in **Sep 2016**
700 students from Uniminuto (Colombia)

2<sup>nd</sup> pilots in **Sep 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>UCC (Colombia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>DUOC (Chile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>UPCH (Peru)</td>
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Participatory final projects

Inspired in the idea of the Science Shops, UOC offers in a pilot project to its student the possibility of realizing their final project through participatory research that tries to give solutions to real world problems.
Engagement through open knowledge

Open Knowledge Action Plan

- Open Access
- Open Data (FAIR)
- Open Educational Resources
- Open Innovation
- Open to Society
- Models of evaluation
Being a locally and globally engaged online University

➢ To contribute to the education of global citizens and global professionals
➢ To enhance the quality of education and research
➢ To make a meaningful contribution to society
Grateful for your attention!