

# **WORLD SCIENCE: PROBLEMS, PROSPECTS AND INNOVATIONS**

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13.	<b><i>Hudyma O. P.</i></b> APPROACH TO ASSESS THE CAPACITY TO PROVIDE THE SITUATION CENTER WITH INFORMATION FROM SPACECRAFT.	91
14.	<b><i>Jishkariani M., Tsotskhalashvili S.</i></b> USING GOOGLE SHEETS TO ANALYZE ELECTRICITY TARIFFS.	97
15.	<b><i>Kabyl A. A.</i></b> HEROIC PERSONALITY IN THE HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE.	102
16.	<b><i>Khimmataliev D. O., Rakhimboeva G.</i></b> FORMATION OF INFORMATION COMPETENCE IN LESSONS BY THE PROJECT METHOD.	108
17.	<b><i>Koba L. V., Zhuikova A. E., Makarova M. O.</i></b> FUNCTIONAL STATE OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS FROM THE FACULTY OF BIOLOGY CHARACTERIZED BY DIFFERENT CHRONOTYPES.	112
18.	<b><i>Kolecka A. M.</i></b> THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL DIMENSION OF PLAY ACTIVITY IN CHILD`S HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT.	118
19.	<b><i>Krynychko L. R., Vatanov A. R.</i></b> MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTUAL AND CATEGORY APPARATUS OF THE STATE MANAGEMENT OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM.	130
20.	<b><i>Mustafaeva Ye. Yu., Aliyev Nihan Alipasha oghlu</i></b> SOLVABILITY OF A NONLOCAL BOUNDARY VALUE PROBLEM FOR A THREE-DIMENSIONAL MIXED TYPE EQUATION.	136
21.	<b><i>Mironchuk Z., Maletska O.</i></b> EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOFTWARE ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS AND PROSPECTS THEIR DEVELOPMENT.	143
22.	<b><i>Nahornyi V. V., Nahorna N. O., Kaplaushenko T. M.</i></b> CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES LMS OPEN EDX FOR ORGANIZATION MOOC.	146
23.	<b><i>Novruzi Nurlana Azad kızı, Talibov Tariyel Huseynali oglu</i></b> THE PLANTS OF GARAGUSH MOUNTAIN PRODUCE NECTAR AND FLOWER POWDER.	151
24.	<b><i>Durru Oguz, Niyazbekova R. K., Kupeshev A. Sh.</i></b> METHODS OF ASSESSING COMPETITIVE COMMODITY.	160
25.	<b><i>Pavlenko O., Pryshchepa Ye., Tymoshenko A.</i></b> MULTILATE MEMORY OF ELEMENT.	166
26.	<b><i>Protsak T. V., Zabrods`ka O. S.</i></b> FORMATION OF MEDICAL EDUCATION.	171
27.	<b><i>Polutrenko M. S., Hrytsulyak H. M., Kotsyubynsky A. O., Savyuk R. M.</i></b> RESOURCE-SAVING TECHNOLOGIES OF PROCESSING OF STORKS OF HERACLEUM SOSNOWSKYI MANDEN.	175

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**Abstract:** the article analyzes the main features of LMS open edX, specifies the specifics and basic approaches to working with the interface and structural components of the system and analyzed massive open online courses (MOOCs).

**Keywords:** distance learning, massive online courses, MOOC, open edX, open education.

Modern society is characterized by the rapid development of distance education technologies based on the Internet. The growing popularity of this form of education leads to revision of traditional teaching and its modification. One of the most popular distance education is mass open online course (MOOC). Developed with the participation of large universities or financial corporations, MOOCs are an effective tool for the development of independent learning, expanding the educational environment of the university, and retraining employees.

A massive open online course (MOOC /mu:k/) is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the Web [1]. In addition to traditional course materials, such as filmed lectures, readings, and problem sets, many MOOCs provide interactive courses with user forums or social media discussions to support community interactions among students, professors, and teaching assistants (TAs), as

well as immediate feedback to quick quizzes and assignments. MOOCs are a widely researched development in distance education [2]. Early MOOCs (cMOOCs) often emphasized open-access features, such as open licensing of content, structure and learning goals, to promote the reuse and remixing of resources. Some later MOOCs (xMOOCs) use closed licenses for their course materials while maintaining free access for students [3].

The purpose of the article is to analyze the possibilities of LMS open edX for organizing MOOC - open educational courses [4].

At the moment, there are a fairly large number of functioning platforms and systems on which they are presented as separate lectures, lessons, or entire courses. The most famous are the following platforms: Coursera (<https://www.coursera.org>), edX (<https://www.edx.org>), Udacity (<https://www.udacity.com>), MIT Open Course Ware (<http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm>), Academic Earth (<http://academicearth.org>), Khan.

For MOOC, special platforms are used that allow you to place educational materials, control the stages of training, manage groups of students. One of the free popular platforms is Open edX.

The open edX platform includes a functional visual editor. For each of the components of the system, it allows you to customize the visibility, its availability, control conditions.

The main component is called "unit" and is a container for other components.

**The most commonly used groups of components include:**

- discussions" (forums),
- "problems" (contain various control units,
- "video" (allows you to upload or use links to an external source),
- additional (contains advanced features and components, including the ability to connect external services).

Test items contain two tabs: basic and advanced. The system supports "classic" tests, multi-selection, numeric or text input, the ability to leave feedback, tests for dragging an object.

EdX courses consist of weekly learning sequences. Each learning sequence is composed of short videos interspersed with interactive learning exercises, where students can immediately practice the concepts from the videos. The courses often include tutorial videos that are similar to small on-campus discussion groups, an online textbook, and an online discussion forum where students can post and review questions and comments to each other and teaching assistants. In blended learning models, traditional classes include an online interactive component.

For us, the MOOC format, while foregrounding some long-established debates in e-learning, also provokes what may be new questions about the contemporary project of higher education and its pedagogies.

All of these MOOC platforms appear to justify their status by promoting curricula that are equivalent to campus-based courses, with a strong focus on content delivery and an emphasis on the rigor and formality of their assessment methods. However, some of the most interesting and innovative practices in online education have emerged by challenging these very ideas; loosening institutional control of learning outcomes and assessment criteria, shifting from a focus on content delivery to a foregrounding of process, community and learning networks, and working with more exploratory assessment methods – digital and multimodal assignments, peer assessment and group assignments, for example.

The promotion of self-assessment and open curricula in the ‘connectivist’ MOOCs, while pedagogically interesting, may not fit so well across other disciplines, and thus it remains on the radical fringes of what the higher education sector might be prepared to more fully endorse.

The question of scale also highlights another core issue we have been concerned with in our conventional online teaching – that of contact and dialogue between tutors and students, and between students themselves. We would hold that this is what drives good online education: contact may be heavily mediated, but it is still there, and it is still the key determinant of generative teaching and high levels of student satisfaction.

How can the notion of ‘contact’ operate with the high enrolment numbers typically participating in MOOC courses? These huge numbers, often in the region of hundreds of thousands, are publicised enthusiastically by Coursera, Udacity and edX alike.

MOOCs have received overwhelming media attention over the last year, and some of the expectations surrounding them are being over-hyped and oversold. But our view is that while MOOCs and the open education movement generally may not achieve everything – the democratisation of education, or the freeing of the world’s knowledge – they can achieve something.

They can open up good teaching and interesting curricula to new groups of learners; they can help draw students into higher education who might otherwise not have ventured there; they can engage unprecedented numbers; and they can be a vehicle to continue to push at our collective notions of what constitutes the educational project.

Online education is a trend-ridden field, and MOOCs might be seen as just another – rather high-profile – piece of ed-tech du jour. However, in their sheer scale, in the rapidity of their rise and in the profound issues they appear to be raising regarding the purposes of higher education and the future of the university, they are clearly something genuinely new, something more than simply modish. For this reason, they are surely worth serious engagement on the part of anyone interested in the digital futures of educational change [5].

There are a huge number of both free and commercial LMS platforms at the moment. Most have similar functionality. They allow you to post educational materials, control, manage user groups.

The open edX system offers ample opportunities for posting educational material, monitoring the progress of a training course, use the expansion of functionality through additional components. Also, open edX has a customized version for mobile devices and an automated system for assembling participant certificates.

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