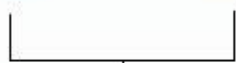


"Seeing Through Photographs" Online Class on Coursera

Pratt Institute INFO-685-02 Digital Analytics

By: Shradha Shree, Gloriana Amador,
JiSun Hong, Arielle Bakoss, Marta Mikłaszewicz

M



MASSIVE

There may be
100,000+
students in a
MOOC.

O



OPEN

Anyone,
anywhere
can register
for these
courses.

O



ONLINE

Coursework
is delivered
entirely over
the Internet.

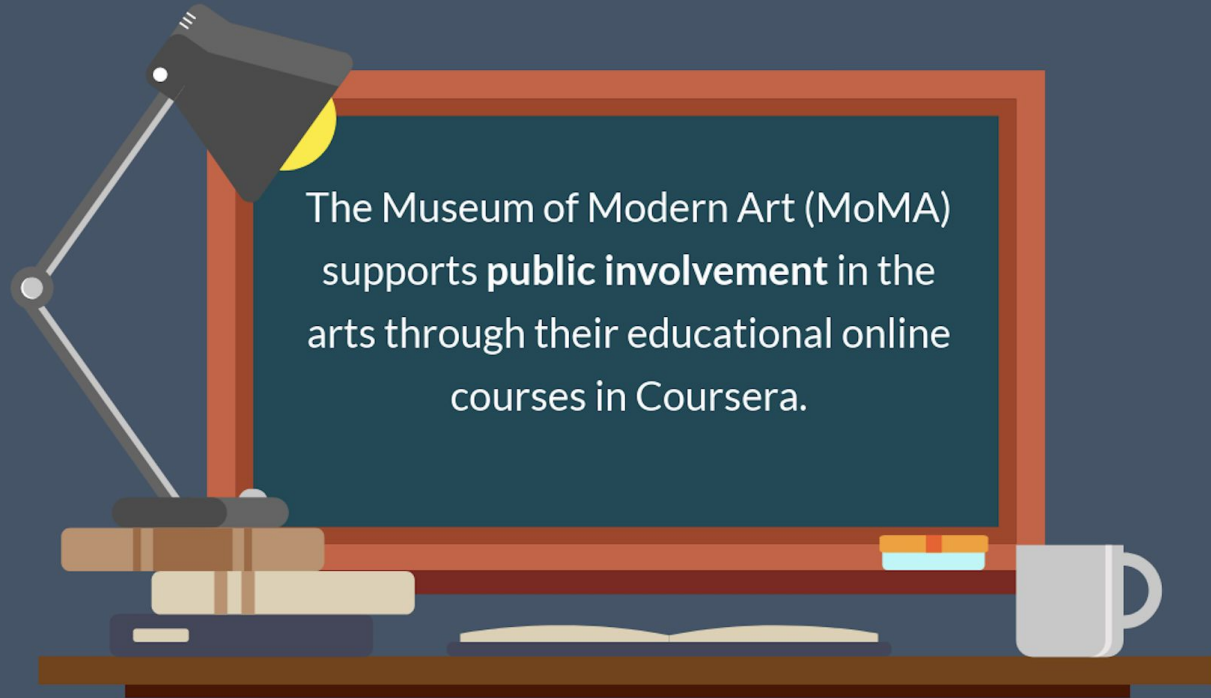
C



COURSE

MOOCs are
very similar
to most online
college courses.

A Global Education



Our Focus

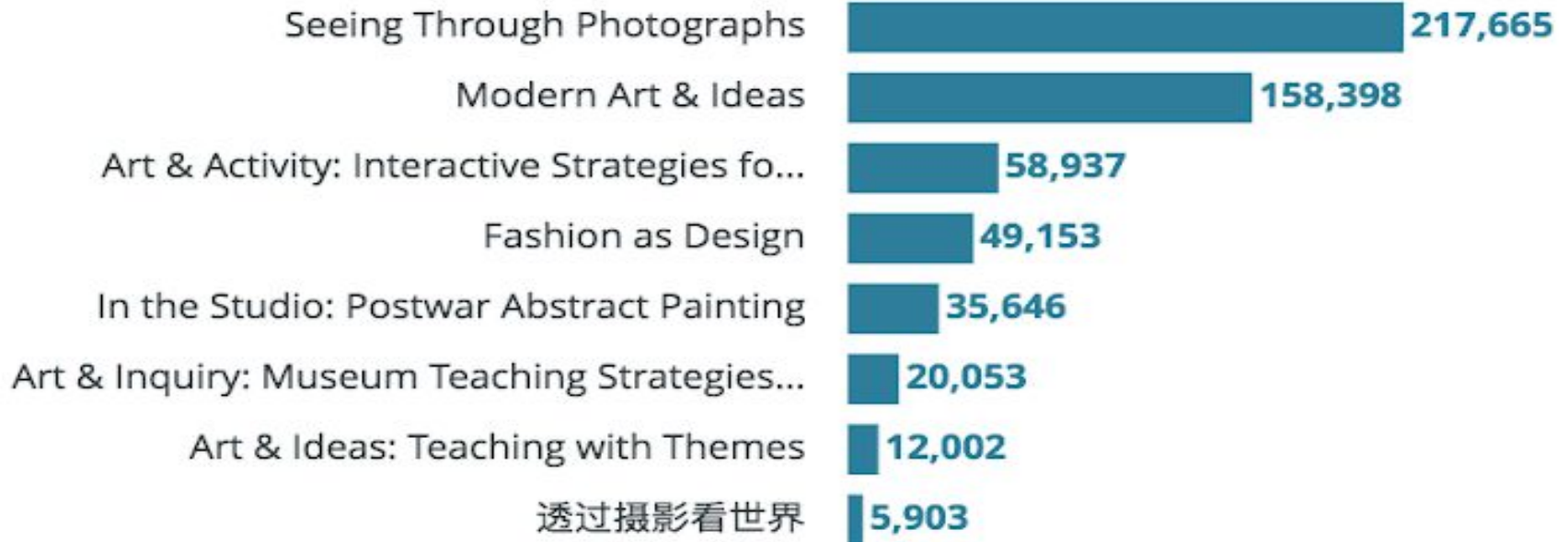


Figure: Depicts the the top 8 courses by enrollment

The Research Origin

The research origin lied in the completion rates as “Seeing Through Photographs” had around 154,443 participants commence the course but only 4,767 completed it.

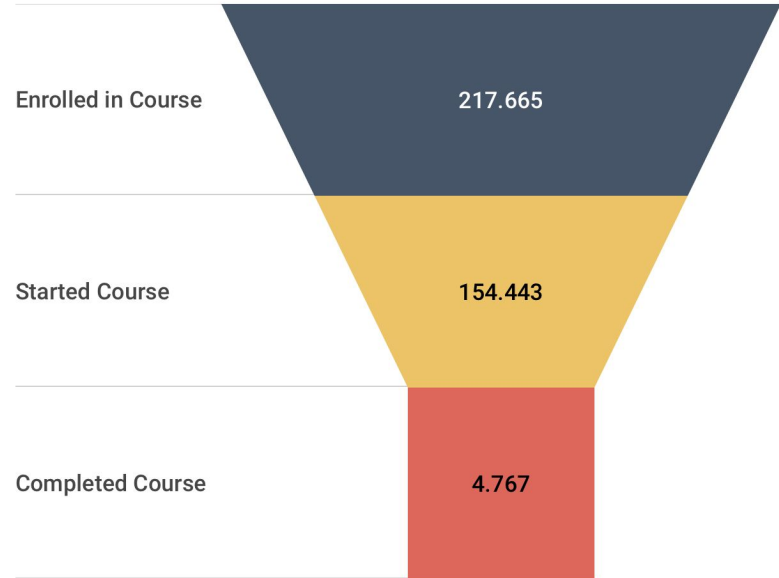
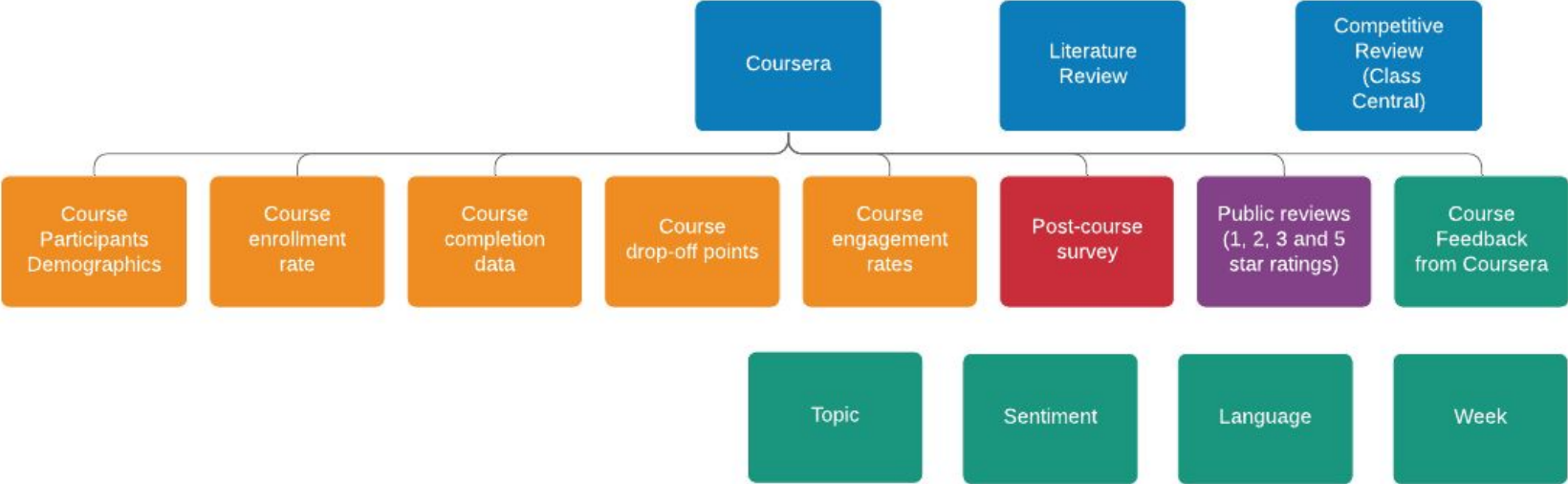


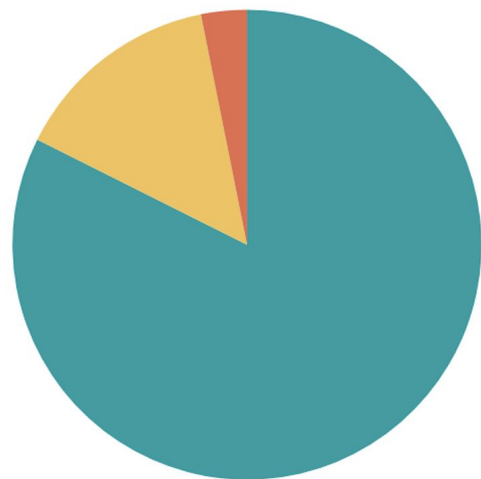
Figure: Funnel contrasts total # of students enrolled to how many began and completed the course

Methodology



The Course and the Sentiment

The course combines exceptional reading material and in depth interviews to create an overall captivating learning experience. Learners were particularly impressed with the content and professional insights in each video and module.



■ Positive (82.39%) ■ Neutral (14.46%) ■ Negative (3.16%)

What are the learners saying?

This course really helped me to appreciate the history of photography and to learn and see it from another perspective...



This course helped me discover a point of view different from the one I had used...



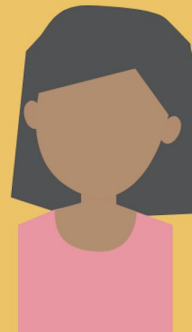
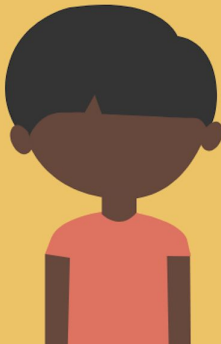
This course helped me discover a point of view different from the one I had used...



I thought that the final assignment instructions were a bit confusing...



I hoped that it was more professional, It was interesting but non technical...



Finding 1:

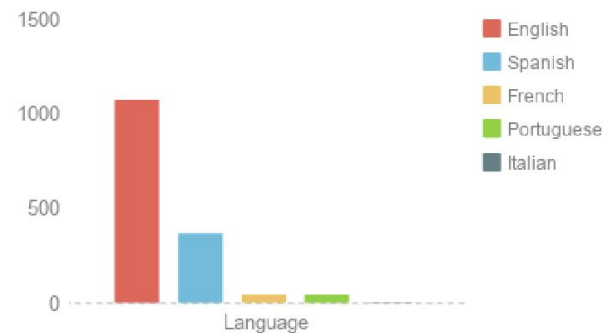
Learners look for content in their own language

Recommendation 1:

Highlight Coursera's subtitle feature



The learners are **global** and they speak different **languages**.



Finding 2

Course title and purpose are not clear enough

- When enrolling learners were not sure about the purpose of the course (introduction to the history of photography vs course teaching how to take picture)

“I gained a broader understanding of the history of American photography and some of the forces that has shaped it. Not a new skill.”

Recommendation 2

Clarify course description & course objectives in the introduction

- Reformulate the course title to touch on intended critical thinking, history and theory

“It give insight in the history of photography and is a stimulating start to do more research.”

Finding 3

Increase course accessibility

- Learners appreciated MoMA's professionalism and the quality of videos
- **Videos:** Transcript text used in the videos is too small and uncomfortable to read and follow.
- **Readings:** Text used in the scans is too considered as too academic, the scans are very difficult to read

Recommendation 3

Rescan readings

Introduction
THIS BOOK IS AN INVESTIGATION of what photographs look like, and of why they look that way. It is concerned with photographic style and with photographic tradition: with the sense of possibilities that a photographer today takes to his work.

The invention of photography provided a radically new picture-making process — a process based not on synthesis but on selection. The difference was a basic one. Paintings were *made* — constructed from a storehouse of traditional schemes and skills and attitudes — but photographs, as the man on the street put it, were *taken*.

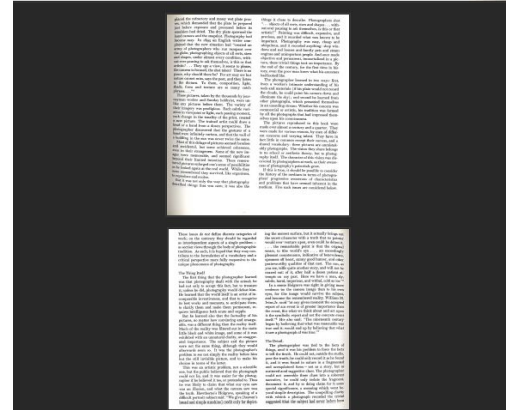
The difference raised a creative issue of a new order: how could this mechanical and mindless process be made to produce pictures meaningful in human terms — pictures with clarity and coherence and a point of view? It was soon demonstrated that an answer would not be found by those who loved too much the old forms, for in large part the photographer was bereft of the old artistic traditions. Speaking of photography Baudelaire said: "This industry, by invading the territories of art, has become art's most mortal enemy."¹ And in his own terms of reference Baudelaire was half right; certainly the new medium could not satisfy old standards. The photographer must find new ways to make his meaning clear.

These new ways might be found by men who could abandon their allegiance to traditional pictorial standards — or by the artistically ignorant, who had no old allegiances to break. There have been many of the latter sort. Since its earliest days, photography has been practiced by thousands who shared no common tradition or training, who were disciplined and united by no academy or guild, who considered their medium variously as a science, an art, a trade, or an entertainment, and who were often unaware of each other's work. Those who invented photography were scientists and painters, but its professional practitioners were a very different lot. Hawthorne's daguerrotypist hero Holgrave in *THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES* was perhaps not far from typical:

"I thought now but twenty-two years old, he had already been a country schoolmaster; salesman in a country store; and the political editor of a country newspaper. He had subsequently travelled as a peddler of cologne water and other essences. He had studied and practiced dentistry. Still more recently he had been a public lecturer on mesmerism, for which science he had very remarkable endowments. His present phase as a daguerrotypist was of no more importance in his own view, nor likely to be more permanent, than any of the preceding ones."²

The enormous popularity of the new medium produced professionals by the thousands — converted silversmiths, tinkers, druggists, blacksmiths and printers. If photography was a new artistic problem, such men had the advantage of having nothing to unlearn. Among them they produced a flood of images. In 1853 the *NEW-YORK DAILY TRIBUNE* estimated that three million daguerrotypies were being produced that year.³ Some of these pictures were the product of knowledge and skill and sensibility and invention; many were the product of accident, improvisation, misunderstanding, and empirical experiment. But whether produced by art or by luck, each picture was part of a massive assault on our traditional habits of seeing.

By the latter decades of the nineteenth century the professionals and the serious amateurs were joined by an even larger host of casual snapshot-takers. By the early eighties the dry plate, which could be purchased ready-to-use, had re-



Finding 4

Assignments & quizzes are not serving their function

- Assignment and quizzes are not aligned with course objectives
- Questions in quizzes are detailed and fact based
- Extensive and difficult assignments

← Question 6/10

1 point

According to Marvin Heiferman, what are some of the questions we should be asking when we look at a photograph? Select all that apply.

Who made the photograph?

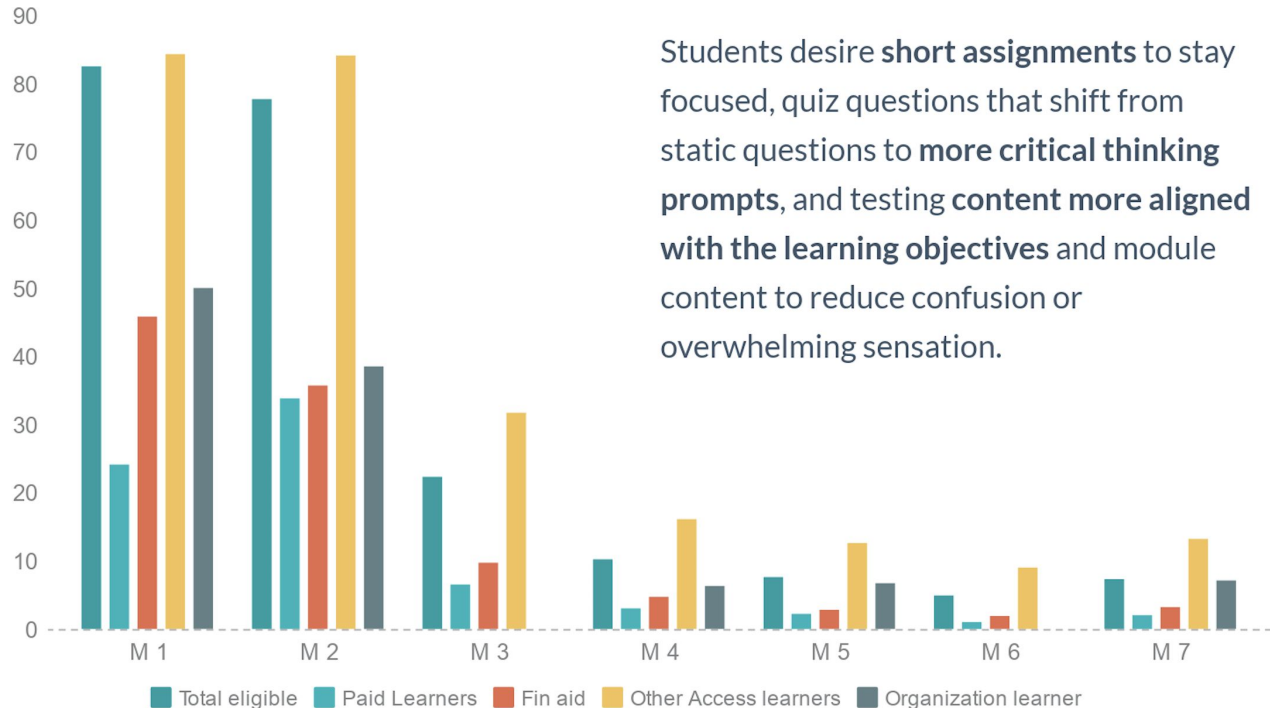
Who wrote the caption?

How large or small is the photograph?

Why was the photograph made?

Recommendation 4

Refocus quizzes and assignments



Finding 5

Community building through course content

- Missing support in languages different than English
- Learners would like to be a part of learning community

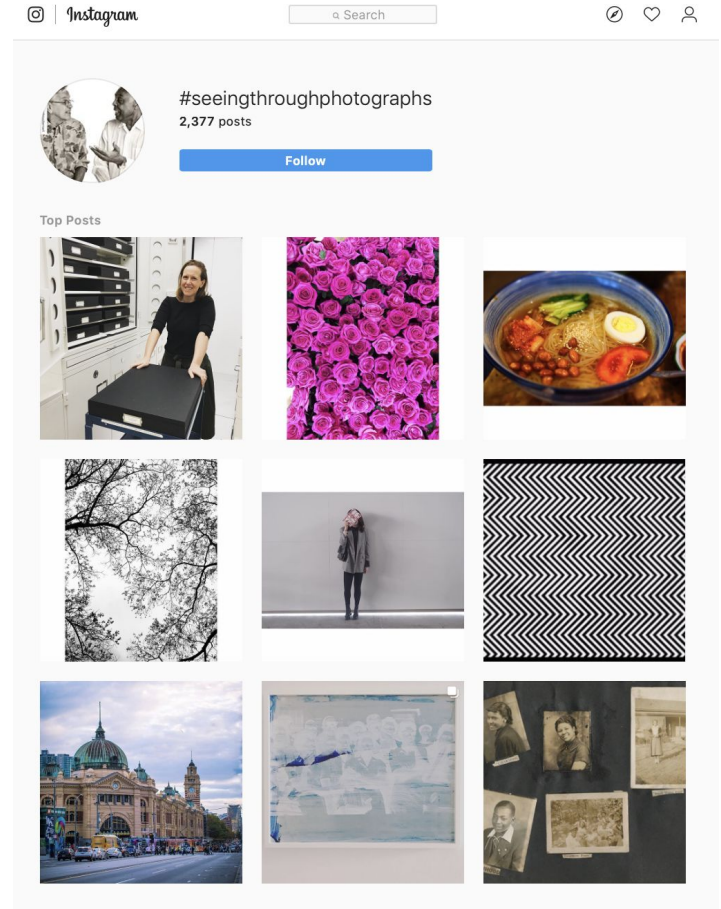
Post-course questionnaire

- Need for more participation from instructors and artists in the discussion forum
- More ways to stay involved in the course such as live-streamed question and answers

Recommendation 5

Connect and Expand “Seeing Through Photographs” Community

- New Course offerings further developing gained skills and/or providing a chance to learn practical photography skills
- Active participation in the online forum by opening forum moderator roles to course alumni and past students
- Increase the presence of “Seeing through the photographs” in social media
 - Promote a course inspired hashtag. E.g. #seeingthroughphotographs
 - Create a course-dedicated Instagram page, Flickr or Facebook group



Thank
you!

The image features a light pink background with scattered confetti in shades of red and teal. The text "Thank you!" is written in a white, cursive font, centered on the page. The word "Thank" is on the top line, and "you!" is on the bottom line. The exclamation point is large and prominent.