Mapping the Learning Content Ecosystem

Critical Questions

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CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN EXPLORING THE NEW LEARNING CONTENT ECOSYSTEM

Critical Questions: The Learning Content Hub — Colleges and Universities

1. What is the nature of your campus—public, private, independent, religious-affiliated, land-grant, research-intensive, two-year, four-year, non-profit, for-profit? How do your institution’s mission, structure, business models, and economics impact its approach—and the campus store’s approach—to learning content and the future of course materials on your campus?

2. What is the status of your institution’s financial health and sustainability? How does this impact decisions and strategy you should be aware of or addressing?

3. What is the condition of bargaining power for the state, publishers, distributors, and campus stakeholders (such as faculty and campus administrators) for your campus?

Critical Questions: Learning Content Creation

1. Are there “star power” faculty authors on your campus? What percent of your faculty are authoring their own course materials to supplement purchased course content? In place of it?

2. What percent of adoptions does the campus store manage (the market share)? What learning content are faculty using for which they do not submit an adoption request to the campus store?

3. Are there faculty using print custom learning materials? Digital custom? What percent of each? What is the store’s involvement with these materials (e.g., sales, copyright clearance, compilation, curation)? Are there services the store could be offering to assist faculty and provide more choice to students?

4. Are any campus departments or faculty involved in the creation or use of MOOCs on campus? What course materials are being used for the course? Where are they being obtained? How about the more common distance learning courses?

5. How knowledgeable is the store staff on the adaptive digital learning products/platforms available? Can/does the store provide first-level information and support to faculty and student users?

Critical Questions: Learning Content Manufacturing — Publishing

1. What percent of your campus faculty are experimenting or using different forms of learning content (YouTube videos, online articles, etc.) or teaching styles (e.g., flipped classroom, Socratic Method, learning/group activities)? Are there members of the academic community on campus you could engage with to learn more?

2. Are OER materials being used or discussed on your campus? By whom? In what ways? What is your level of knowledge about, and comfort with, discussing OERs as well as the creators and repositories of these materials?

3. To what extent are custom print or digital course materials in use on your campus? Is this a potential growth area?

4. What is the status of your relationships with the industry’s learning content publishers? Of their business models and future corporate direction? Are there others on your campus who are having conversations with these content providers—with or without your involvement?
5. Is the store seen as a resource (or the expert) on copyright and copyright clearance for learning content on campus? If not, is there a role for the store to play in this area?

6. Does your campus have a learning/course content strategy in development or in place? Are store leaders involved in this effort? If no to either, how can the store initiate or get involved in the campus’ effort?

7. Are you communicating to the relevant campus stakeholders about the changes happening in learning content creation and publishing—and the potential implications for store sales, products, and services?

**Critical Questions: Learning Content Distribution, Wholesaling, and Aggregation**

1. How would you characterize the relationships between your store and industry distributors? Who on your staff manages those relationships and monitors changes in this space?

2. What conversations are happening on campus related to content licensing or other models that might 1) exclude the store or other players in the distribution chain and/or 2) benefit from expertise that store staff can offer?

3. How is your store strengthening its relationship with students around learning content, course materials, and digital learning products to mitigate the impact of student self-sourcing? Is your store serving as a course materials/learning consultant for students? For faculty?

4. Which Potential Substitutes and/or Technologies and Innovations to Watch present potential opportunities for your store? How will you evaluate and prioritize each? How do you get started?

5. Is your store an active participant of the learning content and learning analytics discussions happening on your campus? If not, why? And how do you become involved?

6. Who are the key players on your campus with whom you need to establish and maintain relationships?

**Critical Questions: Learning Content Retailing**

1. What is the current mission of your campus store? How does the scope of merchandise and services you offer meet the campus’ expectations?

2. What conversations are happening on campus regarding a course content strategy, course content licensing, open educational resources (OERs), and/or digital/adaptive course materials? Is the store engaged in these discussions?

3. What conversations are happening on campus regarding engagement with students via mobile/handheld devices, mobile transaction capabilities and applications, and/or consumer data collection and analysis? Is the store engaged in these discussions?

4. To what extent does the store act as a “brand agent” of the institution? Are there expectations and/or strategies in place guiding the in-store experience for customers? The online/mobile experience?

5. Who in your store tracks consumer trends, trends in retail technologies, your competitors, etc.? How so, and how and with whom do they share what they learn?

6. Does the store have clear and purposeful strategies in place for supporting faculty and students in their teaching and learning roles?

7. To what extent are store systems integrated with campus systems? What are the pain points or needed integrations? What consumer insights are you mining?

8. What strategic relationships does the store maintain with campus stakeholders? Which are needed?
Critical Questions: Learning Content Consumers—Faculty and Students

1. What is the faculty make-up on your campus: tenure-track versus adjunct/part-time?
2. Where are the course material adoption decisions being made on your campus? Are there any trends that can be identified to suggest a shift in faculty authority in these decisions?
3. To what extent are digital, adaptive courseware products and platforms being used on your campus? Is there a trend of increased use?
4. To what extent are OERs being used on your campus? Is there evidence of a trend?
5. Are there discussions occurring on campus about content licensing/course fee models, course licensing, and/or use of MOOCs? Is the college store involved in (or leading) these discussions?
6. What is the level of course materials price sensitivity on your campus? Who are the vocal/active stakeholders? How are their concerns manifesting, and how is the campus store addressing their concerns?
7. What market share of adoptions does the store have? What percent of students are purchasing and using the required course materials and supplements (indicated by your sell-through, feedback from students, comments during Buyback, and other measures)?
8. What strategies and initiatives does the store have underway or planned to maximize course materials access and affordability for students?
9. In what ways is the campus store partnering with/serving faculty and students to maximize the ROI of learning content and course materials?

Critical Questions: Learning and Success Services

1. What is the state of learning and success services on your campus? Does the variety and supply meet the needs of the student body? Do students or staff talk of too few or missing services?
2. What learning and success services are your students currently using? How well are learning and study aid products selling through your store?
3. Are there signs of student self-sourcing for these products and services (such as student-sponsored tutoring or study programs, or questions about/use of online support services)?
4. To what extent are students seeking product support and help with maximizing the benefit of homework and online learning courseware assigned or recommended for their classes?
5. What role can your store play in aggregating, curating, and/or providing student learning services for your campus? Are there ways the store can partner with existing campus services, publishers, or online providers to be a physical location, broker, or other partner?