

# Lessons from the History of Online and Distance Learning:

Simple Concepts to Guide us into the  
Future

Sir John Daniel, O.C.

# École Polytechnique Université de Montréal



Photo by: G. Bukacek



Sir George Williams University, Montreal, 1970





Professor Tony Bates

Crashing into online  
learning: a report  
from five continents  
– and some  
conclusions

**“THE RESULTS ARE  
NOT PRETTY”**

(Blog April 26, 2020)



# TODAY'S TOPICS

Trios:

- The Iron Triangle
- The Three-legged stool

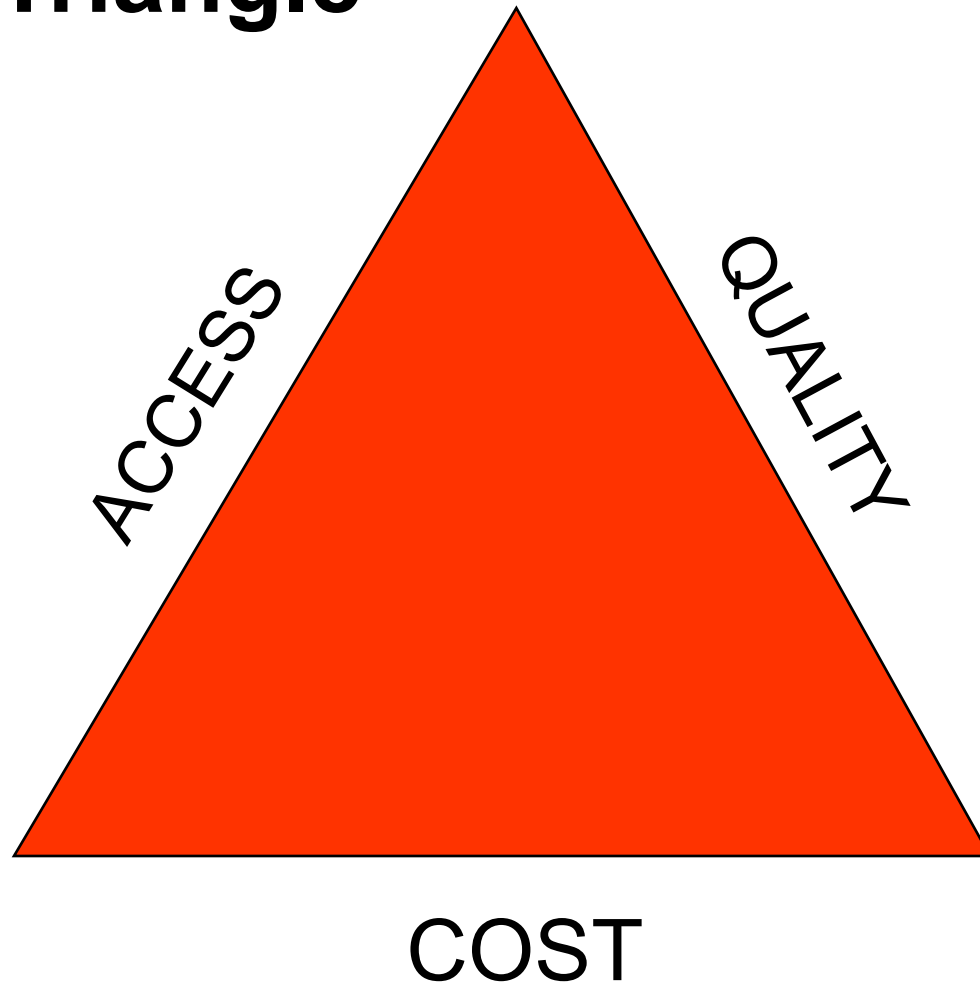
Dyads:

- Independence | Interaction
- Synchronicity | Asynchronicity

# *The Challenge for Education*

- ACCESS (wider)
- QUALITY (higher)
- COST (lower)

# The Iron Triangle

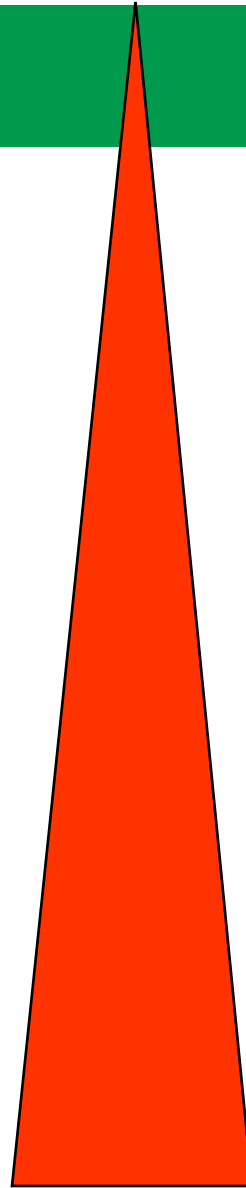




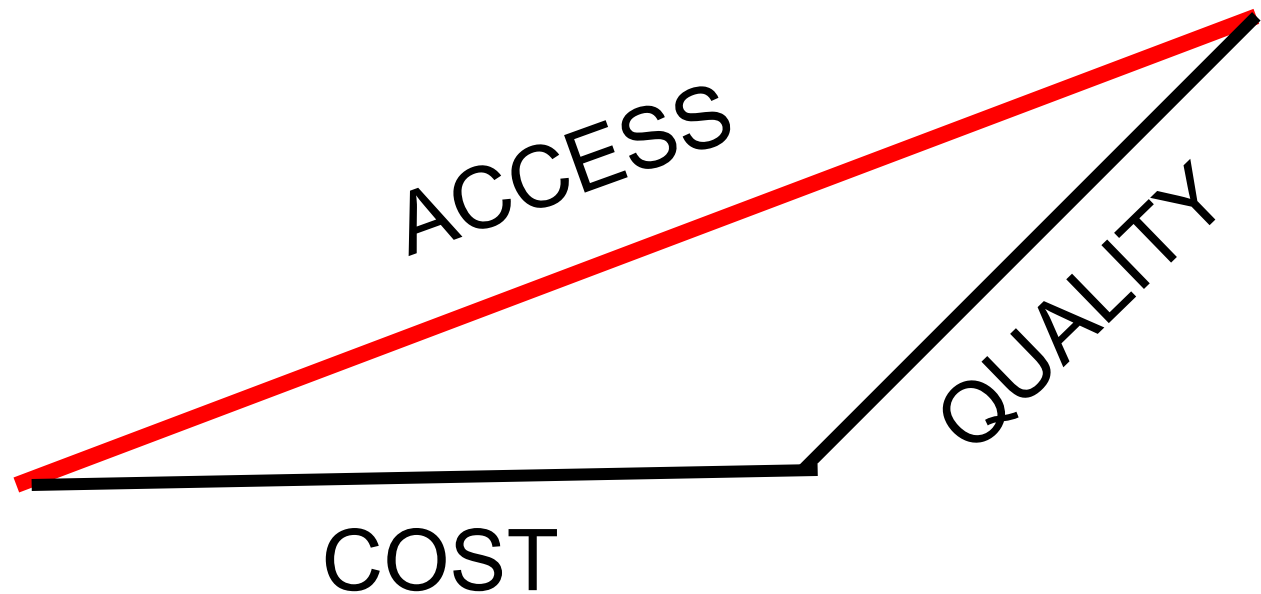
**ACCESS**

**QUALITY**

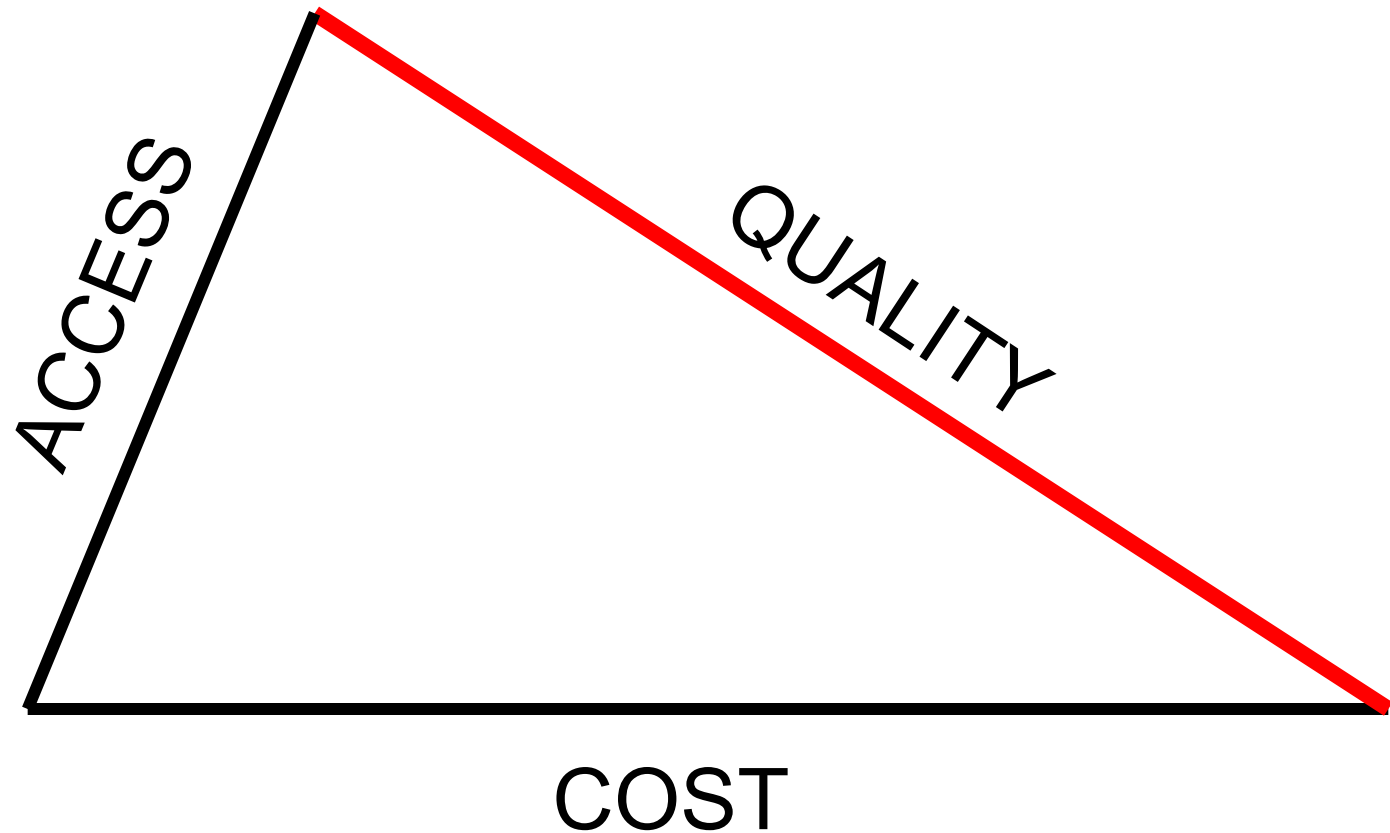
**COST**



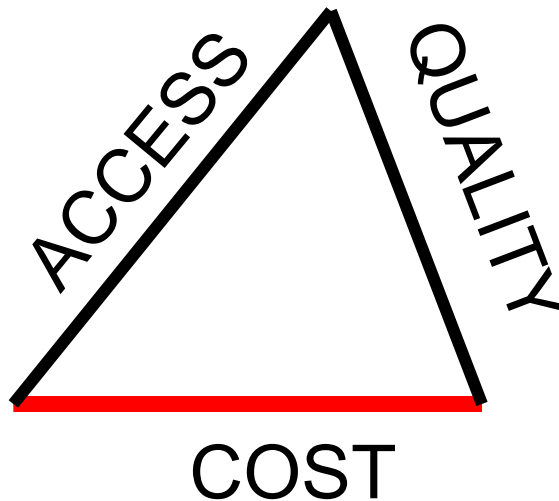
# The Iron Triangle



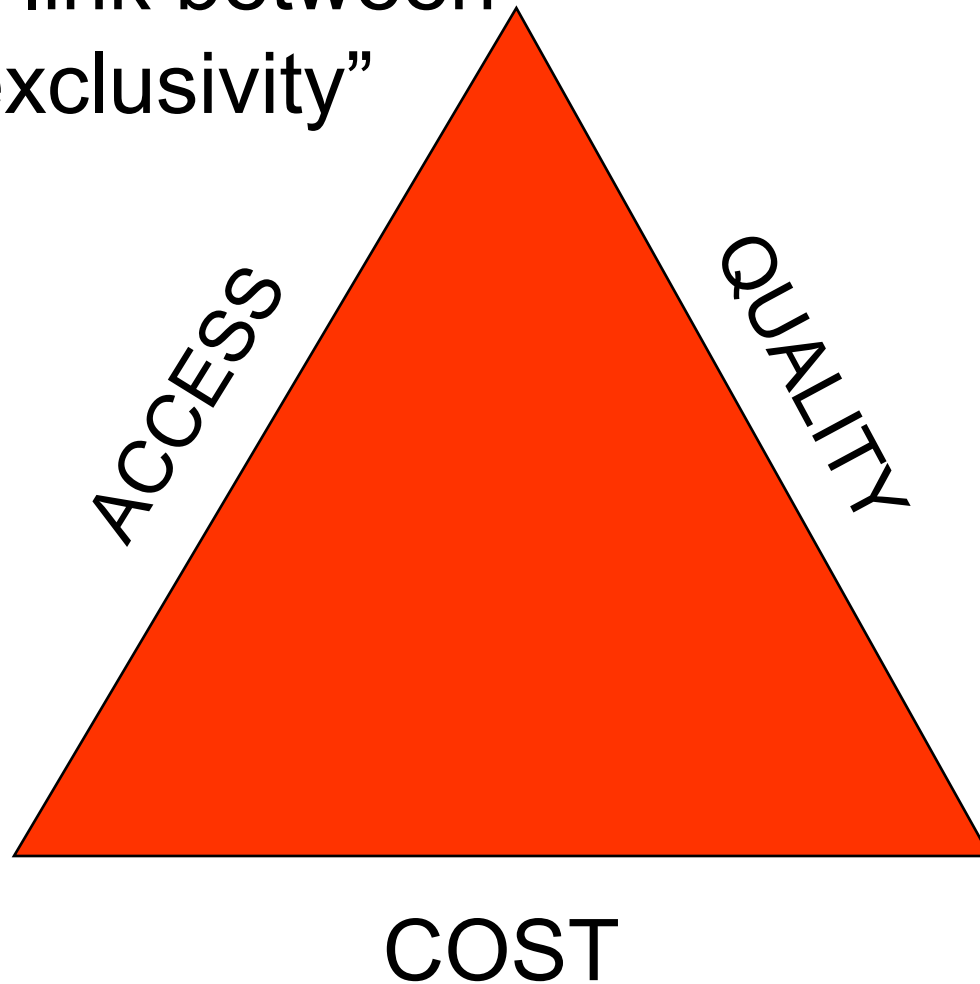
# The Iron Triangle



# The Iron Triangle



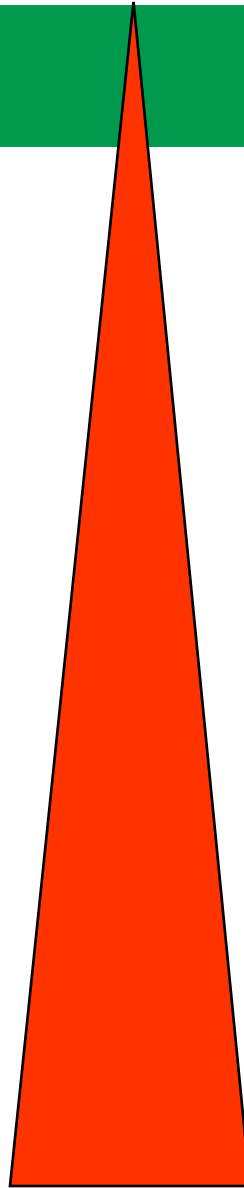
“an insidious link between  
quality and exclusivity”



**ACCESS**

**QUALITY**

**COST**



# *The Challenge for Education*

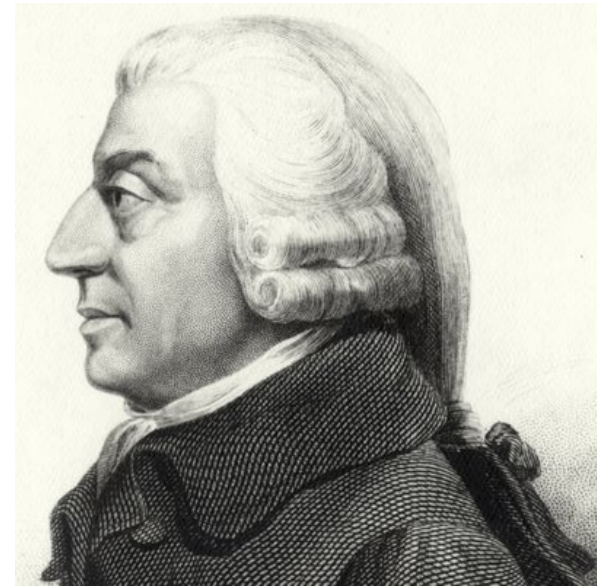
- ACCESS (wider)
- QUALITY (higher)
- COST (lower)

**...all at the same time!**



# Principles of Technology

- Division of labour
- Specialisation
- Economies of scale
- Machines and IT



Adam Smith  
1723-1790



**The Open University**

- **170,000+ students**

# BRITAIN'S TOP UNIVERSITIES

## Quality Rankings of Teaching

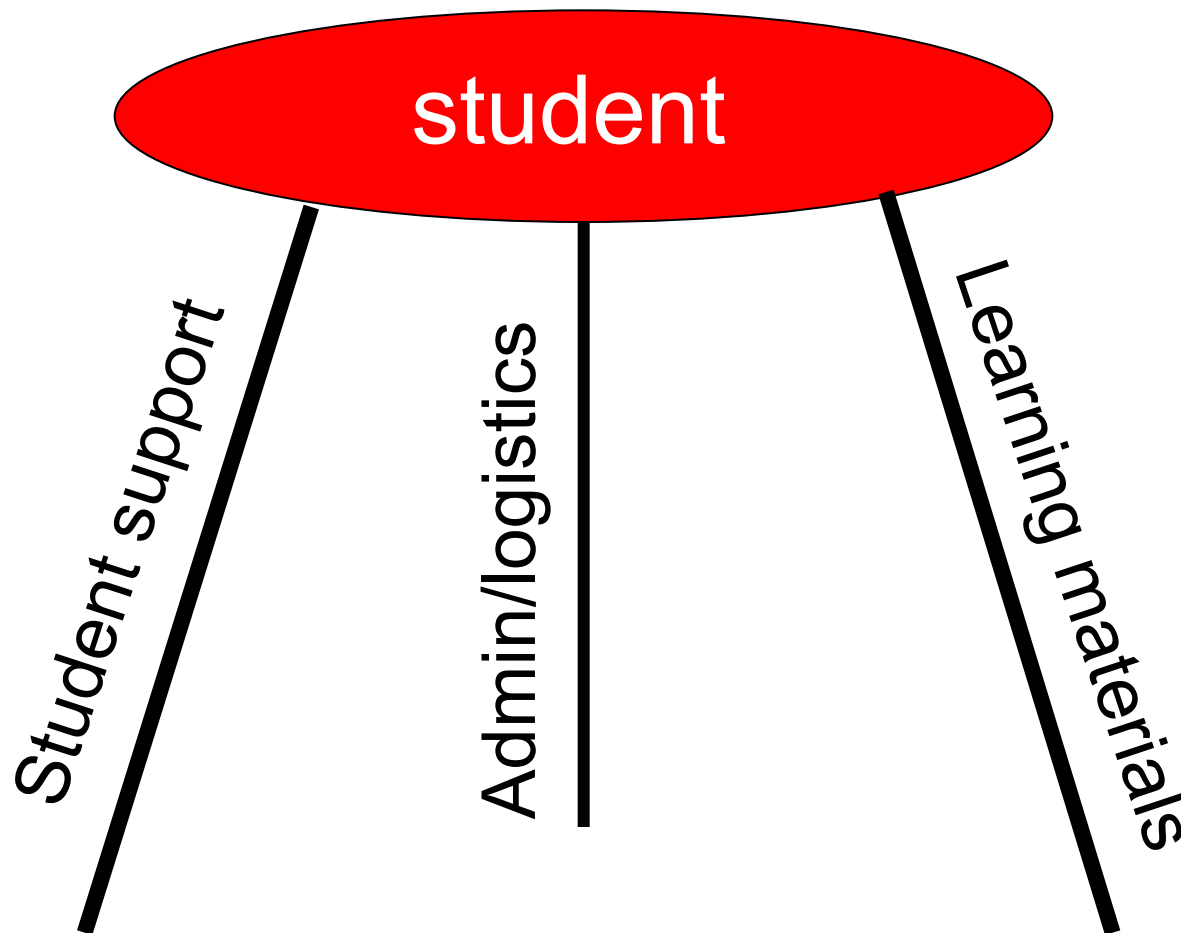
1	CAMBRIDGE	96%
2	LOUGHBOROUGH	95%
3=	LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS	88%
3=	YORK	88%
5	<b><u>THE OPEN UNIVERSITY</u></b>	<b>87%</b>
6	OXFORD	86%
7	IMPERIAL COLLEGE	82%
8	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON	77%
9	ESSEX	77%

...and tops for student satisfaction

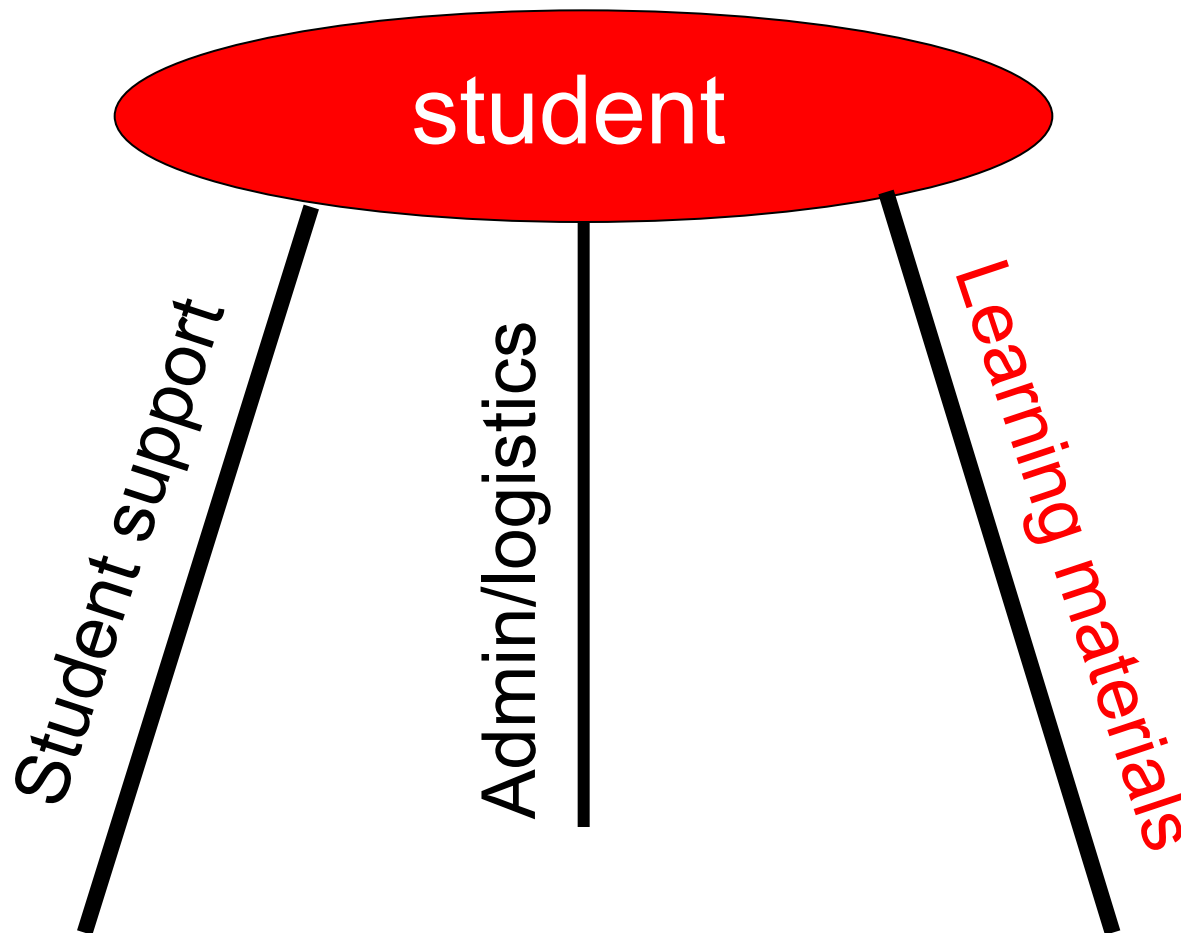


**The Open University**

- **Costs 60 - 80% of conventional**



Distance Learning: a three-legged stool



Distance Learning: a three-legged stool

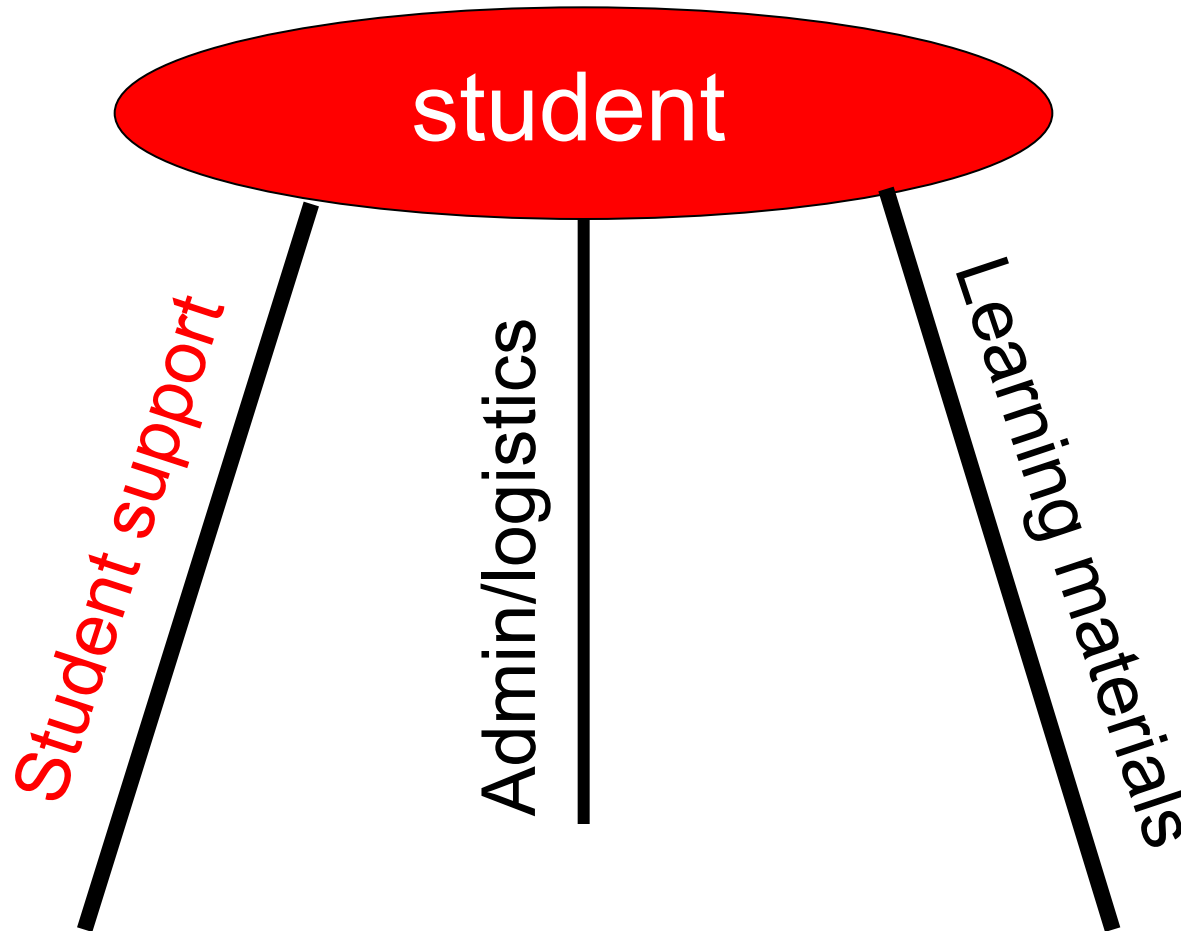


# **Conducting a College through COVID-19: The Evolving Leadership Challenge**

Articles/presentation at [www.sirjohn.ca](http://www.sirjohn.ca)



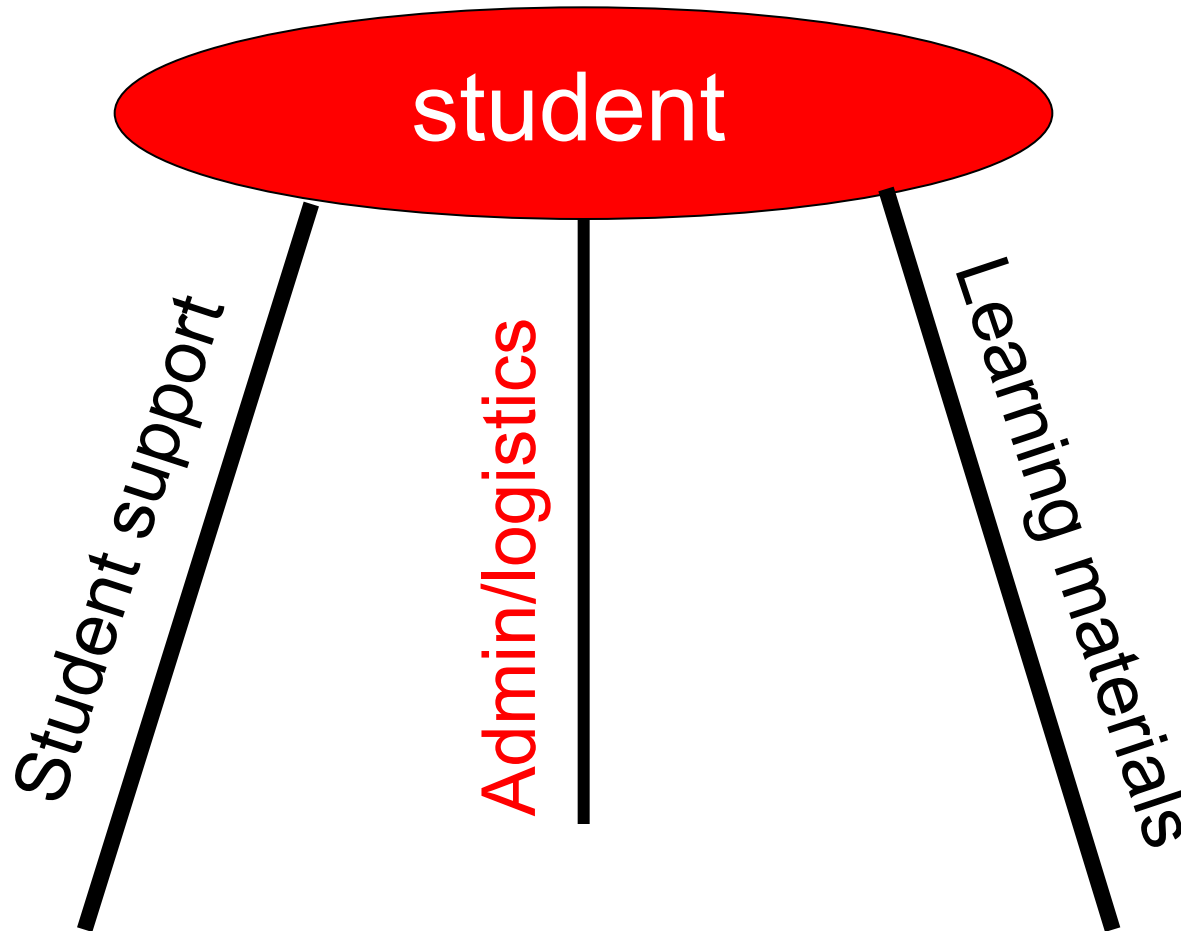




Distance Learning: a three-legged stool

- Academic
- Administrative
- Cultural
- Social

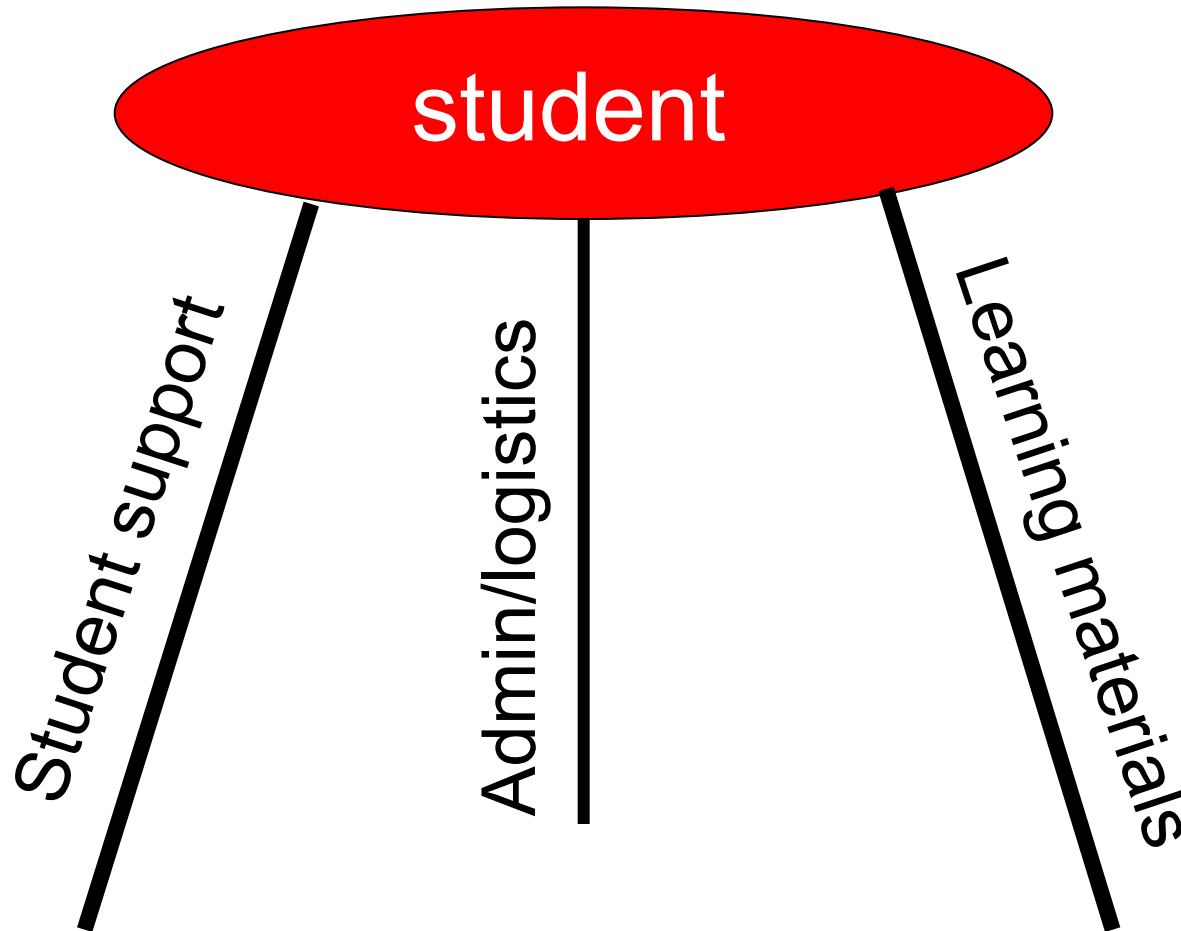
# STUDENT SUPPORT



Distance Learning: a three-legged stool

- Learning Management System
- Online options (ZOOM, etc.)
- Efficient registry
- Helplines and responses to e-mail

## ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS



Distance Learning: a three-legged stool

# Part Two

Independence and Interaction

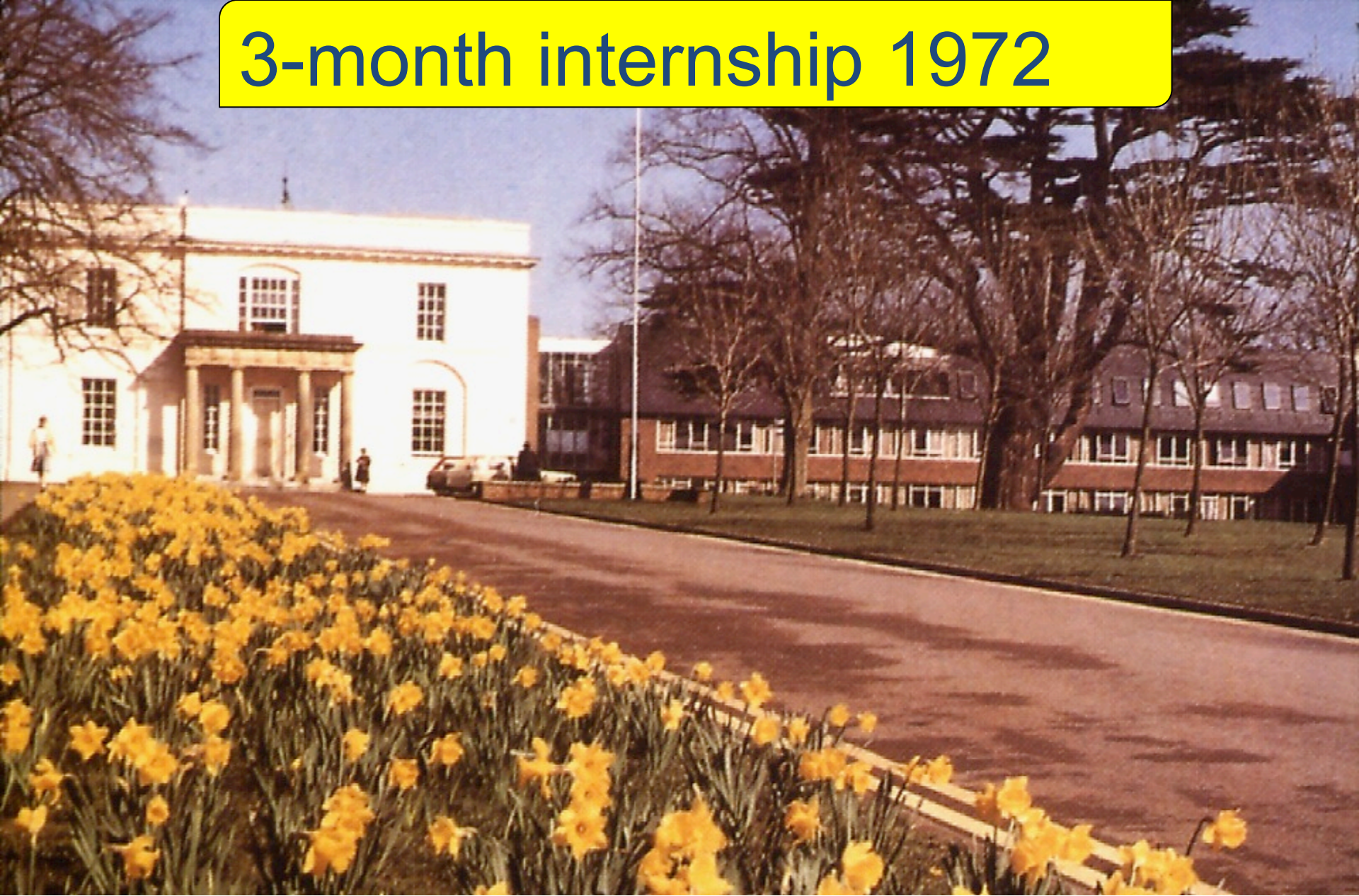
Synchronicity and Asynchronicity



Sir George Williams University, Montreal, 1970



3-month internship 1972



The Open University – United Kingdom



**The Open University**

Open to:

People

Places

Methods

Ideas



Lord Walter Perry  
Founding Vice-Chancellor  
The Open  
University

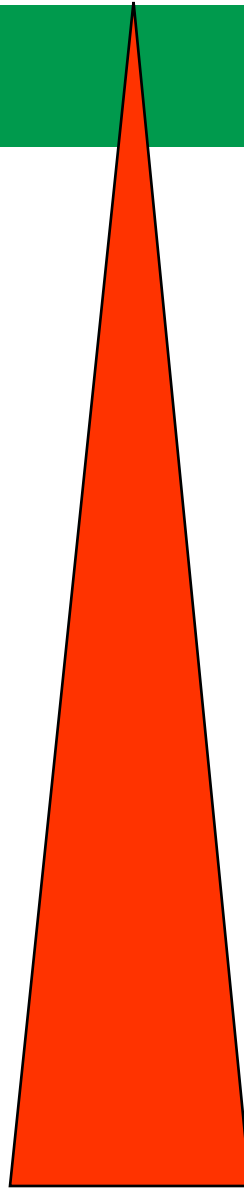
Advice  
- Pilot of 300

Decision  
- Admit 25,000

**ACCESS**

**QUALITY**

**COST**





# UKOU – BBC partnership

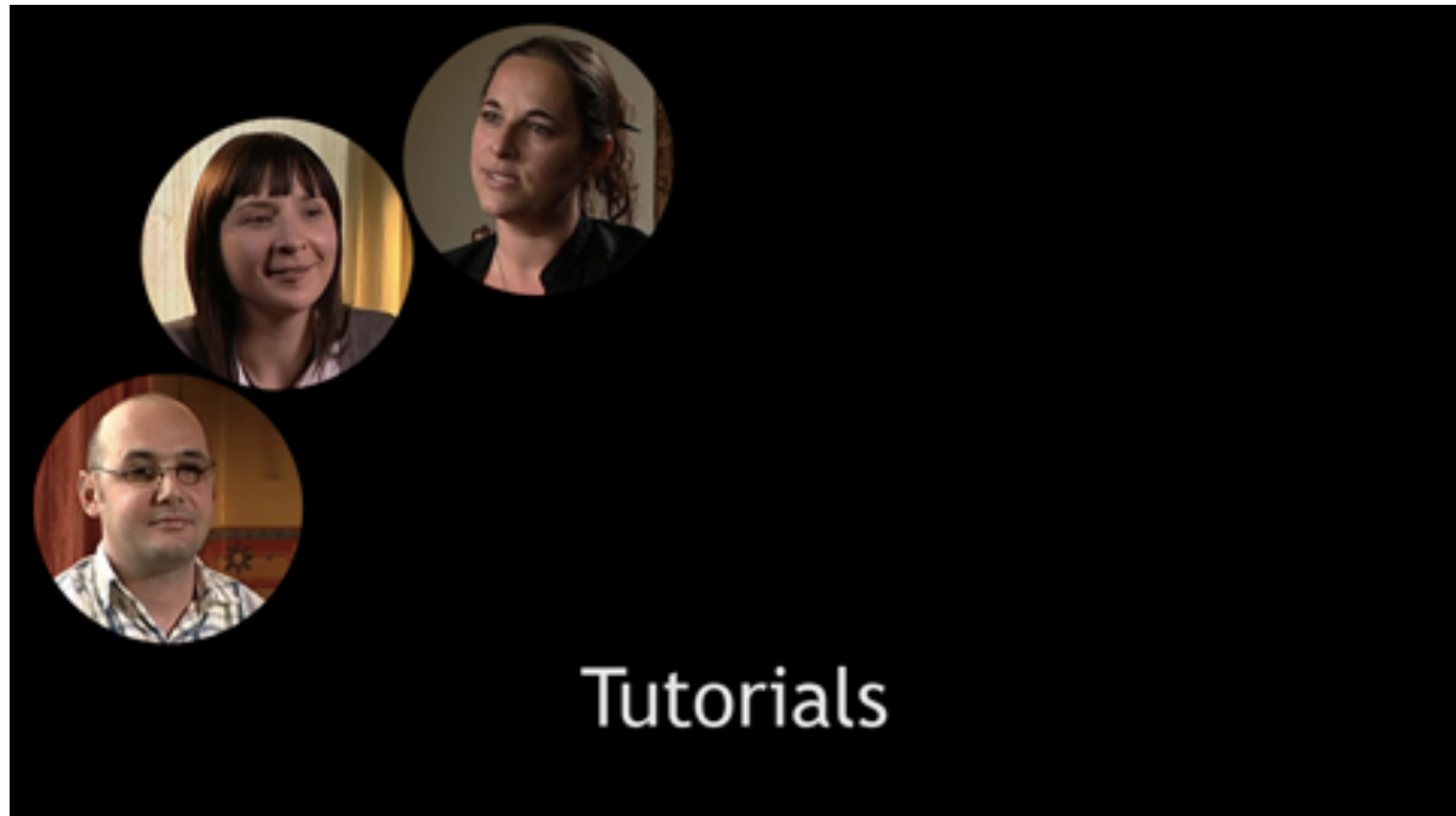


”Earning a degree by watching the telly”

# UKOU – BBC partnership



Worldwide audience of billions



A regional network with thousands of tutors



# Independence and Interaction

# Independence and Interaction

## Getting the Mixture Right

# Interaction

a slippery concept



# Correspondence Education

“A guided didactic  
conversation”

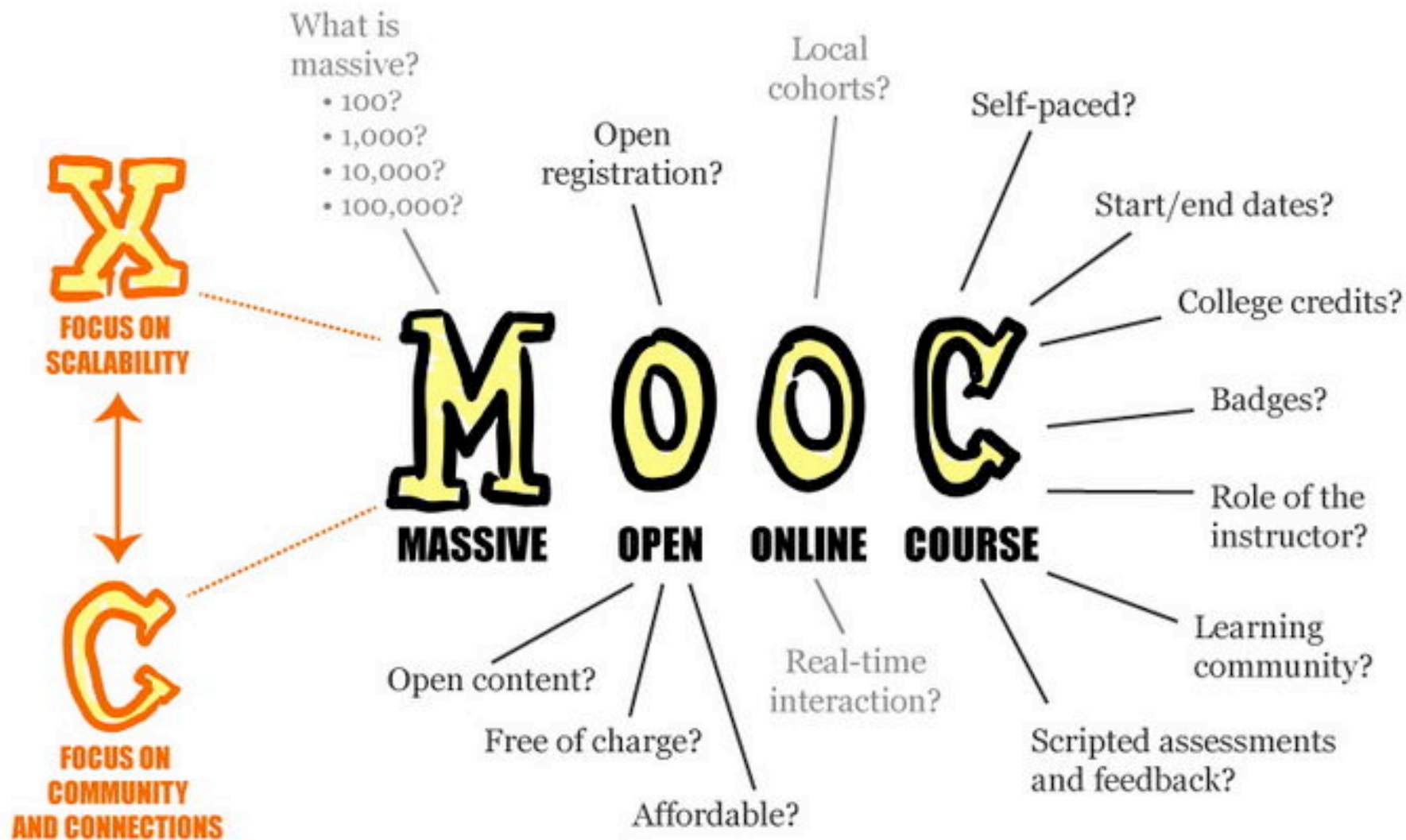
*Borje  
Holmberg*

# Independence and Interaction

## Synchronicity and Asynchronicity



**Cambridge University: All lectures to be online-only until summer of 2021**



M O O C – Every letter is negotiable!





# Dive in and start learning

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# Independence and Interaction

## Synchronicity and Asynchronicity



Sir John Daniel

[odlsirjohn@gmail.com](mailto:odlsirjohn@gmail.com)

[www.sirjohn.ca](http://www.sirjohn.ca)

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**THANK YOU**