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June 27, 2012 - Chaouki Abdallah

Many of our faculty colleagues have been closely following the saga at Mr. Jefferson's university (see for example http://chronicle.com/article/What-If-Sullivan-Is/132517/?cid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en.) The discussion within the University of Virginia has broad implications on the role and future of universities as seen by the various constituents. For example, many of you are aware of the so-called 100,000-classroom talk as described for example in:

http://www.ted.com/talks/peter_norvig_the_100_000_student_classroom.html, where a couple of Stanford University professors taught a computer science class to more than 100,000 students. Similar efforts to put higher education within the reach of everyone are being launched by public & private universities as well as for-profit entities.

My question to you is: Should we embrace the proposed models, and if so, how do we continue to fund our traditional education model while controlling the quality of massive online education?