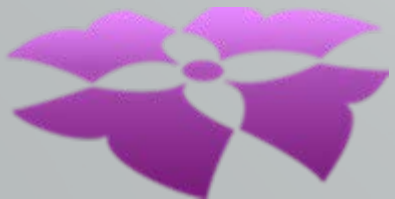




From On-Air to On-Line: Challenges for Institutional Paradigm Shift at the Open University of Japan

Kumiko Aoki, Ph.D.

The Open University of Japan



Online Education in Japan

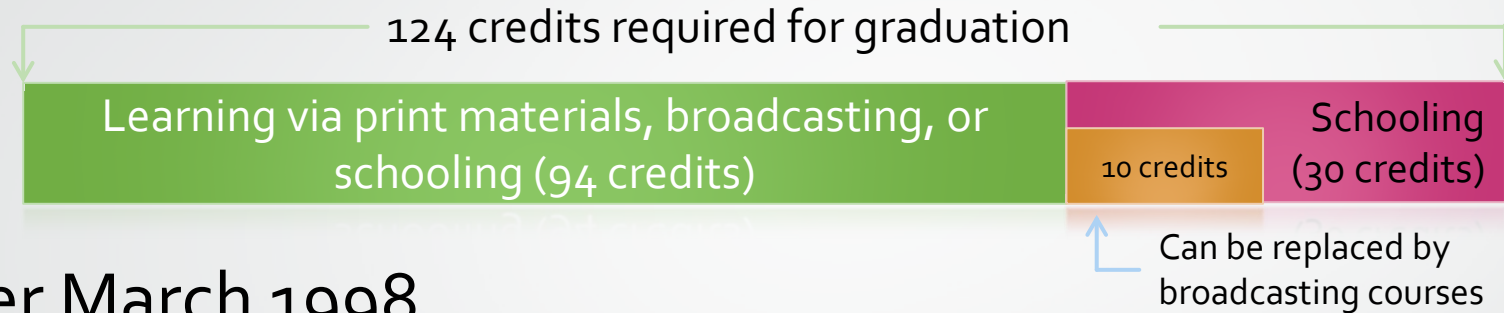
- Technology adaptation in education has been relatively slow in Japan
- According to the survey conducted in January 2014:
 - **<40% (39.3%)** of higher education institutions in Japan have offered any form of e-learning
 - **<60% (57.2%)** of institutions have implemented university-wide LMS
 - **<50%** of the higher education institutions in Japan has any institution-wide strategies for e-learning

Distance Education in Japan

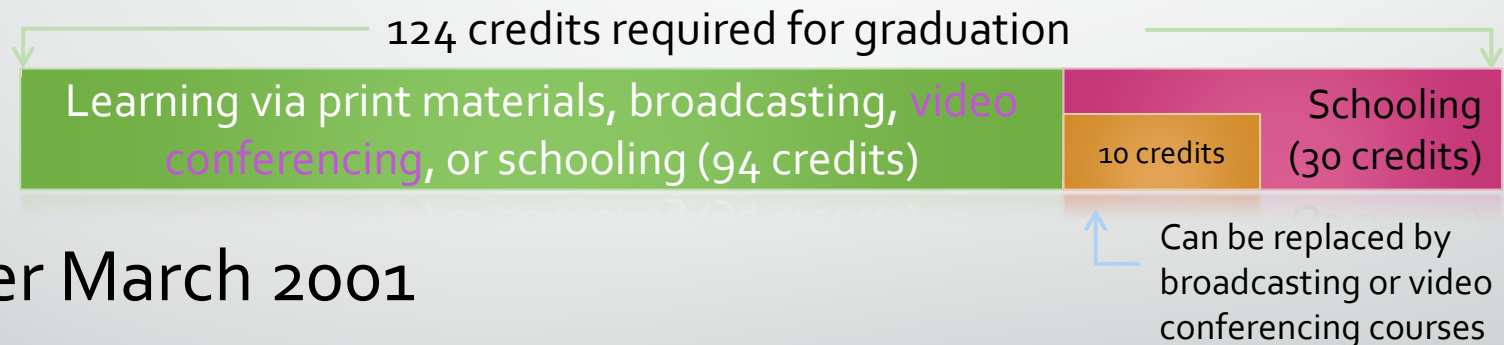
- Distance education or correspondence education has been developed in Japan as an alternative mean to educate people
- Relatively recent when it was officially recognized (in 1950)
- Japanese Ministry of Education has maintained two separate accreditation systems:
 - for traditional on-campus institutions
 - for correspondence distance education

Graduation Requirements for Distance Education Programs

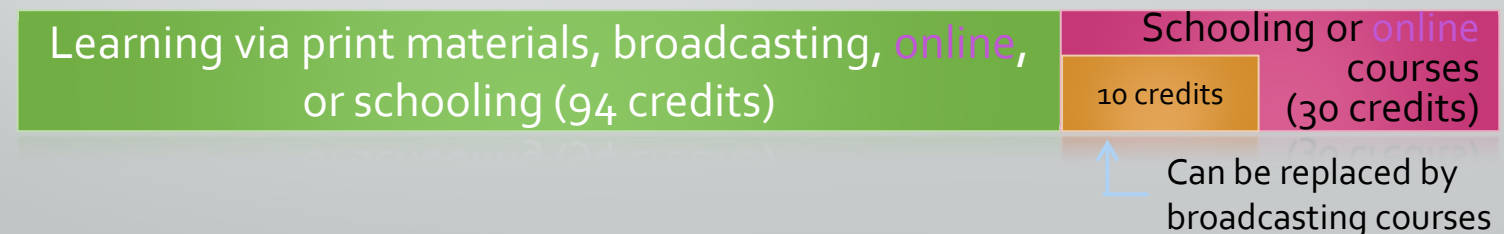
- Before March 1998



- After March 1998

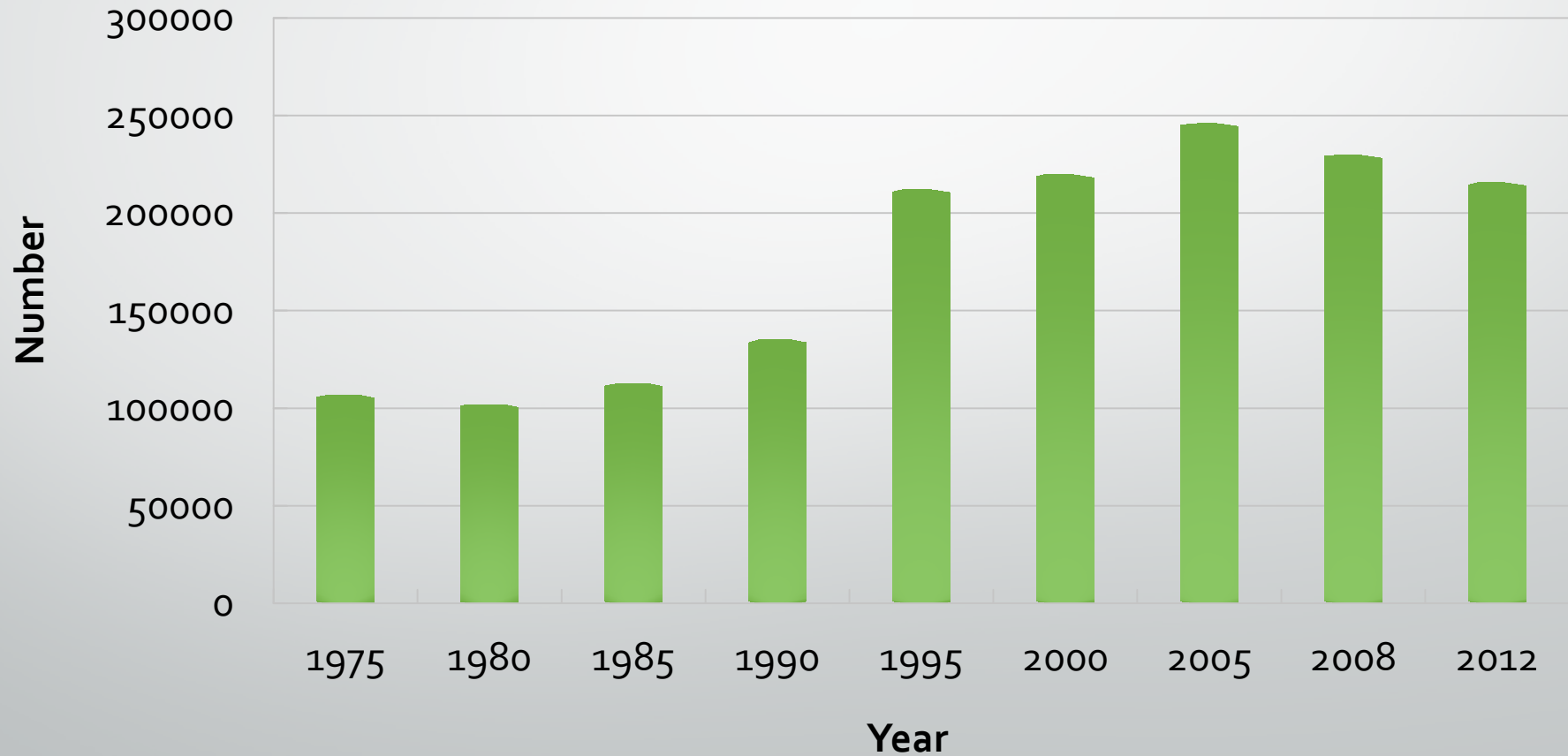


- After March 2001



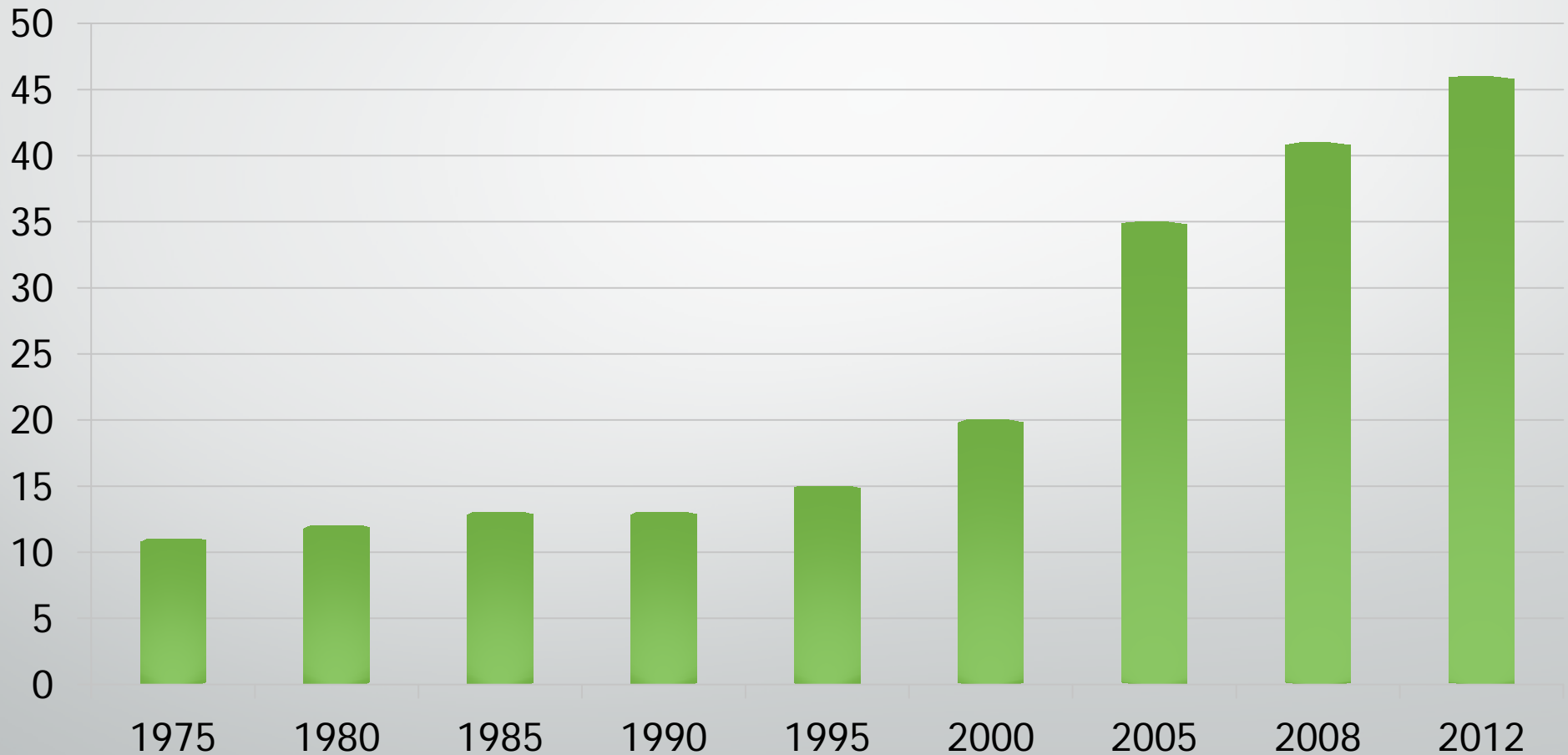
Changes in # of DE Students in Japan

The Number of Distance Education Students



Changes in # of DE Universities in Japan

Number of DE Universities



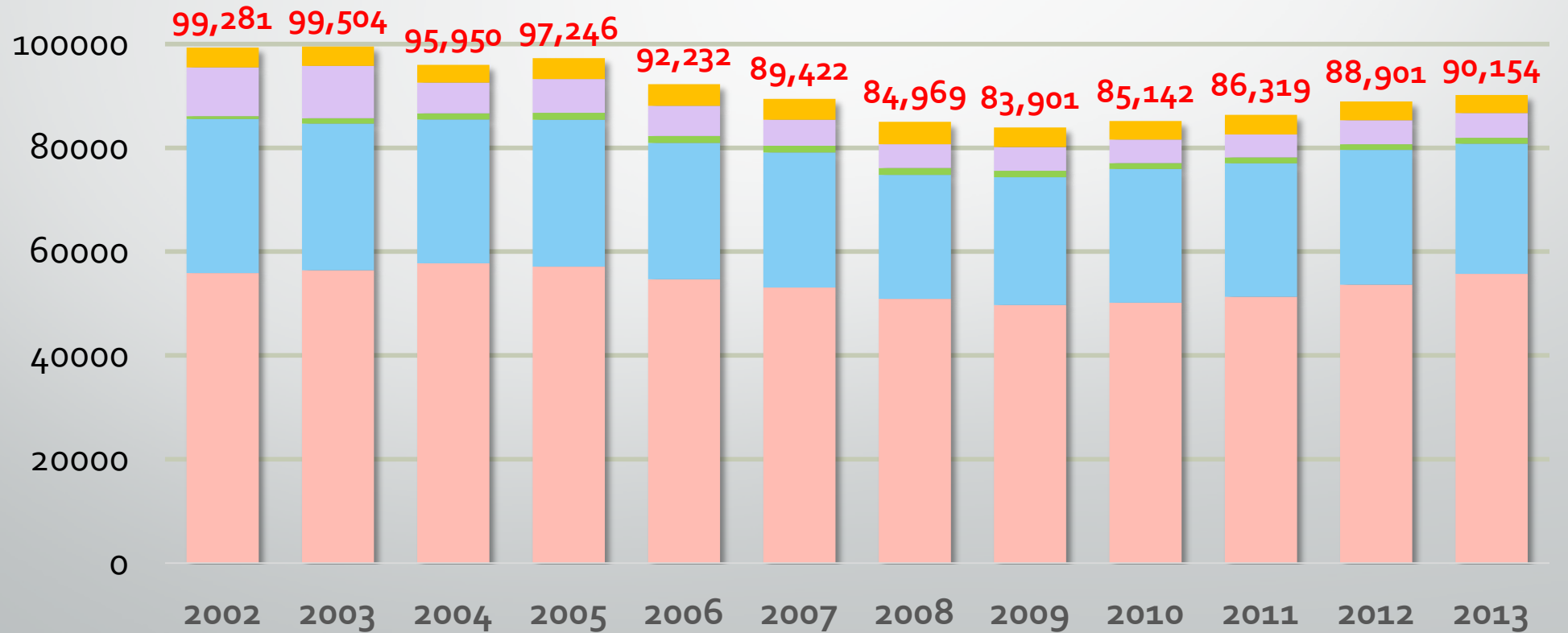
The Open University of Japan (OUJ)



- Established in 1983 by the government
- Began its instruction via TV and radio broadcast in April 1985
- Former English name is "University of the Air"
- Only university in the world that owns an independent over-the-air TV station

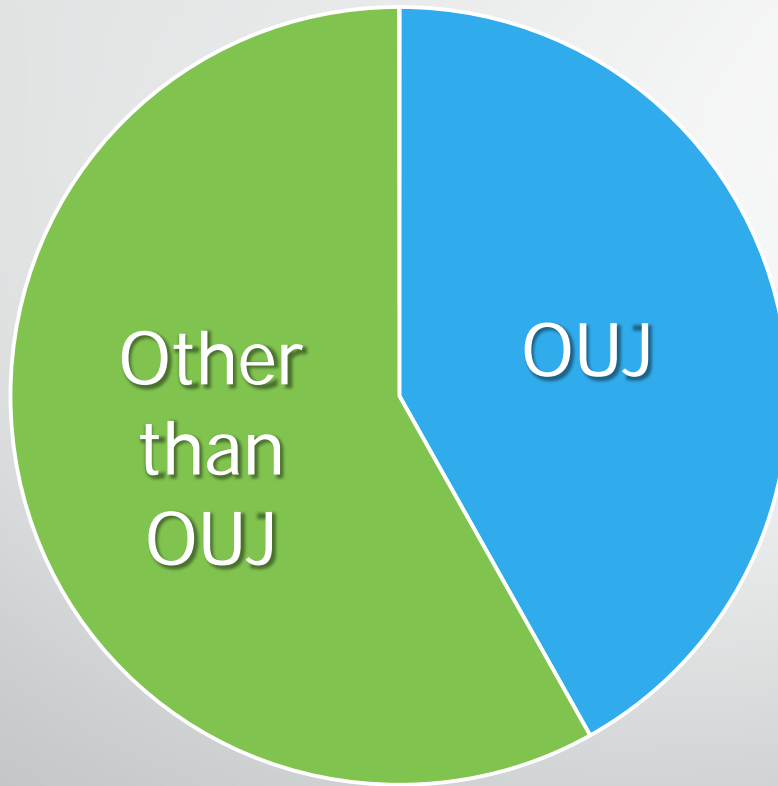
OIJ Students

- Special Auditing Students
- Non-degree Students / School of Graduate Studies
- Master's Course Students / School of Graduate Studies
- Non-degree Students / Faculty of Liberal Arts
- Regular Students / Faculty of Liberal Arts



Total DE Students and OUJ Students

Student Number (2013)



- OUJ comprises more than 40% of the DE students in Japan
- 86 total number of full-time academics
 - 12.5% of the total # of full-time DE faculty members in Japan

Instructional Delivery at OUJ

- **Broadcasting Lecture Classes**

- 45-minute x 15 lecture programs
- Combined with 200~300 page textbook specifically written for the class
- More than 90% of them are now viewable online by registered students

- **Face-to-face Classes**

- Conducted at 50 study centers around the country
- Over 3,000 classes are offered annually
- No bearing to the broadcasting lecture classes
- Managed independently at each study center

Internet Use at OUJ

- **Campus Network Homepage** → Very low usage
 - Forums for courses, Q&A, Supplemental materials
- **System Wakaba**
 - Student records
- **Streaming Video Server (PC & Mobile)**
 - Television lectures online → individual logs not recorded
- **Mid-term Quizzes**
 - Online quiz system for a student to be qualified for taking the final exam

**Not
Integrated**

Open but Not Fully Online

- Broadcasting model of instructional delivery for 30 years
- The very first full online programs are being planned to be offered starting in April 2015
 - Two programs for kindergarten teachers certification
 - Mostly video lectures online with online quizzes
 - Paper & pencil onsite final exams
 - No online discussion forums

The Excuses

- Financial difficulties
 - legally classified as a private university, but the government subsidy is the major source of income
 - Subsidy is given mainly for broadcasting
- Student characteristics
 - Over 60% of the OIJ students are 40s or older
 - Open entrance, meaning diverse academic and skills backgrounds
 - Many lacks in digital skills

MOOCs Tsunami



- Began earnestly considering the possibility of offering online courses for the first time in 2013
- Focal point of the debate
 - Way to justify credit hours
 - Traditional thinking of credit hours at OUJ
 - ① Fifteen 45-minute lecture programs + print material = 2 credits
 - ② Two full day face-to-face lecture class = 1 credit
 - How to count credit hours for online courses?

Two Kinds of Online Courses

- **Courses for delivering information**
 - Similar to broadcasting courses
 - Focusing on what to present or lecture about
 - Easy for OIJ faculty members to imagine
- **Courses for encouraging knowledge construction among students**
 - Very different from broadcasting courses
 - Focusing learning activities for students to do
 - Difficult for OIJ faculty members to imagine

Challenges of Offering Online Courses

- **The university system set up for offering broadcast courses and face-to-face courses at local study centers**
 - No human resources available for producing, designing, creating, implementing, running, and maintaining online courses
 - No career track equivalent to the professional tracks in universities found in the United States
- **Declining financial revenues**
 - Decreasing number of students
 - Decreasing governmental subsidies

Challenges of Offering Online Courses

- **Many committees were set up to discuss different aspects of online courses without any central coordination**
 - Duplicated efforts
 - Production of online courses with short-term visions
 - Misunderstandings/miscommunications
 - Different images of what online courses are
 - Difficulty in shifting the thinking of teaching=lecturing
 - Difficulty in determining assessment methods

Where We Are Now

- Some agreements were reached among the majority of faculty members in terms of variations of online courses
- A central office which oversees online course planning/developing/implementing/running is established
 - One point contact for those inside and outside of the university with regards to online courses
- 2 online courses are started to be offered in April 2015
- 8 courses are being planned to be offered in 2016
- 10 courses are proposed to be offered in 2017



Thank you for your attention!

Questions and comments?

kaoki@ouj.ac.jp