UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD NEWS OFFICE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 0:01 (GMT) Tuesday, 15 November 2016

University of Oxford launches partnership with edX

A new partnership between the University of Oxford and edX, a leading nonprofit online learning destination, has been announced today. As part of the agreement, Oxford will offer a massive open online course (MOOC) from February 2017.

Professor Sarah Whatmore, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, said: 'This collaboration will build capacity for the design and delivery of a range of other online education experiences as the University progresses its Digital Education Strategy. Oxford already has a strong reputation for delivering open educational resources that are used by students, academics and the public worldwide.'

Professor Anne Trefethen, the University Chief Information Officer and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Gardens, Libraries and Museums, said: 'We are delighted to partner with edX and believe we have much to learn from each other as we explore further the potential of technology-enhanced learning.'

The first MOOC course, 'From Poverty to Prosperity: Understanding Economic Development', is freely available for enrolment on edx.org. It will be led by Sir Paul Collier, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government. The course will examine the vital role that governments play in boosting economic development through video lectures, case studies, comparative analysis and a range of other learning activities. The MOOC is aimed at anyone with an interest in economic development, from university students and people working in government and NGOs, through to education and business professionals, and active and engaged citizens who are passionate about the development of their countries. Enrolment opens today, and participants need no specific academic qualifications.

Professor Ngaire Woods, Dean at the Blavatnik School of Government, said: 'The School's mission is to improve government around the world through research and education, and this requires better educated public officials, teachers, entrepreneurs, journalists and citizens. We see this first massive open online course as an effective way to expand access to knowledge beyond the classrooms of Oxford, and to help people understand how their community and country can flourish wherever they are in the world.'

Anant Agarwal, CEO of edX and Professor at MIT, said: 'We are honoured to welcome the University of Oxford, a world-leading centre of learning, teaching and research and the oldest university in the English-speaking world, to the edX global consortium. Our collaboration begins with content from the Blavatnik School of Government to provide our nine million learners with access to an innovative programme that offer insights from a range of academic disciplines and a strong global outlook. We are excited to partner with Oxford to further our shared mission to improve lives and increase access to high quality education for learners everywhere.'

The University of Oxford already has a varied and extensive online presence, offering podcasts which are freely available from both the University's website and iTunes U. The University has also played a significant role in the development and use of digital resources for research in the humanities. Oxford University Department for Continuing Education, which has been delivering adult and professional education for 135 years, also offers a wide range of certified online courses for flexible

and part-time study. Oxford University Press is a University department with a vast online presence and a range of platforms that include scholarly journals and academic reference works; interactive online teaching and homework resources for teachers such as MyMaths and Oxford Learner's Bookshelf; and the leading dictionary site oxforddictionaries.com

For more information, contact the University of Oxford News Office on +44 (0)1865 280534 or email: news.office@admin.ox.ac.uk

Notes for Editors

*About the MOOC course
The MOOC enrolment to "From Poverty to Prosperity: Understanding Economic Development" is open now. The course will start in February 2017 and last for six weeks, with learners expected to spend two to three hours a week on the course. Students will have access to a discussion forum to submit assignments and discuss with peers and instructional staff and can request a statements of completion at the end of the course. No credits will be offered.
After the offering period, the course will remain open and accessible to the public to view the contents (video lectures, case studies, readings) and to take the multiple choice questions but no interaction with peers or instructional staff will be possible.
The course is designed in six modules and analyses the political, social and economic factors that can lift nations out of poverty into prosperity.

- Module 1: From anarchy to a centralised state
- Module 2: From centralised to inclusive states
- Module 3: Power, identities & narratives
- Module 4: Growth through urbanisation & industrialisation
- Module 5: Natural resources and aid
- Module 6: External influences: Trade, migration, international governance, and military intervention

More information about the course can be found here

*About Professor Sir Paul Collier
Sir Paul Collier is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government and a Professorial Fellow of St Antony's College. From 1998–2003 he took a five-year Public Service leave during which he was Director of the Research Development Department of the World Bank. He is currently a Professeur Invité at Sciences Po and a Director of the International Growth Centre. Recent books include The Bottom Billion (Oxford University Press, 2007) which in 2008 won the Lionel Gelber, Arthur Ross and Corine prizes. In 2014, Professor Collier received a knighthood for services to promoting research and policy change in Africa.

*About the Blavatnik School of Government
Founded at the University of Oxford in 2010, the Blavatnik School of Government exists to inspire and support better government and public policy around the world. We teach current and future public leaders through innovative programmes, conduct deep research into pressing issues facing policy makers around the world, and convene leaders and experts to foster better public policy. With a strong global outlook, we combine insights from a range of academic disciplines and derive lessons from the public, private and third sectors. The School was made possible through a £75 million donation to the University of Oxford by American philanthropist Leonard Blavatnik. www.bsg.ox.ac.uk

*Oxford's digital presence
Open Educational Resources

The University's Open Spires website showcases a broad range of open educational resources and projects at Oxford. See: http://openspires.it.ox.ac.uk/

Digital Education Strategy -   The goal of the Strategy is to ensure that in 2020 Oxford remains a premier institution for teaching, adopting the very best of teaching innovations that are made possible by digital technology. See: https://digitaleducation.web.ox.ac.uk

Oxford's iTunesU site was launched in October 2008. It features audio and video podcasts from across the University and currently reaches a worldwide audience of 185 countries. The most popular series are General Philosophy, Quantum Mechanics, Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art, and Building a Business. So far Oxford's iTunesU has attracted nearly 30 million views from people from 185 countries. There are 8,134 episodes grouped in 604 series (an episode is a lecture, talk or interview); a total of 4,100 audio hours online (just audio, there is video too); and 7,100 academic speakers have contributed material. For more information, go to http://itunes.ox.ac.uk/ All material is also available online in Oxford's web portal. See: http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk

The Digital Humanities at Oxford initiative is a joint initiative by the Oxford e-Research Centre, IT Services, the Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), the Oxford Internet Institute, and Oxford's Bodleian Libraries. Oxford probably has more digital humanities activity than any other UK institution, and has received more grants than any other university from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for projects with digital research outputs. One particularly successful project is Early Modern Letters Online, a collaboration between the Bodleian Library and the Humanities Division, which has scanned and digitised online tens of thousands of manuscript letters between great thinkers in early modern Europe. http://digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk/

Oxford University Press For more information about Oxford University Press, go to www.oup.com

Oxford University Department for Continuing Education offers over 90 short online courses, which are delivered to students from over 130 countries. There are around 4,000 students enrolled on its online courses in any given year. For more about the online learning offered by University of Oxford's Department for Continuing Education, go to www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/online/index.php

*About edX
Founded by Harvard University and MIT in 2012, edX is the leading nonprofit online learning destination and MOOC provider, offering high-quality courses from more than 100 of the world's leading universities and institutions to learners everywhere. See: www.edx.org/.

ENDS