

Preparing to Use Open Education Resources: Practical Considerations


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FOCAL POINTS

- Practical considerations
 - Lessons learned from the process
 - Strategies related to using OERs
 - Struggles and successes in incorporating OERs into online courses
 - Potential areas for further research
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Background

- University (Online University): For profit, accredited, 100% online program
- Goal: Transform into an innovative, low cost, competency-based program

Background

- Mission: Leverage new technologies to deliver high quality, low cost programs
- Limited budget

HOW WE DEFINED OPEN SOURCE CONTENT

- “Openly licensed educational resources as teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under a license that permits their free use, reuse, modification, and sharing with others. (cont. on the next slide)
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HOW WE DEFINED OPEN SOURCE CONTENT

- Digital openly licensed resources can include complete online courses, modular digital textbooks as well as more granular resources such as images, videos, and assessment items” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 48).

Practical Considerations

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Why OER'S?

- Cost of a college degree has increased over 1120% since 1978 (Jamrisko & Kolet, 2012; Selingo, 2016).

Why OER'S?

- 14 million Federal Student Loan Borrowers with total student debt outstanding @ 390 million (Department of Education, 2015).

Why OER'S?

- Popular sources report some 40 million borrowers with \$1.2 trillion in total U.S. student loan debt (CNN, 2014).

Why OER'S?

- Increase access by keeping institutional and student costs low.

ADVANTAGES OF USING OER'S

- Access to learning material:
Anytime, any place
- Easy to distribute and disseminate
with little or no cost



ADVANTAGES OF USING OER'S

- Free or low cost
- Continuous improvement: Change material quickly vs. static text books



DISADVANTAGES OF OER's

- **Quality Control:** Many OER repositories (such as Wiki sites) allow any user to post information; information may not be correct.

DISADVANTAGES OF OER's

- **Currency:** Contributors to OER sites are not usually compensated; little incentive to keep the information updated, current, or even active.

DISADVANTAGES OF OER's

- Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: No contractual agreements to keep OER open for a specific period of time, no guarantees that a resource available today will be there tomorrow.

DISADVANTAGES OF OER's

- Time: Finding and curating OER's can consume a tremendous amount of time.

DISADVANTAGES OF OER's

- Technical Issues: No standard for development, access barriers for students, no technical support, and some resources can be difficult to change.

Lessons Learned


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LESSONS LEARNED

- Legal Concerns – ADA Compliant & Copyright
- Managing Resource
- Legal Relationship with Resource Provider



LESSONS LEARNED

- Implications of a Relationship with Provider
 - Ease of Administering the Resource
 - Overall Costs of Adoption
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LESSONS LEARNED

- Overall Costs of Implementation
- Ongoing Administrative Costs



Using OER's

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

- Resources vary significantly in terms of quality and accessibility
- Flexibility to Adopt Entire Resource or Specific Sections

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

- Finding open resources for a single course is manageable
- Identifying open or low cost resources for an entire degree program is daunting

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

- Significant time is involved in reviewing, selecting, and adapting OER content

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

- Technical support needed for open or low cost resources can be significant
- Alignment issues (program outcomes, course objectives, learning objectives, level)

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

- Creative common license does not mean there are no restrictions on use
- Instructor Resources
- Reputation of Creator (Author/Institution/Organization)

CONCLUSION

- OERs may be free and open, the *administration* of the OER is not free.
- Review the legal requirements of open educational resources.

CONCLUSION

- Finding ways to use OER and meet institutional, educational, accreditation, and student needs can be challenging

CONCLUSION

- OER's might not be the complete solution to the financial barriers students often face in obtaining a college education, but continuing to research this and other options may help to provide further insights.



Future Research

AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Babson Survey Research Group (2016) found that faculty awareness of OER's in the U.S. has grown over the past year (from 20%-25%) but the majority of faculty surveyed indicated that OER's are not a driving force when evaluating course materials for their classrooms.

AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- How to minimize barriers: technical, price, permission; as well as limitations to the ability to locate, adapt or build upon a resource.



Q & A



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