

Slide Notes for “Intersection: Professional Development of Librarians as a Strategy for Sustaining Open Education Initiatives”

By Michelle Reed

From the presentation, “Working at the Intersections of Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication: New Models for Engaging Students, Faculty, and Librarians,” by Sarah Hare, Merinda Kaye Hensley, Michelle Reed, and Amanda Makula at the Association of College & Research Libraries conference in Cleveland, Ohio, on April 11, 2019. Presentation materials are available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10106/27924>.

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Slide 1

Intersection: Professional Development of Librarians as a Strategy for Sustaining Open Education Initiatives

In preparing for our presentation, we talked about how we use the *Intersections* white paper in our work-- for example, whether we check in on it regularly or use it to calibrate. For me, this felt like a really difficult question. I feel that my work as an open education librarian, which I transitioned into from working squarely in the realm of information literacy, embodies the intersections. It's foundationally intersectional, it is inextricably tied to our identities as teachers and our interest in scholarly ecosystems, and it is therefore very deeply connected to evolution and innovation in teaching and learning.

Libraries aren't new to open education efforts. The work of open education has been taking place on college campuses, often from within libraries, for a number of years. However, having roles dedicated to this work is still quite new. So I want to talk briefly about my role at the University of Texas at Arlington.

I am oriented under the Scholarly Communication Division within the publishing arm of UTA

Libraries. My primary responsibilities include:

- Lead outreach and education efforts to raise awareness and measure the impact of open educational practices
- Develop and administer a grant program in support of open education
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to develop and disseminate OER
- Lots of building partnerships and collaborations

I'm going to talk today about offering professional development for libraries staff on providing OER consultations as a way to sustain support for the adoption of open and affordable content.

Slide 2

Defining Open Educational Resources (OER)

Open = free + permissions

In my role, one of the things I do frequently is teach people what we're talking about when we talk about OER. There is a common misconception that OER are just free resources, but the permissions piece of the equation is just as important as the free. Open resources are those that provide users with the legal permission necessary for them to engage in remix and revision activities with the resource. The open license allows for content customization, localization, and open pedagogy.

We've seen openwashing of the term OER. I get contacted by people all the time about our work in open education, including from vendors, and have had a few folks say the definition is somehow undecided. This is not true. There is a clear and widely held definition of OER, and it centers on sharing principles. It is true that many libraries include library-licensed content in open & affordability initiatives, but that doesn't make that content open.

The permissions piece is about intellectual property and how we value and share information, how we communicate and participate in communities of scholarship, and it is scholarly communication ripe for connection with information literacy.

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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/oelib/37051477601/>.

Slide 3

Information Literacy and OER

“Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective **discovery** of [resources suitable for students’ learning needs], the understanding of how [course materials are] **produced and valued**, and the use of information in **creating** new [course materials] and participating **ethically** in communities of learning.”

Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2016) modified by Michelle Reed (2019)

While we’re getting definitions out of the way, I want to take a moment to also define information literacy. But I took a few liberties.

Common questions during OER consultations:

- Where do I find OER?
- How do I ensure I’m using quality OER?
- How do I remix or modify other people’s work?

Engaging in critical thought and disrupting the status quo are central to information literacy, and that’s fundamentally what practicing open education requires of us. It is the work of culture change.

There are many ways to make OE complicated, but it doesn’t have to be that way-- and shouldn’t for those new to the topic.

This kind of framing, with an information literacy lens, was important for overcoming a couple of big challenges when developing this new program.

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Sustainability

A person is not a program.

OE efforts need a leader. But they aren’t sustainable without a team.

Size is a challenge:

- 58,000 + global enrollment
- Over 2,200 educators
- 180+ degree programs
- How to support a campus this size???

Image by [Jonathan Blackburn](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Slide 5

Novelty

“How long has this been a thing? I’ve never heard of it!”
Seems new for both faculty and librarians.

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Slide 6

Identifying and Meeting an Information Need

- OER consultations are reference consultations with an Open spin
- Many programs leverage library-licensed content in addition to OER
- Explaining open licensing for resource adoptions is easy

We’ve connected people to information for years. OER are not unlike any other reference or instructional consultation. This was my starting point for talking to librarians about supporting OER adoptions on our campus.

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Open Office Hours

- Hosted drop-in office hours for faculty to help them identify OER and library-licensed content to replace traditional resources.
 - Designated library support two hours per day during OE Week
 - Offered in support of open education grant program
- Trained Adoption Support Team (volunteers from library staff) to offer these consultations.
 - Two-hour training
 - Online materials and customizable templates
 - Individual assistance

Open Office Hour volunteers agree to dedicate a small portion of time to OER consultations. Goal is to offer resource discovery support to educators interested in transitioning to open or library-licensed content, and the vehicle is training Libraries staff to provide this service.

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Staff turnover is a challenge, but opening the volunteer opportunity to any Libraries' staff helped build capacity. We had ten people participate in first year; five resigned from UTA between year 1 & 2. Fortunately, five returned & participated as "lead librarian." An additional five new to OE efforts this year. Of the 15 people who volunteered to help (not mandatory), five are not public-service librarians.

Paired them up and made myself readily available so they felt confident and supported. Know they are to refer to me for more complicated requests (creation from scratch).

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Learning Outcomes

- Identify topics and questions to foreground during OER consultations in order to define the educator's information need.
- Examine OER repositories, search engines, and guides in order to retrieve content related to the educator's information need.
- Discuss freedoms and restrictions of Creative Commons licenses in order to guide educators on reuse of third-party content.

Key Frames: "Searching as Strategic Exploration" and "Information Has Value"

Learning outcomes for OER Adoption Support Workshop.

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Adoption Support Workshop

Used Google Drive for all workshop materials, including exercises, slides, source files, templates, and other workshop documents. Templates folder contains five templates (consultation notes, image tracker, program outcomes, resource list, and resource match worksheet) and volunteers encouraged to create their own subfolders for notes from their consultations. Everyone has access. Everyone has current content at all times. Resource discovery notes can be shared between volunteers, myself, and instructors and can be updated over time.

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OER Consultation Notes

- Course Basics
- Content & Information Needs
- Instructor Interest, Awareness, & Expectations
- Course Material Samples
- Resources Discussed

Questions from OER Consultation Notes:

Course Basics

List basic information about the course, when/how it will be offered, and to whom.

Sample questions: Is it a new course? Online, face-to-face, or hybrid? Synchronous or asynchronous? Who may enroll? How will course materials be shared with students?

When does it begin? Is a syllabus/schedule available?

Content & Information Needs

Take notes about the content of the course. What are the goals and learning objectives?

What topics will be covered in the course? What types of resources are needed (e.g., text, videos, images)?

Instructor Interest, Awareness, & Expectations

Take notes about what sparked the instructor(s)' interest in OER. What are their previous experiences with OER, and how would they describe their level of awareness?

What are their previous experiences with Creative Commons licensing, and how would they describe their level of awareness? What are they hoping to accomplish during the consultation?

Course Material Samples

List any relevant resources you locate together during the consultation. Take note of how the instructor perceives quality of the resources.

Resources Discussed

List brief descriptions and links to any resources discussed during the consultation.

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Libraries as Leaders

Training for the UTA CARES Adoption Support Team was adapted from “Searching for Open Materials” by Quill West, which was developed as a component of Pierce College’s Libraries as Leaders program.

<https://libraryasleader.org/searching-for-open-materials/>