Hello and welcome to OER 101: A Crash Course in Open Educational Resources or O-E-R for short. Part II of II Materials, Movements, and Moving Forward.

My name is Chelsea Stone and I am the Digital Resources & Projects Management Librarian at Sacred Heart University.

In Part I, you learned about the OER initiative at Sacred Heart, definitions of open educational resources, copyright, public domain, fair use, licensing and Creative Commons!

In Part II, you’ll learn about concrete OER materials, various movements and thoughts for moving forward.
OERs are being created by institutions, organizations, and academics. It is common for OERs to be found in collections or repositories. The collaborative and open sharing nature of the movement encourages pedagogical innovation. While many open educational resources are created by reputable sources, it’s always a good idea to have a review process – for quality of content and pedagogical applicability.

Examples of OERs include:

- MIT Open Courseware, which offers complete courses in a variety of subjects at both the undergraduate and graduate level
o OpenStax which offers a variety of open textbooks available online, for download and in low-cost print versions
o Course packs compiled by professors from materials in the public domain
o Materials created by faculty or students from lecture notes, readings, syllabi, etc. that have been open licensed
o And much more!

Examples of OER include:
- MIT Open Courseware
- OpenStax
- Course packs & public domain materials
  - Lecture notes
  - Syllabi
  - Projects
  - etc.
- Materials created by faculty or students
- And much more!

SLIDE 26

Many of the faculty at Sacred Heart University are working on new and innovative ways to incorporate OER and other freely available materials into their courses. Some of these efforts include:

o The Department of Mathematics adopting OpenStax textbooks for College Algebra and Precalculus
o Assistant Provost for Teaching and Learning, Steve Michels formerly of the Department of Government, Politics & Global Studies created course packs using public domain materials
o Professor Colleen Butler-Sweet from the Department of Sociology creating podcasts to supplement lectures
o Professor Eman Abdelfattah from the School of Computer Science using Sway to create an interactive lecture module to teach coding to her students
As you can see from these examples, this movement is not just about the high cost of textbooks. OERs have numerous potential benefits including alleviating student expenses, increasing pedagogical flexibility, and improving student engagement. OER can be utilized in traditional, hybrid, multimedia or online learning environments.

The success of and need for the OER movement can be seen acutely in United States higher education. With community colleges and state university systems taking up the leadership mantle in the movement. In 2017, New York State made a landmark decision to make an $8 million investment in OER for their SUNY system. In 2012, California passed legislation for the creation of 50 free digital textbooks. 2017 also saw the announcement of a partnership between Lumen Learning and Follett, a mainstream
publisher, to “lower costs and improve student success through the use of academic content and courseware based entirely on open educational resources (OER).”

Another mainstream company looking at OER is Amazon, who launched Amazon Inspire to offer school curriculum and OER browsing to school teachers. As the managing director of OpenStax, Daniel Williamson, points out, “the fact that large companies like Amazon are beginning to enter into the world of open educational resources means the field is "coming of age." The market potential for innovation with companies like Amazon and Google could be significant for the success and sustainability of the OER movement.
State governments are not the only one’s taking notice of OER. In 2015, as part of the Third Open Government National Action Plan, the Obama administration emphasized the importance of OER saying:

*Open educational resources are an investment in sustainable human development; they have the potential to increase access to high quality education and reduce the cost of educational opportunities around the world. Open educational resources can expand access to key educational materials, enabling the domestic and international communities to attain skills and more easily access meaningful learning opportunities.*

As part of its #GoOpen campaign, the U.S. Department of Education proposed a new regulation that requires department grant-funded intellectual material to be openly licensed.

**20 states** have also joined the #GoOpen initiative to develop technological strategies that feature OER, pursue the creation of OER repositories, and jointly share resources and strategies. Connecticut became the 20th state to join the initiative in 2017.
There are certainly challenges and improvements to be made as OER evolves and develops into a more sustainable and prevalent aspect of our educational environment.

There are a number of factors, which the educational community and the open community at large will need to discuss.

**Considerations include:**
- Copyright & licensing
- Accuracy & Updates
- Relevance
- Funding
- Awareness
- Access
- Availability
According to a 2015-16 Babson survey…

- 58.1% of faculty reported to be “Not aware” of Open Educational Resources
- 16.5% were “Somewhat aware”
- This represents a modest increase from the 2014/15 survey
- 65.7% responded that they were “Not aware” of open textbooks

There is a concern that with both OER and the concept of “open” that faculty have a fuzzy understanding and awareness.
SLIDE 35

- 81% are “Aware” or “Very Aware” of copyright
- 66% said they are “Aware” or “Very Aware” of the Public Domain
- 38% are “Aware” or “Very Aware” of Creative Commons

SLIDE 36

When looking at perceived barriers, it is clear that there needs to be institutional support for faculty to identify and implement OER.

- 49% of faculty responded “there are not enough resources for my subject”
- 48% said it was “too hard to find what I need”
- 45% responded that “there is no comprehensive catalog of resources”
- About 23% of respondents find searching for OER “Difficult” to “Very difficult”
- With about 62% saying they “Don’t know”
As institutions and communities invest in and develop OER, the availability and credibility of these resources will increase. Additionally, while cost savings is a significant reason for adopting OER, the push has to be about more than just financial considerations, as many faculty cite the quality and content of materials as the most important factors in selecting resources for class use.

The OER movement is part of a larger open movement and we are all invested in common goals.

From a larger vantage point, OER is about equitable access to resources and information for educators, for students, and for the world.

Thank you for joining me for OER 101: A Crash Course in Open Educational Resources, Part II.

I’d like to give a special thanks to the contributions of Jaya Kannan and Zach Claybaugh. As well as to Ula Lechtenberg and Mark Denny.
CREDITS

This OER 101 crash course was created by Chelsea Stone, Digital Resource & Projects Management Librarian, Summer/Fall 2017.

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