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Open Educational Resources: The What, How, Why, and Who

Kris Helge
khelge@twu.edu

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Kris Helge – Assistant Dean Academic Engagement, Texas Woman’s University

1. Presentation Title: Open Educational Resources: The What, How, Why, and Who
2. Presenter Information-Primary presenter CV/resume or biographical sketch: Kris Helge is Assistant Dean of Academic Engagement at the Texas Woman’s University Library. Prior to working at TWU, he served as Director of the Library at Tarrant County College, and as Scholarly Communications Librarian at the University of North Texas. At all three of these institutions Kris promoted, offered education, utilized, and made available open educational resources. Kris earned a Ph.D. in Information Science from the University of North Texas, a J.D. from South Texas College of Law Houston, an M.L.S. from the University of North Texas, and a B.A. from Baylor University.
3. Disciplines: Education, Educational Leadership, Higher Education Administration, Arts and Humanities, Physical Sciences and Mathematics
4. Presentation Theme: Issues and trends in higher education.
5. Presentation Type: Best practice presentation (45 minutes)
6. Abstract: Open educational resources are free, digitally available, valid and reliable textbooks, videos, syllabi, and other educational resources utilized to save students money. This session describes what open educational resources are, where to locate them, why to use them, and it reinforces their validity and reliability of use.
7. Keywords: open educational resources
8. Creative Commons license: Creative Commons Attribution – Share Alike 4.0
9. Presentation Documents:

Each year, the cost of education prevents some students from purchasing textbooks, or from even attending college at all. Some students do not prepare for their classes due to foregoing the purchase of a textbook, due to its steep cost. College and university staff, faculty, and administrators search for logical avenues to assuage the costs of education for all students.

One tool that alleviates some of the exorbitant costs of education for students is termed open educational resources OER.ⁱ OERs are free and digitally accessible textbooks, educational videos, syllabi, and other peer reviewed, valid, and reliable pedagogical tools. The primary benefits of OERs are that they save students money, they are well vetted by faculty peers before they are distributed for use, and they are globally accessible in digital format. OERs are easily located via numerous digital educational sites such as: Rice University’s OpenStaxⁱⁱ, Merlot IIⁱⁱⁱ, College Open Textbooks^{iv}, and the Open Textbook Library.^v

This session conveys what OERs are, where to locate OERs, how to use them, provides some answers as to why and when one might utilize them, and discusses who is currently using these resources. This session also communicates interactively different grants available for which one may apply to develop an OER only course.^{vi} This session will interactively guide individuals through the grant process, answer questions about the grants, and challenge attendees to consider using OERs. At the termination of this session, attendees will understand the value of OERs, know where to locate OERs, recognize how to utilize and evaluate OERs, and grasp how to apply for a grant to establish an OER only course.

ⁱ SPARC: Open education (2018). Retrieved from <https://sparcopen.org/open-education/>

ⁱⁱ OpenStax: Access. The future of education (2018). Retrieved from <https://openstax.org/openstax-tutor#how-it-works>

ⁱⁱⁱ Merlot (208). Retrieved from <https://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm>

^{iv} College Open Textbooks: Driving awareness and adoption of open textbooks (2018). Retrieved from <http://www.collegeopentextbooks.org/>

^v Open Textbook Library: University of Minnesota (2018). Retrieved from <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>

^{vi} Federal Register: Applications for New Awards; Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education-Open Textbooks Pilot Program (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/07/30/2018-16264/applications-for-new-awards-fund-for-the-improvement-of-postsecondary-education-open-textbooks-pilot>