OER Stories

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interviewed by Jennifer Peters, Seneca Libraries and the Teaching & Learning Centre**

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Open Education Resources (OER) are "teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under a license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others" (Hewlett Foundation). This series will highlight faculty who are using OERs with their students.

What is your program, and in which course do you use an OER?
I teach in the School of International Business and Management and I use an open resource in PPS100 - Professional Presentation Skills. There are 12 sections of this course in the Fall 2018 semester. I have been the course leader since Fall 2014.

What OER do you use with your students?
We use a WordPress site that links to videos, online articles, websites, and graphics. You can access the site at professionalpresentations.wordpress.com.
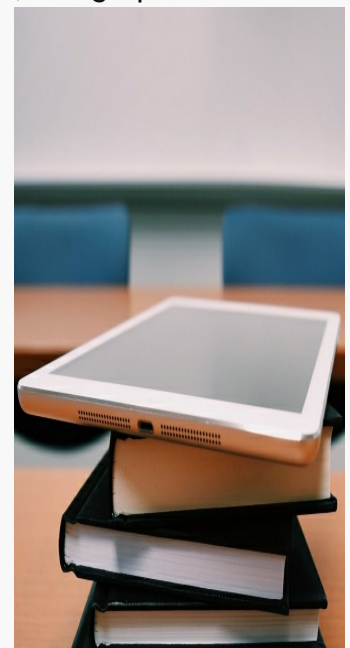
When did you start using an OER with your students?
We have been using the WordPress site since Fall 2014.

How have your students responded?
The students have given positive feedback. It is an excellent teaching tool that is "here and now," as all the materials are relevant and laid out in a weekly format. Students access WordPress from their Blackboard course site. It's easily accessible along with all the other course materials.

I feel the students have a deeper understanding of the course concepts because of the visual nature of the course content. The

students find that watching a presentation done well by several presenters is much more valuable than reading about it in a text.

There is no charge to the students for this site.

To date, this approach for the course delivery has saved students between $67,120 and $108,360[1].

Do you feel it has improved the teaching and learning experience for you and your students?

Absolutely! We can customize the videos, online articles, and websites to our learning outcomes and weekly learning objectives. Offering students a series of videos and images offers more variety of delivery than the traditional textbook. Students can see firsthand several types of presentations, thus improving their ability to critically analyze all of the various components of a presentation (effective introductions, attention getters, closings, eye contact, gestures, voice intonation, audible voice tones, etc.). It really is experiential learning.

The art of storytelling is threaded throughout the course. Videos are chosen carefully to model effective storytelling techniques. We can add or delete information at any time on the WordPress site whereas if using a textbook we may be committed to it for at least a couple of years. Using this site allows us to adapt lessons if something new and relevant should arise. We can add information to the site within minutes.

Is there anything you would change about using the OER with your students?

Absolutely not. Students, as well as the faculty, like the layout and the effectiveness of the WordPress site. Again, it is a great teaching and learning tool.

What are your future plans with the OER?

We will continue to use and build the site, as we recognize the effectiveness of this resource.

Any other comments?

If you are interested in developing this type of resource, Seneca Libraries is a great place to get started. A quick chat with them about linking and copyright can get you started.

Please note: While the resource Debi uses is not technically an OER, it does leverage freely available material, thereby creating a free course resource for her students.

[1] For this calculation, we used an estimate of a $40 textbook multiplied by half the number of

students for the low estimate and multiplied by three quarters of the students for the high estimate.

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