Office Space:

Developing Student OER Leaders Through Hiring Practices and Collaborative Projects

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In order to increase the use of open educational resources in courses and encourage faculty exploration and innovation in finding new, better, and less costly ways to deliver quality learning materials to students, Connecticut College library staff built a program to support and foster open education initiatives on campus. Increasing student advocacy for OER became an important goal during the initial phases of the project. This chapter will examine the role of student employees as OER leaders and outline the education, training and support needed to foster an OER student champion. Included here is extensive background research on the various approaches to fostering student OER advocacy on college campuses and the specific steps taken to create an OER for information literacy instruction with a student working in Research Support & Curricular Technology at the Shain Library at Connecticut College.

The student voice is a vital piece of any open educational resources initiative on a college campus. Students carry the financial burden of overpriced textbooks and often pay for course materials long after college due to interest on student loans. The Student PIRG, Public Interest Research Group, is a great example of the power of student advocacy to drive discussion and change governmental and institutional policy. The Student PIRG website lays out the issue by explicitly targeting skyrocketing textbook costs: “Textbook prices have risen four times faster than inflation, leaving the average student now budgeting more than $1,200 every year for materials. After working to end tricks the publishing industry used to increase prices unfairly, U.S. PIRG is fixing the broken marketplace by promoting free, openly licensed textbooks.”[1] The anger in this statement is palpable, and warranted but, with a concentration on cost-savings, it doesn’t encompass the wide-ranging benefits of OER and what the open

[1]“Make Higher Education Affordable.” U.S. PIRG. https://uspirg.org/feature/usp/make-higher-education-affordable

movement offers to higher education including greater academic freedom, innovative instructional strategies and equitable access to learning.

Librarians, administrators and faculty who are engaged in open educational resource programs often ask how best to educate students about OER and how to train them to advocate for, and become leaders in, the fight for broader open textbook use on campus. The approaches vary from informative displays in the library, “petting zoos” with OpenStax textbooks or written comments about how the high cost of textbooks affect student life on a daily basis. These are easily accomplished and certainly raise awareness of OER work, but they don’t fulfill the need to educate students about making, using and sharing open resources and how they can lead to innovative pedagogy.

It is also necessary to take into consideration the burdens students carry as they manage academic, personal and professional concerns. Anxiety and depression among undergraduate students are on the rise on college campuses. According to the American Psychological Association, 61% of college students seek counseling for anxiety while 49 percent report feelings of depression.[2] Jones et al. found “a universality of anxiety across various types of students,” including academic distress, financial stress, family problems and peer support issues.[3] Beiter et al. found in a study from 2015 that, “demographically, the most stressed, anxious, and depressed students were transfers, upperclassmen, and those living off-campus.”[4] Advocating for OER is not an undue burden for students but adding yet another chore to their day or asking for unpaid labor is a problem if stress levels are already high. Finally, student loans are an enormous stress for students as they consider the repercussions of

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[2] Lea Winerman. “By the Numbers: Stress on Campus. American Psychological Association. (2017). https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/09/numbers

[3] Jones, Payton J, So Yeon Park, and G. Tyler Lefevor. "Contemporary College Student Anxiety: The Role of Academic Distress, Financial Stress, and Support." *Journal of College Counseling* 21 3 (2018): 252-264.

[4] Beiter, R., R.Nash, M.McCrady, D.Rhoades, M.Linscomb, M.Clarahan and S.Sammut. "The Prevalence and Correlates of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress in a Sample of College Students." *Journal of Affective Disorders* 173 (2015): 90-96.

high debt on their future. According to the College Board website, “average total grant aid per FTE undergraduate student rose by 36% between 1998-99 and 2008-09 and by another 60% between 2008-09 and 2018-19.”[5]

With all these stressors, students are required to maintain their GPA, participate in sports, engage in extracurricular activities and be active in clubs and nonprofit work. And yet, it is recommended that students advocate for OER in the following ways:

- Raise awareness about solutions to the problem
- Gather and share data on textbook costs, student preferences, and personal impact of prices
- Advocate for initiatives that offer faculty time/money to redesign their courses to lower costs
- Adopt a student government resolution committing to specific actions
- Campaign for a vote on allocating student fee money for OER support
- Put an open license on all content that your group creates
- Publicly thank faculty who adopt open textbooks
- Model a positive and respectful tone – avoid demonizing![6]

These are noble objectives and students play an important part in any OER initiative, but putting too much pressure on students leads to disappointment for staff and overburdened students. By the time librarians and administrators ask for help promoting and advocating for OER, students schedules are full. An alternative approach is to pay students for their time toward promoting, educating and marketing OER on campus.

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[5] “Average Aid Per Student Over Time.” *Research*. College Board. https://research.collegeboard.org/trends/student-aid/figures-tables/average-aid-student-over-time

[6] Open Oregon Educational Resources. *Textbook Affordability Student Toolkit*. (2018). https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KW2OakEQVSGJdYL_CBPSorvohHHOaUEC/view

Many students are employed at academic libraries working in different capacities from technical services to public services. Some departments have a dedicated OER student worker with a job description that specifically outlines responsibility for advocating for open educational resources. An example is the Affordable Course Content Student Ambassador at VCU Libraries. [7] This is a position created by Hillary Miller, Scholarly Communications Librarian, Virginia Commonwealth University. The job description includes the promotion of the open and affordable course content initiative to the VCU community, OER outreach events and creating educational materials. The VCU position is entry-level and qualifications for the job are soft skills that demonstrate a student's interest in learning about OER rather than specific technical or open education knowledge. Another example is, the OER Publishing Student Assistant at the University of Texas Arlington, this position requires more advanced skills to help with Pressbooks integration, editing open textbooks and experience with HTML.[8] An OER job description for students can offer resume-building skills, but is also an educational opportunity for reflection and self-assessment where "students learn how to educate, encourage, and promote the adoption of OER materials while in college and beyond."[9]

Some programs use upper level students to adapt existing course materials as OER. Challenges to this type of program can be a lack of willingness by faculty to share content or allocating funding for stipends for the students. Regardless of their passion for the cause, students may not be willing to work for free. In their article, "It's Not Their Job to Share Content": A Case Study of the Role of Senior Students in Adapting Teaching Materials as Open

[7] "2019-2020: Student Job/Internship - VCU Libraries - Affordable Course Content Student Ambassador (PAID)." Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture. VCU.

[8] OER Publishing Student Assistant. *Scholarly Communications*. UTA. https://library.uta.edu/dept/open-education-resources

[9] Khalid, Mohammed. "How Open Ed opens up student advocacy in promoting OER." *OpenStax Blog.* (2017). https://openstax.org/blog/how-open-ed-opens-student-advocacy-promoting-oer.

Educational Resources at the University of Cape Town," Hodgkinson-Williams and Paskevicius state “in the interviews students were asked directly if payment contributed towards their willingness to undertake this task. Surprisingly two responded that they would have done this without being paid and saw the payment as ‘a nice bonus’ (Student 1), but it did help them to ‘prioritise’ (Student 2) this work. However, Student 3 was quite pragmatic and reflected that ‘giving tutors extra workload or trying to convince them to take this work on themselves will be difficult’.[10]

At Connecticut College, budget issues prevented us from creating a dedicated student OER position, so the Research Support & Curricular Technology Student Assistant job description was adapted to include OER related duties. The purpose of altering the job description was partly to seek help in advocating for the College’s OER initiative, but also to make the position more challenging beyond simple clerical tasks or data entry and help the student develop broader transferable skills. The job teaches about issues of access and equity in higher education, utilizing affordable course content to improve student success and work collaboratively with faculty, staff and peers.

Educating the student assistant about OER was the first priority. We began with a basic introduction to open educational resources. These included the series of videos on OER by Abbey Elder, Open Access & Scholarly Communication Librarian at Iowa State University.[11] These videos provide a comprehensive overview of the issues in open education including advocacy, copyright and creation of content. In addition to the educational value of these videos, they provided an excellent example of best practices for video tutorial creation since my student assistant was tasked with creating a screencasting tutorial for English majors. My student read

[10] Hodgkinson-Williams, Cheryl, and Michael Paskevicius. "It's Not Their Job to Share Content": A Case Study of the Role of Senior Students in Adapting Teaching Materials as Open Educational Resources at the University of Cape Town." *E-Learning and Digital Media* 10, no. 2 (2013): 135-147.

[11] Elder, Abbey. “Abbey Elder - YouTube.”https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfQ5GAgW5Bq8aJbgdd2e5EQ.

The SPARC Open Education Factsheet which provided a simple definition of OER as well as a picture of skyrocketing textbook costs and studies that highlight student success rates when OER is used in classes.[12] Lastly, she read “7 Things You Should Know about OER” from Educause, which showcases different OER models at various universities and how open education policies are adopted at the university, state and federal levels.[13] The positive effects of learning about OER for the student were made obvious through conversation about equity in access to education and the link between academic success and affordability of course materials.

Another approach to teaching students about open education is the OER initiative at Adams State University which focused largely on engaging students as OER advocates. In their paper, Bridging the Gap: Rural Librarians’ Journey to Understanding Students’ Role in OER Outreach, Langdon & Parker note the unintended positive consequences of outreach to students about open educational resources, “the multifold benefits of such dialogue include promotion of the library and librarians as valid resources for students’ educational needs; increased student awareness of information privilege and how it impacts them, both positively and negatively; and, of course, knowledge of open resources so that they can advocate for a shift away from traditional textbooks and toward more open sources.”[14] Their study consisted of surveys to students that led to discovering that the majority of students surveyed are interested in learning more about OER. But, the authors conclude that in order to develop a program of student advocacy you must have administrative support. A grassroots approach is fine to garner interest, but in order to build momentum, initiatives need funding and institutional buy-in.

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[12] “Open Education Factsheet.” *SPARC.* https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsparcopen.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2016%2F01%2FOpen-Education-Fact-Sheet_SPARC.11.10.pdf

[13] “7 Things You Should Know About Open Educational Resources.” Educause. https://library.educause.edu/resources/2010/5/7-things-you-should-know-about-open-educational-resources.

[14] Langdon, Amanda N., and Katherine E. Parker. "Bridging the Gap: Rural Librarians’ Journey to Understanding Students’ Role in OER Outreach." *Adams State University, Colorado.*

In “OER and Social Justice: An Honors Colloquium at Oregon State University,” Buck and Valentino use a 2-credit course to teach undergraduate students about open education and “the economic models that drive the price of information creation and access and include undergraduates in discussions or activities surrounding open access and social justice topics is one way to help create future advocates.”[15] This was the intention of creating a student assistant position for OER advocacy. All job duties related to OER led to on-campus activities, discussion, and reflection on the role of OER to promote open education practice and reduce the financial burden of college for students. Work responsibilities were designed to help the student assistant discover, synthesize, and reflect on social justice and information access.

When working with individual students on issues relating to open education, we hope to inspire future academics who support, and are aware of, open access, open data and open pedagogy. In “Introducing ‘Generation Open’: The Next Generation of Open Advocates,” Clobridge introduces an early-career researcher who states, “for reasons of efficiency, economic benefit, and morality our research should be open, particularly if it's publicly or charitably funded.”[16] The opportunity to use and create open resources affords a student the chance to mold a very different scholarly landscape after graduation by supporting open practices in higher education and research institutions. One where new academics will have to recognize the need for open access resources for financial reasons as well as the imperative to create content with diverse and relevant examples for students on a local level. Access to resources needs to be inclusive and open in order to create a new world order that benefits those beyond exclusive peer networks. Clobridge emphasizes the collaborative instructional

[15] Buck, Stefanie, and Maura L. Valentino. “OER and Social Justice: An Honors Colloquium at Oregon State University.” *Journal of Librarianship & Scholarly Communication* 6 (2018): 1–18. doi:10.7710/2162-3309.2231.

[16] Clobridge, Abby. “Introducing ‘Generation Open’: The Next Generation of Open Advocates.” *Online Searcher* 39 2 (2015): 68–70.

practice or open pedagogy that is possible when integrating open educational resources into a course.[17]

At Connecticut College, we intentionally included the student assistant in open pedagogy projects to add authenticity and rigor to her workload. Instead of creating a research paper that only the instructor reads, open pedagogy practices can result in websites, open access resources or work that can be used in future iterations of a course. Open pedagogy addresses the need to change instructional strategies for an online learning environment. With the use of OER and digital scholarship tools and software, students can create, remix, collaborate and adapt materials for use in their courses or share them openly to connect with a wider public beyond the course parameters. “Thinking of students as constructors of meaning is also one way in which we begin to explore what is at the heart of the real project of education (and therefore information literacy) which is empowerment.”[18] The OER student assistant in my department was able to edit and add to an open textbook for a philosophy course, *Form and Content: An Introduction to Formal Logic*, she was taking at the time.[19] This project allowed her to see the financial value of an OER, influence the outcome of the content and evaluate the resource at the end of the class. This became an effective way to teach about OER since the student was experiencing the process of creation as well as using the end product.

In an article in Chronicle Higher Education, Christina Hendricks wrote, “an open education movement with students is much more effective than without, and creating and revising OERs can be a valuable way for students to learn and to have their work make a larger

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[17] Clobridge. “Introducing ‘Generation Open’: The Next Generation of Open Advocates.”

[18] Critten, Jessica. “Death of the Author(Ity): Repositioning Students as Constructors of Meaning in Information Literacy Instruction.” Chapter. In Critical Literacy for Information Professionals, edited by Sarah McNicol, 19–30. Facet, (2016). doi:10.29085/9781783301508.003.

[19] Turner, Derek D., "Form and Content: An Introduction to Formal Logic" (2020). *Open Educational Resources*. 1. https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/oer/1

impact than just earning them a grade."[20] As OER supporters, we encourage faculty to incorporate open pedagogy projects in their classes. It seems reasonable then that we facilitate student-created projects in the library. We can benefit from students' expertise in their respective disciplines. The student assistant hired for the position in research support and curricular technology at Connecticut College majored in English and was highly qualified to create research tutorials for English majors.

A student assistant with responsibilities in OER advocacy has a unique pathway to faculty that librarians may not. Students can gain access to faculty for casual conversation and they can represent your department as an advocate for open educational resources. The OER student assistant created interview questions and talked with many English faculty as preparation to create a research tutorial. She was able to schedule a coffee date and talk comfortably with an English professor who could outline precisely what a basic research tutorial for English literature should include. As an English major, the student was able to bring her own research experiences to the conversation and engage in a discussion using the academic vocabulary of the field. She met with the Student Advisory Group for the English Department in order to get feedback on research strategies and tips from her peers. These assets were invaluable to the project and something that only a current student in the discipline could add.

Working on information literacy goals with the student assistant began with an overview of the Connecticut College library instruction program's tiered outcomes.[21] These had been recently revised and provided a basis on which to build a tutorial specifically targeted to first year English majors. Although librarians wanted to begin a lesson for first year students with a tutorial for OneSearch, our discovery platform, the student assistant pointed out that searching

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[20] Hendricks, Christina. "Students Vital Role in OER." *Chronicle of Higher Education.* https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/views/2017/12/13/students-have-vital-role-creating-and-spreading-oer#.XkMUb_bD2iw.link

[21] "Library Instruction." Connecticut College. https://www.conncoll.edu/information-services/libraries/research-resources/library-instruttion/

in the catalog was confusing and hard to navigate. She emphasized the necessity to become comfortable with subject specific databases such as JStor and MLA which can situate an argument or research topic in context. Her opinion was echoed by the professor responsible for first year instruction in the English Department. The professor saw students struggling with evaluation of sources when using OneSearch and pushed for an easier way to introduce students to the scholarly conversation by introducing subject databases in 100-level classes. Hamlett and Georgas support this in their findings that there is a "disparity between students' perceptions of the discovery tool's ease-of-use and the difficulties they encountered while using the tool."[22] In the study, students reported that OneSearch was very easy to use yet still had trouble locating full text and differentiating types of sources. As we debated the need for instruction versus usability, it became clear that a tutorial would not replace library instruction, but supplement it.

In addition to database skills, the student assistant wanted the tutorial to focus on close reading skills. Close or critical reading is a technique to parse very complex plots or themes. Purdue OWL lays out steps for close reading: using tracking methods, making marginal notes, freewrite summaries and step back.[23] In *Critical Reading in Higher Education: Academic Goals and Social Engagement,* Manarin et al note that "research suggests that simply asking students to build an argument based on multiple documents does not improve comprehension."[24] The pitfall of any library instruction class is to assume that students who leave the room with five relevant articles are adept at research. As a senior, the student assistant recognized the value

[22] Hamlett A., and Helen Georgas. "In the Wake of Discovery: Student Perceptions, Integration, and Instructional Design". *Journal of Web Librarianship*. (2019)https://doi.org/10.1080/19322909.2019.1598919

[23] "Close Reading a Text and Avoiding Pitfalls." Purdue OWL. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/writing_about_fiction/index.html

[24] Manarin, Karen, Miriam Carey, Melanie Rathburn, and Glen Ryland. *Critical Reading in Higher Education*. Indiana University Press, 2015.

of close reading as she wrote her honors thesis and realized this was an important piece of advice for new English majors.

The tutorial was created for ENG150:Essentials of Literary Study, an introduction to the skills and concepts fundamental to the discipline of English and the art of reading and writing. Discussions emphasize the close reading of poetry and prose fiction, and the historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts of literary texts. The information literacy outcomes for library instruction classes for ENG150 are to use close reading methods to critically analyze and evaluate reading material, make inferences, and determine a writer's purpose and tone; and compare and contrast articles in different genres in order to determine applicability to academic writing projects. These objectives were simplified and included in the final tutorial script.

As a senior, the student assistant was highly proficient in research skills and very reliant on individual subject databases for projects. She insisted that first year English majors needed an introduction to JStor and that would be a crucial tool for all of their research projects. "While some library users may consult JSTOR with awareness of its role as a digital archive, many users also think of it as a place to identify current and relevant scholarship of interest, across subject areas."[25] Corroborating evidence is reported by Hamlett and Georgas, in their comprehensive look at studies showing students could easily navigate through OneSearch but they had difficulty determining source types; students under-utilized facets; and students relied on the first results that they found.[26] This evidence supports a need for library instruction classes but deemphasizes a need to introduce students to the online catalog because of the false assumption that it is easier to use than individual databases.

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[25] Pearce A.L. "Discovery and the disciplines: An inquiry into the role of subject databases through citation analysis". *College and Research Libraries*. 80 2 (2019): 195-214.

[26] Hamlett A., and Helen Georgas. "In the Wake of Discovery: Student Perceptions, Integration, and Instructional Design".

The student assistant was given a number of books and articles to read on information literacy for English majors including the *MLA Guide to Undergraduate Research in Literature.*[27] In addition, we analyzed the syllabi from English classes available on our LMS in order to align tutorial objectives with course outcomes. This approach is a first step in a broader initiative of curriculum mapping. Uchiyama and Radin (2009) found the process of curriculum mapping to be a collaborative process that emphasizes knowledge and expertise of all instructors whether faculty or library staff.[28] By taking into consideration assignments and objectives of individual syllabi, we were ensuring adherence to the research skills development laid out by the department.

It was decided that the student would create a three minute tutorial, with a brief description of OneSearch but highlighting the scholarly articles available through the databases. According to the ACRL's Instruction Section newsletter, *Tips and Trends*, lengthy webinar-style formats can have a high attrition rate and a better approach is to have the information clustered into a series of videos with each video describing a single discrete task.[29] This first video is meant to be an introduction to research and more advanced video tutorials will follow.

In order to prepare for recording a screencasting tutorial, we provided the student assistant with workshops, online webinars and examples of best practices. She viewed examples of instructional videos to get an idea of voice modulation and tone. The library has licenses for Camtasia so that was our choice for tutorial software. The student assistant met with the Instructional Technologist to see a demonstration of the software and discuss ways to effectively write a script and record audio. She also watched Camtasia tutorials on LinkedIn

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[27] Brookbank, Elizabeth, and H. Faye Christenberry. MLA Guide to Undergraduate Research in Literature. New York: Modern Language Association of America. (2019).

[28] Uchiyama K.P. and Jean L. Radin. "Curriculum mapping in higher education: A vehicle for collaboration". *Innovative Higher Education*. 33 4 (2009): 271-280. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-008-9078-8

[29] Nagar, Rashelle. "Video Tutorials." *Tips and Trends.* ACRL Instructional Technologies Committee. https://acrl.ala.org/IS/wp-content/uploads/Tips-and-Trends-Winter20.pdf.

Learning, an expensive subscription platform but very valuable to academic technology instruction. Training tutorials advised writing a script prior to recording a screencast resulted in smoother transitions and higher quality audio recordings.

An important aspect of expository writing is rhetorical analysis and this was a key component when preparing to write the script for the tutorial. The student assistant determined that the target audience was first year students. She had to think about voice, tone, and persona to accommodate the communication situation. This was equally true for writing the script, as well as recording the audio for the tutorial. We agreed that she wanted to be friendly and sound like a peer, but act as an authority who is familiar with English coursework and research projects. A key element was to address logos, pathos and ethos in her script writing. Using ethos, “a method of persuasion in which the speaker or writer (the “rhetor”) attempts to persuade the audience by demonstrating his own credibility or authority,”[30] she introduced herself in the script and explained why she is an expert on research tools for first year writing projects in English.

This led to a discussion about the ACRL framework, “authority is constructed and contextual” and the concept that “experts know how to seek authoritative voices but also recognize that unlikely voices can be authoritative, depending on need.”[31] The student assistant recognized her role as an expert among her peers, but understood the importance that she interview English faculty to ensure authoritative oversight of the project. At this stage, we brought in logos to the script by stating “I interviewed Professor X and she said these are the things first year students need to know.” In this statement, the student assistant is no longer appealing to feelings, that students should listen because she’s a friendly peer, but that she is appealing to the logic or reason of her audience. Lastly, she brought pathos to the argument.

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[30] McKee, Jessica and Megan McIntyre. “Ethos.” Writing Commons. https://writingcommons.org/article/ethos/.

[31] "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education", American Library Association. (2015). http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.

Pathos evokes an emotional response from a reader by appealing to empathy, fear, humor, or some other emotion, for example, she included in her script the inevitable anxiety new students feel when confronted with a research assignment and the necessity to be trained on the right tools in order to successfully get your paper done.[32]

In order to give proper credit to the student assistant for her work, she was asked to choose a Creative Commons license for her scripts. We also discussed where her work could be shared and if she would be comfortable with others using her writing. She viewed a number of videos on copyright and read information on fair use. Brigham Young University's Copyright 101 is an interactive series of tutorials that provided information about the rights of copyright holders and legal exemptions for undergraduate students.[33] In order to choose a license and learn how to add the license to your work, she read information on open licenses from OpenOregon Educationals Resources.[34] This became an experiential lesson in the ACRL frame, Information Has Value. In this scenario, the student assistant learned about the value of information beyond rules of citation styles and warnings about plagiarism. “As creators and users of information, experts understand their rights and responsibilities when participating in a community of scholarship.”[35]. She created her own resource and then chose a license that suited her needs while understanding the imperative to provide free information to users and sharing work with the academic community. She chose a CCBY license, understanding that “this license lets others distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation.”[36]

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[32] Gayle, Kendra, Jessica McKee and Megan McIntyre. “Pathos.” Writing Commons. https://writingcommons.org/article/pathos/.

[33] Brigham Young University’s Copyright Licensing Office. (2016). Copyright 101. copyright.byu.edu.

[34] “About Open Licenses.” *FAQ*. OpenOregon Educational Resources. http://faq.openoregon.org/about-open-licenses.

[35] "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education", American Library Association. (2015). http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.

[36] “About the Licenses.” Creative commons. https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

As mentioned previously in this chapter, students face stress daily from numerous channels both in their private lives and in the educational setting. In the midst of our project, the student assistant was facing high anxiety due to the pressure of completing an honors thesis and family obligations. It was necessary to take a step back and help her negotiate a difficult point in her academic career. This became an opportunity to practice instructional strategies based in critical information literacy theory. Metaliteracy encourages learners to think of themselves as producers of information rather than consumers. Jacobson and Friedman state "it can be revelatory for students to realize, for example, that how they feel about learning something new (affective) may have an impact on that learning (cognitive)."[37] I recommended that she read *Creativity in Research: Cultivate Clarity, be Innovative, and Make Progress in Your Research Journey*, a book that lays out clear steps to teaching researchers how to manage their creative process. "No matter your field, scholarly work prizes novelty and innovation: identifying new problems worth solving, explaining unexplained phenomena, solving problems that haven't been solved before, producing new interpretations of important cultural or historical events, or developing new methods to study the world."[38] Downtime is crucial for the freethinking, imaginative mindset that a student needs to be creative. But students are busier than ever and idle time is a luxury for many. The key to addressing how to handle work overload is to practice self care and analyzing a situation for triggers or stressors.

Ulibarri et al discuss how to strike a balance between handling emotions rationally and ensuring that they don't jeopardize sound decisions during the research process. The student assistant voiced concern about a break in the relationship with her honors thesis adviser. It was obvious that she needed to assess the situation and evaluate her feelings. She was often in

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[37] Jacobson, T. and Friedman, M. "Teaching critical thinking and metaliteracy through OER: Theory and practice in a course collaboration." *International Journal of Open Educational Resources*, 2 1 (2020).

[38] Ulibarri, Nicola, Amanda E. Cravens, Anja Svetina Nabergoj, Sebastian Kernbach, and Adam Royalty. *Creativity in Research: Cultivate Clarity, Be Innovative, and Make Progress in Your Research Journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2019).

tears and worried about completing her research project. She needed to find a way to channel her emotions, not ignore them. “The ubiquity of emotions in the human experience also means that trying to ignore emotions and banish them from research practice is often counterproductive or even destructive to your work and health.”[39] She used emotional intelligence grounding techniques and developed the self-awareness that gave her the tools to observe and use her own emotions to drive her work forward. Noticing the emotions that emerge as you do your research can provide valuable feedback in helping you discover your own research process, including time management issues, goal setting, and which analytic methods will mesh best with your personality.

Empathy for the student was key in this situation in order to move the OER work forward. In this case, it was an opportunity for supporting the goals of critical pedagogy and acknowledging a necessary investment in specific community or individual needs. In the years since 2015 when the ACRL Framework was produced, librarians have worked at expanding instructional practices to include social justice issues and allowing student voices in the conversation. Here was an open door to help the student assistant see her strengths and engage in strategies for success. And, an opportunity to model ethical leadership. “Students best learn about ethical leadership not only through studying abstract principles of the kinds that tend to be taught in ethics courses or even at home and in church, but also through concrete case studies in their fields of endeavor whose applications to their own lives and work the students can immediately see.”[40]

In the spirit of project-based educational practices, the best way to engage students in an OER initiative is to have them engaged in every part of the project - making OER, editing

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[39] Ulibarri, et al. *Creativity in Research.*

[40] Sternberg, Robert J. *What Universities Can Be: A New Model for Preparing Students for Active Concerned Citizenship and Ethical Leadership*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (2016).

OER, evaluating OER, finding OER, speaking with faculty about OER and pay them, in some way, for their work. If we want them to understand all of the major issues related to open educational resources including equity, constructivism, academic freedom, then this is the best way to do it. Students are at the heart of our open educational initiatives. They are the group that struggles with cost, with access, and with the potential for facing inequitable environments. Open education should amplify student voices, and they should be heard, and valued, in every step taken with OER on college campuses.

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OER Student Assistant Job Description
Connecticut College

Summer 2019
Research Support & Curricular Technology Student Assistant Position

Description
The Research Support & Curricular Technology team provides access to the best scholarly and educational resources to foster creativity and intellectual curiosity in the campus community. We teach information discovery and the ethical use of information at the reference desk, virtually, and in library instruction sessions. We encourage and support the use and creation of OER at Connecticut College through innovative grant programs for faculty and staff assistance in finding, adopting and licensing of open educational resources.

Responsibilities
- Identify opportunities for open educational resources on campus, especially among high-enrollment courses
- Search for and Identify applicable OER for use as course content
- Create marketing materials for promotion of the OER program on campus
- Post OER announcements and other informational materials to all social media channels, newsletters and blogs for RS&CT
- Maintenance of Digication accounts
- Clean and set up iPads and iPods
- Update documentation for DELI materials
- Update libguides and check for broken links
- Scanning projects as assigned

Skills and experience
Interest in issues of access and equity in higher education. Interest in utilizing affordable course content and open educational resources to reduce student costs and improve student success. Preference for collaboration and group work. Ability to learn quickly, meet deadlines and manage competing priorities. Strong service orientation. Excellent oral and written communication skills.

Tutorial Script for English 150
Rachel Haines, Connecticut College ‘20

Hello! I’m Rachel Haines, and I’m a senior English major at Connecticut College. Today I’m going to walk you through the research component for a basic critical essay assignment you might get in one of your English courses. I’ve spoken with some of the department’s faculty members as well as other majors for some helpful hints and tips. Today we’ll be focusing on two important “How-Tos”: first, how to effectively use OneSearch; second, how to navigate JSTOR and other scholarly databases.

Before walking you through the three “how-tos,” I just want to quickly differentiate between primary and secondary sources. A primary source is typically the text you are responsible for interpreting or close reading—be it a novel, poem or play. In contrast, secondary sources are articles or book-chapters written *on* a given literary text. For the sake of the tutorial, George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* will be our primary source and the database articles will be our secondary sources.

As you can see, I’m currently on the library homepage. First, we’re going to look at OneSearch. Navigating OneSearch can be a little overwhelming, especially since a simple search can surface so many irrelevant/untopical resources. For example, if we just type “Middlemarch,” you get a lot of reviews/DVDs/versions of the primary text rather than scholarly sources. You can go into advanced search and incorporate some key terms to narrow your search down—for example, we could type in “Middlemarch” and then add “gender.” Go ahead and click “articles.” Let’s click on “Allusive Mischaracterization in Middlemarch” and then use the JSTOR link to access the article. That leads to our next How-to! Before moving on, though, I just wanted to briefly mention some other uses for OneSearch: say you want a copy of a book that we don’t have in the library. For example, this “George Eliot and Herbert Spencer” book. If you scroll down, a box will appear that will let you place a request through CTW. It is important to stress that it can take a day or two to receive a CTW book, so don’t start your research the night before something is due! However, if you do find yourself rushed and in need of a book, you can always check to see if the library has access to an ebook version via Cambridge CORE or ProQuest. For example, the book *Milton and Gender* is currently checked out, but there’s an easily accessible ebook version through Cambridge.

Now, let’s move onto JSTOR. Like OneSearch, you can do a general search using your primary text. The results are a little narrower than OneSearch, but if you have a topic in mind already, it’s useful to narrow it down further. Let’s add gender as a key term. While this combination cuts the results down significantly, it’s still a little broad. That’s OK—especially if you’re still not 100% sure about your own argument. If that’s the case, you can look through some abstracts to get a better sense of how to further narrow your search down. For example, maybe you decide you’re specifically writing about gender in relation to embodiment. Go ahead and add “embodiment” as a key term. Just by narrowing it slightly, quite a few promising sources surface to the first page.

If you find you're struggling to formulate an animating research focus, or you just don't know where to start—don't panic! You can always fall back on searching your primary text alongside a few interesting key terms just to see what's been written on it. Sometimes getting a feel for/thinking alongside other critics helps you get a feel for what you're interested in!

I hope you found this short tutorial helpful. If you require further assistance, you can always make a research appointment with one of the many wonderful librarians by clicking the box at the bottom of the screen! Happy writing!

