

OER, Social Justice, and Online Professional Development to Enhance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at a University

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Abstract:

Until recently, it has commonly been assumed that open educational resources are inherently equitable due to their constitution toward accessibility. Recent literature, however, challenges the idea that access is synonymous with equity and social justice. While definitions of open education and openness vary from source to source, in general, traditionally, there is a focus on providing entry to educational materials to underprivileged populations in an effort to save money. Sarah Lambert, author of *Changing our (Dis)Course: A Distinctive Social Justice Aligned Definition of Open Education*, likens the phenomenon of assumed justice in OER to technological determinism, which she defines as “a problematic and ultimately ineffective approach to technology implementations, which assumes that the particular capabilities of new technologies will always improve the situations into which they are brought.”¹ Similarly, openness determinism assumes that being open is intrinsically “good”—thus, open educational resources will naturally foster justice. Lambert argues that the open community should avoid openness determinism to reflect contributions to social justice and equity and instead consider how OER applies to redistributive justice, recognitive justice, and representational justice.

Keywords: open educational resources | oer | equity | diversity | inclusion | social justice

Article:

*****Note: Full text of article below**

CHAPTER 13

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Samantha Harlow and Melody Rood

Until recently, it has commonly been assumed that open educational resources are inherently equitable due to their constitution toward accessibility. Recent literature, however, challenges the idea that access is synonymous with equity and social justice. While definitions of open education and openness vary from source to source, in general, traditionally, there is a focus on providing entry to educational materials to underprivileged populations in an effort to save money. Sarah Lambert, author of *Changing our (Dis)Course: A Distinctive Social Justice Aligned Definition of Open Education*, likens the phenomenon of assumed justice in OER to technological determinism, which she defines as “a problematic and ultimately ineffective approach to technology implementations, which assumes that the particular capabilities of new technologies will always improve the situations into which they are brought.”¹ Similarly, *openness determinism* assumes that being open is intrinsically “good”—thus, open educational resources will naturally foster justice. Lambert argues that the open community should avoid openness determinism to reflect contributions to social justice and equity and instead consider how OER applies to redistributive justice, recognitive justice, and representational justice.

Redistributive justice relates to the allocation of resources and can be applied to OER through free textbooks and other educational resources that can lift a financial burden from those who cannot afford them. Recognitive justice refers

to the inclusion of diverse perspectives in open content. Due to the ability to revise and remix OER, recognitive justice provides the opportunity to intentionally include marginalized populations through images, histories, studies, and more. Finally, representational justice is similar to recognitive, but it takes it a step further by allowing marginalized and oppressed populations to use their own voices to create firsthand knowledge. Representational justice invites the creation of equitable educational resources that move beyond the white, Western, and cis/het male (cisgender and heterosexual)-centered voice that is traditionally found in academic canon. The addition of more learning opportunities and professional development around recognitive and representational justice is an ongoing goal for University of North Carolina Greensboro librarians tasked with the OER initiatives and thinking through the challenges of virtually engaging audiences with these concepts.

Kristina Clement echoes the importance of justice in the article, *Interrogating and Supplementing OER through a Decolonized Lens*, by questioning if open materials are actually perpetuating inequity in education: “While the affordability of OER can increase accessibility for marginalized learners, implementing OER in the classroom that are heavily colonized and center a white patriarchal epistemology does nothing to increase or foster equity for marginalized learners. It merely gives marginalized students increased access to an educational environment that continues to systematically devalue them.”² The online learning and student success librarians intend to build opportunities for conversations and improvements into general education about OER as well as presenting more social justice-centered educational sessions.

Background

The University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG) is a mid-sized public university located in central North Carolina. UNCG is a minority-serving institution, with a large population of Pell Grant-eligible students and a large rural student population. As of fall 2020, around 13 percent of UNCG students are classified as fully online distance students, and in fall 2019, around 30 percent of students were first-generation.³ Based on demographics, UNCG has an active student success center and offers many programs centered around student experience, including high-impact practices (HIPS), a Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) grant from the University of North Carolina (UNC) system, and a Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program focused on an immersive and advanced research experience for underrepresented and first-generation students.⁴ As well as recruiting and giving strong support to a diverse student body, UNCG has committed to building a

more diverse faculty. Based on UNCG's student population and dedication to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) through student success initiatives, the UNCG University Teaching and Learning Commons (UTLC) has long offered EDI programming, professional development, and pedagogy training. Some EDI workshops that have been offered in fall 2019 and spring 2020 include trauma-informed curriculums, Indigenous pedagogy, and an EDI online course through the UNCG learning management system (LMS), Canvas. With most courses moving to an online format due to COVID-19, these sessions became more important and popular than ever before.

The switch to online course delivery has brought an opportunity for instructors to learn about and implement low- and no-cost online course materials for their students. Open educational resources (OER) are "educational materials made freely and legally available on the Internet for anyone to reuse, revise, remix and redistribute."⁵ OER educational programs within libraries have been around for well over a decade. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Forum on the Impact of Open Course-ware for Higher Education in Developing Countries first mentioned OER in 2002.⁶ Many university libraries have established OER programs, faculty stipends for implementing OER, training workshops, or have librarians who are committed to helping instructors find OER to replace textbooks and costly course materials. Instructors are usually quick to agree that eliminating a textbook will help students save money, and when surveyed, they think that OER is important to student success.⁷ As OER has grown and become established within higher education, the national importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) pedagogies have also become vital to teaching and learning, including critical race theory, anti-racism pedagogy, and universal design for learning (UDL). This EDI expansion has taken root through university programming and teaching and learning centers in the form of courses, curricula workshops, presentations, and webinars.

At UNCG University Libraries, OER programming has been well-established in services and support since 2010. The former libraries associate dean of technical services was heavily ingrained in the national OER community but left for another position in mid-2019. This paved the way for the online learning librarian and the student success librarian (both housed in the Research, Outreach, and Instruction department) to form a partnership to lead OER for UNCG Libraries. This workflow also includes managing and implementing the OER faculty stipends of \$1,000 per instructor to eliminate a textbook in a course through a program called "OER Mini Grants." UNCG Libraries has awarded approximately seventy instructors in eighty different courses these stipends, saving UNCG students over \$2 million in textbook costs between 2013 and 2020.

Though many courses and students have been positively impacted by these grants, the online learning and student success librarians wanted to alter certain aspects of the implementation of the grant. One plan for improvement was increased and more visible marketing of the grant to new instructors, adjuncts, and teaching assistants. As of fall 2019, no online courses had ever been awarded an OER Mini Grant, but OER can have a significant impact on online students. Online students at UNCG and nationally are largely non-traditional; non-traditional students include those over twenty-four, whose entry to college was delayed by at least one year following high school, single parents, those employed full-time, those attending a postsecondary institution part-time, those with dependents, those who are financially independent, and those who do not have a high school diploma.⁸ Another desired shift in OER and UNCG Libraries services was to improve alignment with UNCG professional development opportunities, including student success initiatives and EDI programming.

To refresh OER at UNCG and to better meet the needs of diverse student populations, we wanted to make the vital connection of uplifting teaching with OER to contribute to EDI and social justice conversations throughout campus by developing and hosting online professional development opportunities. Migrating all OER educational programming to virtual starting in 2020 was developed out of the public health needs of COVID-19 but led to librarians being able to reach a broader audience and to better advocate to lessen the cost of course materials to students during a pandemic and beyond. This chapter covers how these UNCG librarians incorporated virtual OER programming and asynchronous, interactive tutorials through a collaborative workflow to allow a more holistic EDI approach to student success; these changes to UNCG Libraries' OER services and programming continue to save students money but also encourage better representation in course materials and curricula. COVID-19 has forever shifted online learning within academia, and this chapter delves into the successes and challenges of implementing this kind of online training and future directions of how instructors and librarians can take OER beyond textbook replacement.

We intend to build upon the previous foundation to further promote open education and social justice. While it is useful to show stakeholders the culmination of costs saved due to OER adoption, especially when funds for grants are being determined by the return on investment, that conversation should be a starting point. Sarah Crissinger, author of *A Critical Take on OER Practices: Interrogating Commercialization, Colonialism, and Content*, urges librarians to be honest about the limitations of OER, urging advocates to be transparent about open content as enhancements to the classroom and not the solution to inequitable education systems.⁹ We who are tasked at UNCG with leading the OER program are attempting to understand the nuance of adjusting conversations

depending on the audience. While it might be appropriate to emphasize the return on investment when speaking to the Provost's Office, a different approach should be used for faculty and students. Regardless of the stakeholder, we want to be inspired by this OER, social justice, and EDI research and literature and build these theories into virtual professional development and dialogue at UNCG and beyond.

OER, Online Learning, and COVID-19

COVID-19 caused a large shift in global academia. According to the College Crisis Initiative, 44 percent of universities and colleges in the United States of America (out of around 3,000 institutions surveyed) were delivering courses fully or primarily online in fall 2020, with only 4 percent staying completely in-person.¹⁰ In spring 2020, most courses at UNCG (around 90 percent) moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Going into the fall 2020 semester, about 50 percent of courses were online, with many of the face-to-face classes being hybrid or hyflex, where courses give students the flexibility to attend in person or online; this transition meant that UNCG Libraries moved many services to virtual, including all information literacy instruction and research programming being offered at a distance, through synchronous or asynchronous methods.

Moving academic courses online quickly causes stress for many university stakeholders, including instructors, librarians, and students. According to a survey sent out to adults (over 18) in the United States in June 2020, it was found that “40.9% of respondents reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition, including symptoms of anxiety disorder or depressive disorder (30.9%), symptoms of a trauma- and stressor-related disorder (TSRD) related to the pandemic.”¹¹ When library patrons are stressed, getting them to attend and take part in virtual training on research and OER is a challenge; university libraries are forced to shift mindsets in terms of how they best help patrons with research and all academic services.

Though pandemics cause strain on communities, online learning provides a way to better reach out to students and instructors across campus and beyond during these challenging times. While students were at home and most likely experiencing high levels of stress, units across UNCG's campus came up with a variety of programs and resources to address student and instructor needs, as well as address social justice and equity issues in higher education. The University Teaching and Learning Commons (UTLC) came up with a series of online classes for instructors to help with ways to better understand how to incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within their curricula, pedagogy, and syllabi. The UNCG High Impact Practices (HIPs) committee brought in virtual

guest speakers to showcase specific strategies of HIPs in action to help students. Even very physical and high-touch university services, such as advising, counseling, and tutoring, moved services online to better help students. With the quick shift to online learning, UNCG Online, Information Technology Services (ITS), and instructional technology consultants created a Keep Teaching website and offered many virtual workshops about creating courses online as well as on the learning management system (LMS) Canvas, Google Suite, video options, and more.¹²

UNCG Libraries shifted all information literacy instruction online during COVID-19, including professional development and research workshops for patrons. The online learning librarian has been offering two webinar series for almost four years: one is entitled Online Learning and Innovation and the other one is a series on Research and Applications. These series have also included a variety of virtual panels of instructors, showcasing examples of collaborations between various online learning departments around campus. During COVID-19, all campus undergraduate programming moved fully online, including all orientations, campus workshops, and welcoming events. This positioned UNCG Libraries to promote more virtual programming to ease research and assignment anxiety for students and instructors.

To connect OER to a social justice framework, as well as promote more instructors at UNCG to use OER during the pandemic, we sought to educate and train all UNCG Libraries employees. In spring 2020, we collaborated with a university library technician in the UNCG Libraries Technical Services department to do an OER educational session for the whole library. This was part of the newly formed virtual training program for internal library workers called University Libraries Virtual Learning Community (ULVLC) and a collaboration with a university library technician to showcase the Course Adopted Text program. This is a program where e-books are purchased by the library and adopted and used by UNCG instructors for use in the classroom as a “free for students” alternative to traditional textbooks.

In summer 2020, we did a two-part synchronous Zoom workshop for UNCG library liaisons and other librarians and archivists working with courses and research in academic departments. Part one was an introduction to searching for OER so librarians could help instructors locate OER for courses, with interactive activities in open repositories. The second part of the series was on the basics of OER creation as well as reviewing OER research guides and webpages at other universities to compare with what the UNCG Libraries offer. After this liaison and librarian workshop series, the need became clear for more collaboration with OER across departments and to provide more educational opportunities to all library personnel. Based on feedback from the Access Services library

department about patrons requesting textbooks, a virtual meeting was planned for everyone working at the checkout desk to discuss the most common issues brought up by patrons. From this meeting, an infographic of major OER repositories was developed in collaboration with this department and the Student Success Librarian. See figure 13.1 for a view of categories for arts and humanities, business, social sciences, and science and math that were included on the infographic.

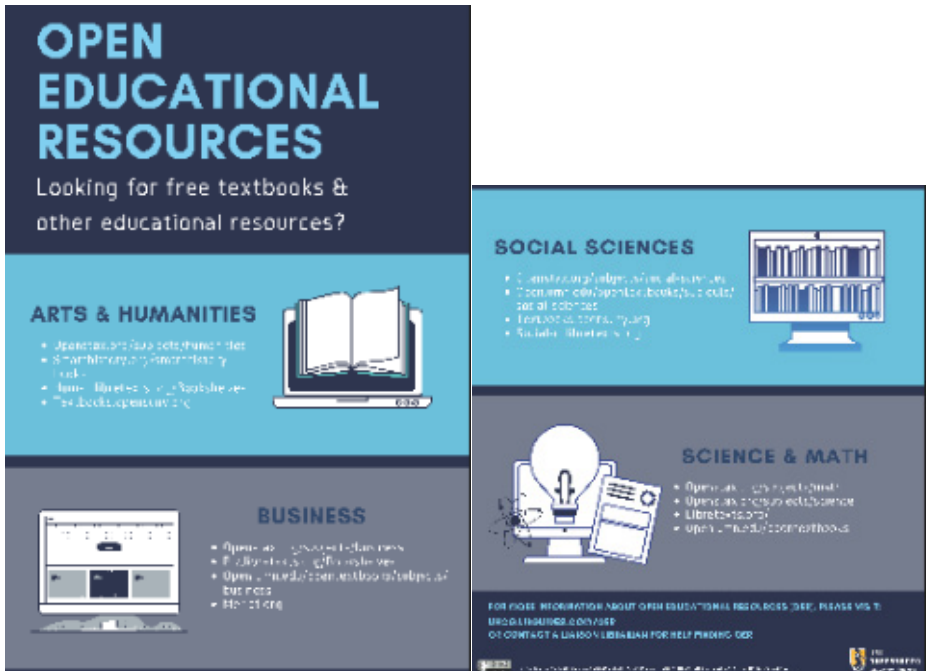


Figure 13.1

View of the options included on the OER infographic developed in collaboration with UNCG Access Services.

For the full infographic, go to <http://go.uncg.edu/oerinfo>.

The push to get more instructors to use OER to help students during the stress of the pandemic and promote better social justice in the classrooms also exists at the state level. The online learning and student success librarians got involved in various University of North Carolina (UNC) system OER collaborative projects to create more virtual training for instructors teaching online during the pandemic and beyond. The first undertaking, in summer 2020, was the creation of a series of online course packs to help instructors throughout North Carolina use and create OER in large lecture courses. In

fall 2020, a series of OER training modules was created to guide instructors through finding, creating, and evaluating OER. There is also an ongoing project creating a UNC system OER Commons hub for instructors to ingest and share their open educational materials. In spring 2021, these projects and training are being pushed out across the system through educational webinars and academic unit deans; these projects can be found on the UNC System and OER Collections webpage.¹³

Designing and Implementing OER Tutorials

UNCG Libraries also resourced and created a variety of materials to help contribute to student success and teaching or researching online during COVID-19. When virtually helping library patrons with research and assignments, liaison librarians rely heavily on asynchronous research tutorials—specifically, the newly designed UNCG Libraries Research Tutorials.¹⁴ These tutorials and modules are on research concepts to help students find, evaluate, use, credit, and create research based on the UNCG Libraries’ information literacy learning goals. The platform was designed based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to be accessible and interactive as well as have multiple means of representation, engagement, and action and expression.¹⁵ The platform uses a rich content editor to implement a variety of multimedia content; this works well for adapting and using openly licensed resources. Content from YouTube, Google, and beyond can be easily embedded, and the open-source tool H5P is used to create interactive, HTML5 “quick checks” on every page so that users can test their learning. The creation workflow of the modules (housed within tutorials) is also a collaboration between all UNCG liaison librarians.

Educating a variety of university and state-wide academic stakeholders about OER contributes to student success, but in order to promote the social justice components of OER during a pandemic, it’s important to create a variety of online components, including showcasing open pedagogy and social justice frameworks. With the combination of UNCG recognizing the importance of OER, EDI, and online learning to student success and accessibility, the online learning librarian created a suite of online modules on OER, housed within the UNCG Libraries Research Tutorials platform. The Finding, Creating, and Evaluating modules help users get started with OER. The Finding module provides OER definitions and addresses searching for open materials for courses within repositories. The Creating module trains instructors and students on best practices of producing open materials, applying Creative Commons licenses, and technologies and accessibility strategies for designing OER. The Evaluating module helps educators discern which OER materials are appropriate for

college-level courses within a variety of educational settings. See figure 13.2 for how the OER modules are organized within the overall tutorial in the UNCG Libraries Research Tutorial platform.

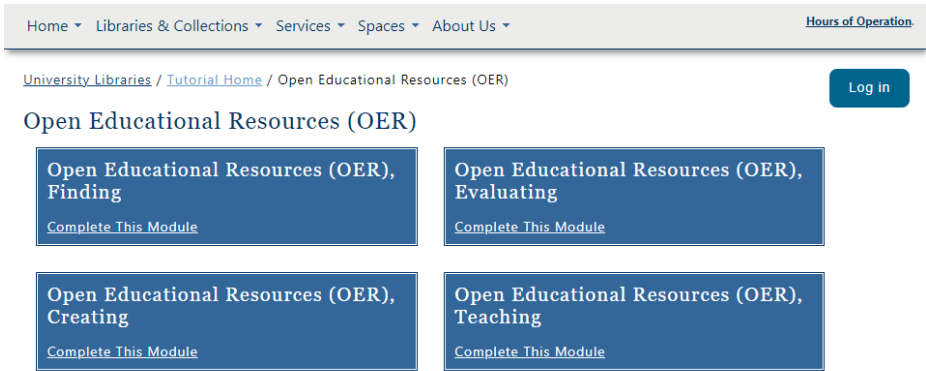


Figure 13.2
UNCG open educational resources (OER) tutorial homepage.

To show how incorporating open education is vital to teaching with an EDI lens, whether virtual or face-to-face, the Teaching module was created. This module centers on open pedagogy and helps connect OER to social justice in course design. Open pedagogy is the “use of open educational resources (OER) to support learning, or the open sharing of teaching practices with a goal of improving education and training at the institutional, professional, and individual level.”¹⁶ Many times, open pedagogy goes beyond teaching with open materials; it also includes students in the process of creating OER for assignments while contributing to the materials available for their disciplines. Therefore, this module aligns with the UNCG UTLC equity, diversity, and inclusion training and professional development opportunities; contributes to online learning and instructional design training; and helps to advocate for student success and empathy during a global pandemic. The module pages include an introduction to open pedagogy; open pedagogy tools such as H5P, Timeline JS, and Pressbooks; considerations for open pedagogy such as understanding digital tools, scaffolded learning, and copyright education; a section on equity, diversity, inclusion, social justice and OER, which includes information about inclusive teaching, readings on OER and social justice, a webinar on OER and student equity, and a comprehensive breakdown of the social justice principles applied to OER, assessing OER and learning outcomes; and finally, teaching with OER

help at UNCG. See figure 13.3 for a screenshot of how the OER Teach module looks on the open pedagogy page.

University Libraries / Tutorial Home / Open Educational Resources (OER) / Open Educational Resources (OER), Teaching

[Log in](#)

Open Educational Resources (OER), Teaching

Introduction to Open Pedagogy

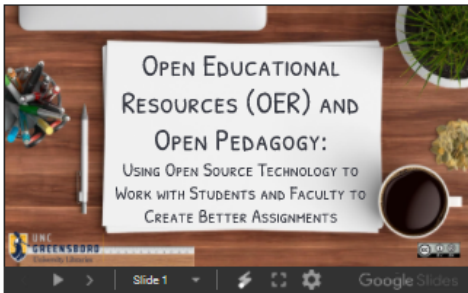
Open pedagogy is a set of pedagogical practices that include engaging students in content creation and making learning accessible to all. It asks instructors to consider renewable assignments, which students create for the purpose of sharing and releasing as OER. This means teaching students about many important aspects of creating content: copyright, citations, fair use, Creative Commons, and open education.

There are many examples of instructors using open pedagogy in higher education, by having students create:

- Wikipedia entries on underrepresented groups
- Digital textbooks of diverse voices in their field
- Visual timelines of history in their areas of study or course work
- Virtual exhibits of freely licensed materials in their field
- And more!

The [Open Pedagogy Notebook](#) is a website that shares stories and community practices on open pedagogy examples in the classroom. The [OER Starter Toolkit](#) also covers many aspects of open pedagogy. David Wiley's "[What is Open Pedagogy?](#)" is a great introduction to the topic.

[UNCG Libraries OER and Open Pedagogy Presentation](#)



The screenshot shows a Google Slides presentation. The slide content is:

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) AND OPEN PEDAGOGY:

USING OPEN SOURCE TECHNOLOGY TO WORK WITH STUDENTS AND FACULTY TO CREATE BETTER ASSIGNMENTS

The slide is set against a background of a wooden desk with a pen, a coffee cup, and some greenery. The Google Slides interface at the bottom shows 'Slide 1' and navigation controls.

Figure 13.3

Screenshot of the “Introduction to Open Pedagogy” page from the UNCG Libraries OER Teach module.

Due to the flexible nature of the tutorials, the OER modules were created and published throughout fall 2020. Librarians were able to use the modules with specific classes in order to get feedback and see how they worked with students and instructors. In fall 2020, the online learning librarian worked with the UNCG music librarian on an open pedagogy music Ear-Training course, which was moved online due to COVID-19. This course focuses on music reading, and the instructor had students create materials to contribute to an open textbook on music dictation. The online learning librarian presented a virtual, interactive synchronous session on searching for open musical materials for students to adapt for this course, and the Finding OER module was pulled down

from Canvas Commons and adapted to train undergraduate music students about OER. This example shows how open pedagogy can be used virtually and how the OER tutorials' flexibility contributes to students being contributors to OER in their fields.

Virtual Programming and OER

After the original design of the asynchronous online tutorials on OER, an increase in EDI programming at UNCG, and the shift in courses due to COVID-19, the need became apparent for more virtual professional development for instructors. Based on this demand, the student success librarian designed a lesson plan for an online workshop that highlights how open pedagogy can be used to challenge traditional academic canon, which tends to center the overrepresented white Western narrative. Drawing on the instructional theory of constructivism, which encourages people to construct their own knowledge, the session encouraged faculty to empower students to be collaborators and contributors to knowledge, further promoting opportunities to center marginalized voices. Using examples of student-created open content, this webinar wanted to show faculty the multitude of ways in which their assignments can contribute to EDI learning objectives and curricula. This webinar was then presented in a campus-wide professional development series in winter 2020.

This synchronous professional development webinar introduced Lambert's principles of social justice, with a focus on representational justice. Attendees were encouraged to consider why representation matters and how insidious an impact a lack of representation can have on marginalized and oppressed populations. This was followed by a brief discussion about how a lack of representation upholds problematic assumptions, such as whiteness as neutral or standard. The presentation also reviewed the 5Rs of openness to make sure that attendees understood the components that make open pedagogical assignments possible. The definitions of open pedagogy used in this presentation were intentionally chosen for their acknowledgment of social justice: "Open Pedagogy, as we engage with it, is a site of praxis, a place where theories about learning, teaching, technology, and social justice enter into a conversation with each other and inform the development of educational practices and structures."¹⁷ Audience members were asked to consider overlaps with other learning theories such as constructivism.

The presentation used a variety of examples with varying levels of openness to showcase assignments that contribute to cognitive and representational justice. The anthology, *My Slipper Floated Away*, uses a non-commercial and no-derivatives Creative Commons license (CC-BY-NC-ND), which means that the work

can be distributed with credit but cannot be changed. Despite the anthology being the least “open” example presented, it has a high representational justice impact, allowing students to tell their own stories. For further discussion on why materials with high representational impact may select less-open terms, see Shanna Hollich’s chapter, “The Unrealized Promise of OER: an Exploration of Copyright, the Open Movement, and Social Justice.” *My Slipper Floated Away* is a collection of student-written essays, where the writers are immigrants, children of immigrants or people of color, showcasing their “intense longing to belong in America and their passion to succeed in this country, while dealing with myriad challenges.”¹⁸

This example addresses how the discourse around open educational resources needs to move beyond openness as a measure of equity. While the ability to remix and revise allows opportunity toward cognitive and representational justice, the level of openness is not what makes the resource equitable. As Lambert states, “A social justice-oriented definition would be useful then to shift the debate from what openness might look like, to whom we want our openness to ultimately serve and how our openness might achieve greater educational and societal equality.”¹⁹ Other examples, like the “Timeline of African American Rights Movement 1950–1980,” as well as open case studies on social justice movements from the University of British Columbia allowed attendees to see a multitude of renewable assignments that engage students and add value to their disciplines as specific examples that contribute to social justice beyond redistribution.²⁰

Assessment and Future Directions of OER

When thinking about OER, EDI, social justice, and assessment at a university, thinking through the return on investment for OER programming is crucial to ensure continued institutional support. When we took over the OER grant and initiatives, the return on investment from the stipends already had a significant financial impact, with the program saving students over \$2 million in course materials and textbook costs from 2013 to 2020. Financial savings and academic student success are a major focus at UNCG, which is why it is crucial to incorporate the redistributive justice principle within OER programming. Workshops promoting the grant cover introductory information about OER, the increased rates of educational materials in the last forty years, statistics from the Florida Distance Learning Consortium that look at the student success impact due to required textbook costs, and information about grant applications and where to seek guidance.²¹ In the current application for the OER Mini Grants to be awarded in 2021–2022, a question was added for applicants to specifically address how the grant will help support equity, diversity, and inclusion for UNCG students,

allowing the reviewers to prioritize applications that consider opportunities for recognitive and representational justice, such as open pedagogy assignments.

Beyond the return on investment of OER Mini Grants, looking at the assessment of the OER virtual tutorials and programming that has been performed over the last year is crucial to move the program forward. A survey is sent out after all the library's virtual professional development offerings, which include the synchronous sessions done on OER and open pedagogy during the 2020–2021 academic year. The survey showed success for the open pedagogy and social justice webinar; everyone who attended was very satisfied with the content, pace, and timing of this webcast being around forty-five minutes. Since their implementation in fall 2020, the OER tutorials on the website application are being used more heavily than Canvas Commons. The OER website tutorials, published throughout fall 2020, have received 312 unique views as of February 2021. More people are signing up for virtual OER training than in past years. For example, the February 2021 OER virtual training workshops for instructors interested in applying to the OER Mini Grant had the highest registration and attendance since the grant's inception.

Continuing these types of synchronous workshops and programs are integral to securing the funds needed for the continuation of the OER Mini Grants, but moving forward, we plan to place a stronger emphasis on professional development and workshops that highlight how open education can utilize the principles of recognitive and representational justice. This includes adding information about inclusive teaching and learning with links to perspectives on open education and equity into every presentation, using UNCG specific examples of renewable assignments, teaching with OER virtual modules, and incorporating open pedagogy. Integrating with other EDI virtual events on campus will be crucial to keep the momentum going; for example, we plan on presenting to instructors at an annual UNCG virtual meeting on teaching and research called ADAPT, within the EDI track, to showcase how OER goes beyond freeing the classrooms from textbooks.

Online programming provides access based on restrictions due to COVID-19, creating more opportunities for instructors to attend and engage in these concepts, but for OER to better contribute to social justice, there need to be more chances for students to learn and create OER in their disciplines. In February 2019, the student success librarian created an event called the OER Valentine's Day Pop-Up where they gave out treats and coffee to students passing through the library that included cards with basic information on OER. There was also a whiteboard where students could interact with the question, "What would you buy if you didn't have to buy expensive textbooks?" By the end of the day, the whiteboard was packed with answers. Students who interacted with the pop-up

were generally interested in free educational resources; this activity focused on financial savings, and we were able to gather specific quotes and needs of the UNCG student population. A picture of the whiteboard with student feedback has been used in OER programming for instructors and administrators, helping different audiences better connect to the needs of UNCG students. The success of the interactions and pop-up nature of this OER event for students has not been replicated virtually but provides a model for organically connecting to students to help them better advocate for themselves to eliminate costly course materials. In the future, this librarian will experiment with student pop-up virtual events and develop alternative attendance incentives geared toward students.

To allow students to have a clearer voice within OER, continuing events like the Valentine's Day pop-up will be crucial, as will increasing the incentive for professors to use OER and open pedagogy in their courses. Since taking over OER initiatives on campus, we have noticed specific examples of teachers using open pedagogy in a variety of disciplines. A Kinesiology course on "Foundations of Sports Coaching" won an OER Mini Grant, eliminated a textbook, and allowed students to create digital timelines on women sports coaches to fill a gap in coaching literature; this assignment gave the students voice while showcasing the need for more diversity in sports textbooks on underrepresented populations. Another example is the art history course "Modern and Contemporary African Art History" from fall 2019. In this class, each student substantially edited and improved an article for a modern or contemporary African artist in Wikipedia over the course of the semester; one exception was a student who created a new article for an artist who did not have one. To achieve this, the course instructor, the director of the UNCG Digital ACT Studio, and the art and visual resource librarian collaborated on the assignment design and assessment and scheduled six workshops during the semester on Wikipedia and art history research. This group of collaborators is currently working on an article that covers the assessment of the course and open pedagogy assignment; ultimately, the students were able to connect their Wikipedia work to many competencies with art history education and information literacy, as found through an assessment using rubrics and by surveying students in this course.

Open pedagogy gives students a voice, teaches them about OER, and allows them to participate within their course and discipline, but it's challenging to track and assess open pedagogy assignments at any given university. For example, the Music Dictation and Reading course was able to use the tutorials for their open pedagogy assignments and even implemented an open pedagogy project. The instructor of this course did this, with help from the library, without winning the UNCG Libraries OER Mini Grant. Since liaison librarians do not always know of open pedagogy and OER being implemented into curricula and courses, it's

difficult for them to assess and improve on what has been done. Moving forward, better tracking of who is using OER and open pedagogy in courses will be key, possibly by surveying instructors outside of the OER Mini Grants. Ideally, this will also lead to showcasing the known UNCG open pedagogy assignments for the campus community and beyond through resources such as the UNCG OER Mini Grant website and the Open Pedagogy Notebook. Finding ways to build incentives for resource sharing could be another improvement to the grant and OER programming at UNCG and beyond.²²

Some assessment data has been collected on OER and online programming at UNCG. An assessment form is sent out after the course is complete to instructors who won grants. Overall, instructors generally agree that the OER Mini Grants contribute to student success, and most continue to not use textbooks in their courses. This year, a COVID-19 question was added into the survey sent to the grant winners to assess if the pandemic shifted their original plan. The survey is mostly composed of open-ended questions, so reviewing the responses for social justice and EDI connections will be helpful to better promote OER as a crucial aspect of helping students moving forward, whether instructors continue to teach online, hybrid, or face-to-face. In the future, a qualitative study on instructors using OER and open pedagogy at UNCG or throughout all of North Carolina or the Southeast, would lead to interesting findings on accessibility and student success connections.

Conclusion

In 2019, the online learning and student success librarians took the already established OER program at UNCG Libraries and built upon it to include new advocacy and education for a variety of audiences, including other library personnel, students, teaching faculty, and student success stakeholders campus-wide as well as at a state-level. The librarians moved beyond the traditional introductory-level workshop that placed an emphasis on affordability to provide more content on the connection between open educational resources, EDI, and social justice. The additional programming placed a focus on Lambert's three principles of social justice: redistributive, recognitive, and representational. As this move coincided with the global COVID-19 pandemic, it was important to consider both synchronous and asynchronous virtual professional development opportunities. The online learning librarian created online modules on OER that can be accessed asynchronously through the UNCG Libraries Research Tutorials Platform. The Teaching with OER module provides information for instructors that introduces open pedagogy, the connection to social justice and EDI, tools for open pedagogical considerations, assessment, and learning outcomes. As for a synchronous

learning opportunity, the student success librarian created a lesson plan for a webinar as part of the UNCG Libraries winter 2020 professional development series, which looked at student-created open content and the representation of marginalized and oppressed groups. Even though the OER program at UNCG has predominantly focused on redistributive justice until recently, the librarians plan to evolve education and professional development opportunities to include more conversations about recognitive and representational social justice. They recognize that equity, diversity, and inclusion also impact student success, even though the research around OER tends to connect financial savings to student success alone. The suite of asynchronous OER modules, as well as the lesson plan on open pedagogy and EDI, are the beginning steps toward a more social justice and EDI-aligned OER program at UNCG.

Endnotes

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