

OER Literacy: Are Academic Librarians the Missing Link?

An Advocacy and Capacity Building Project of the
International Association of Universities (IAU)

3 questions

- Why is it important to be OER-literate?
- Is it sufficient to be OER user-literate?
- Is it possible that everyone become OER-literate?

Definitions

Open Educational Resources (OER) are:

- Technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purpose, UNESCO, 2002
- Any resource available at a little or no cost that can be used for teaching, learning, or research, Educause, 2010

Concretely...

OER are:

- Textbooks, course reading, simulations, games, quizzes, etc.
- Not limited to electronic resources
- Originating from universities, governments, publishers, individuals
- Often collaborative
- Not e-Learning
- Published with the aim to be re-used

And...

They have in a very short period of time (10 years)

1. Gained momentum as a possible:

- Solution to the economic crisis and less funding for education
- Instrument for the development of lifelong learning
- Tool to enhance accessibility to education

2. Gained visibility

- Thousands of OER have been produced
- First World Congress on OER at UNESCO, June 2012

So...

They appear to be here to stay.

And it will be (is) important to be OER-literate.

Yet

- Where are they located?
- How can I assess their quality?
- How can I use them?

OER-Literacy

There will be (is) a need for:

- Being able to read (identify) to access OER;
- Being able to think critically (understand and interpret) in order to evaluate available OER;
- Being able to write (create, communicate and compute) to produce OER.

To become full OER-literate

But

How can each individual deal with:

- The multiplicity of sources
- The constant evolution and variety of techniques and copyrights?
- The dissemination and preservation of their content?

Can the academic librarian help?

And how?

From literature review, academic librarians do not seem to be highly involved

Yet some academic libraries are involved

And could be involved in (Robertson, 2010):

- Subject-based guides to finding resources
- Information retrieval and evaluation
- Managing intellectual property rights
- Metadata and resource description
- Resource dissemination
- OER on OER-literacy

Are they the missing link?

IAU has developed a project to test the idea and train and support academic librarians on OER use, reuse, and production with the aims:

- To enhance the creation of a community of OER-literate at the HE level worldwide;
- To participate in a better mapping/referencing of existing OER;
- To contribute to a more equitable geographical balance of OER production.

The Paris Declaration on OER includes Libraries as strategic partners.

IAU

- IAU is a Membership organization with institutional, organisational, and affiliates members in 120 countries
- IAU Secretariat is located in Paris, France. It has been hosted by UNESCO since its creation (1950)
- IAU promotes academic values, knowledge sharing, collaboration and solidarity for and within the HE sector through projects, statements, conferences, reference and scientific publications, and services.

More at: www.iau-aiu.net

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