

AY 2013-2014 Reassignment Final Report
By Dr. Rhianna C. Rogers
With contributions from ESC Educational Technologists
Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio

INTRODUCTION

This report is a summation of my recent AY 2014-2015 reassignment on Open Educational Resources (OER) development and production. Included in this report are descriptions of project accomplishments, possible college-wide OER development best practices, and other findings/considerations.

Over the past five years, I have been very involved in OER and Open Education initiatives. I have worked hard to utilize digital technologies creatively in my on- and off-line classrooms. My interest in the concept of open learning has a long history in my work.¹ Since coming to ESC in 2010, I have developed, reused, and modified OERs as well as made numerous presentations across SUNY campuses and locally at ESC about how to implement OERs in assignment and course development (see References below). I was honored to be asked by the OpenSUNY Center for Online Teaching Excellence (COTE) to be an Innovation and Research Fellow in AY 2014 – one of only 20 people asked to serve at this level out of 571 fellows. In 2015, I was again honored by OpenSUNY COTE as a recipient of its inaugural Online Effective Practice Community Award. Additionally, I have been cited by SUNY System Administration as an “OER Pioneer” for my research into affordable, accessible educational resources that are scalable and sustainable (Please see SUNY Faculty Showcase-OER Pioneers: <http://opensunyals.org/facultyshowcase.html>).

As previously indicated, I was awarded a competitive faculty reassignment to expand my work on OERs into my research specialization, Latin America, in AY 2014-2015. As part of this project, I traveled to Spain, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico to record footage at archaeological and historical sites. Upon my return to the US and with the help of ESC Educational Technologists (formerly Faculty Instructional Technologists-FITs) Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio and the external design firm, *The Quilted Squirrel*, I developed these resources into OERs (e.g., educational videos, micro-lectures, and interactive tutorials). As a way to encourage OER development at ESC, Adam Deyglio and I also co-created three (3) faculty training tutorials to teach faculty how to develop their own OERs using the digital tools Screencast-o-matic, Blogger, and Photosynth. To make this project accessible to a wider audience, I developed a website, titled “Latin American History and Archaeology OERs,” and I added my newly developed OERs to both my Vimeo page (external) and ESC Learnscape page (ESC internal) for wider use. (See references section below for specific web links).

¹ Finding that many of my nontraditional and online students in anthropology lacked experiential learning in artifact analysis, I worked with a colleague, Nathan Whitley-Grassi, to develop an interactive 3-D digital artifact repository that students could learn from and contribute to (AY 2011-2012). I was honored to join the SUNY REAL/Open SUNY PLA Lumina Grant as an Academic Team member from 2012 to 2014. During this time, I researched survey data on global trends and practices in Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), developed OERs to support student comprehension of the PLA process, and co-developed online tools for students, faculty, and evaluators engaging in the process. In 2013, I also participated in the International Programs IITG project on Virtual Term Abroad, overseen by Lorette Pelletiere Calix and Patrice Prusko Torcivia (Calix and Trocivia).

MY OER PHILOSOPHY

It is worth noting that at the core of my teaching philosophy is the underlying notion of equity in the human experience. I believe that all should be given access to learning and education, no matter their location in life. I believe the use of OERs has the ability to support my philosophical ideals. Paul Stacey (2012) offers some convincing benefits of using OERs, which I have included below:

OERs can:

- increase access to education
- provide students with an opportunity to assess and plan their education choices
- showcase an institution's intellectual outputs, promote its profile, and attract students
- convert students exploring options into fee paying enrollments
- accelerate learning by providing educational resources for just-in-time, direct, informal use by both students and self-directed learners
- add value to knowledge production
- reduce faculty preparation time
- generate cost savings, which has been particularly substantiated for open textbooks
- enhance quality
- generate innovation through collaboration.

I truly believe that OERs can help make learning come alive for the students as well as encourage faculty to develop new, exciting and engaging ways to interact with students in courses. Though this project has ended, I plan to continue to share my knowledge about OERs to colleagues and students at ESC and beyond and develop new and exciting OERs in the years to come.

PROJECT RESULTS, GENERAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS FOR BEST PRACTICES

The process of developing OERs in this project taught me many things this past academic year. Though I had developed OERs before, I had not done so on such a large scale. Doing this project required intense collaborations with a variety of people, developing a willingness to learn new tools and skills, creating new skills in budgeting and time management, and it also taught me the importance of relying on a community of people to get a large scale OER development project done. I fully believe that this was a community effort, so I asked that both Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio contribute to this section of my report. Their comments are incorporated below.

As part of this project, we were able to develop twelve (12) OERs:

- four (4) professional, mini-lecture OERs developed by the professional design firm *The Quilted Squirrel*,
- seven (7) academic and tutorial mini-lecture OERs developed by Adam Deyglio, and
- one (1) interactive, mini-lecture OER developed by Allison Moreland.

A copy of each of these OERs, with the exception of Allison Moreland's interactive OER², can be seen on the following websites:

- Rogers, R. (2015). Latin American History and Archaeology OERs. <https://latinamericanoers.wordpress.com/>
- Rogers, R. (2011). Dr. Rhianna C. Rogers' Vimeo Page. <https://vimeo.com/user7371908>

Working together with a variety of people on this project, in and out of ESC, forced me to learn a lot about different developmental processes. For example, working with a professional design firm, *The Quilted Squirrel*, required me to learn about their professional video production process and how to work with project managers, designers, audio producers, and film editors. Employees of the firm and I both had to find ways to explain academic and professional expectations to each other, how to determine appropriate project priorities, and what type of OER could be produced in the timeframe and budget allocated for this project. This process took time and patience on both parts. It is worth noting that the creation of four (4) OERs with this firm took five (5) months, from beginning to end (May-Sept. 2015), and cost \$3000 out of my own pocket.³ Each video went through a variety of edits and revisions based on both my comments and their professional feedback. For each video, I was expected to do the following:

- develop a OER concept and script
- select the video segments and photos from my personal repository then match the resources to the script (this process required that I calculate, by seconds, how the words, images, and videos would connect with each other
- create the descriptors for each segment of the video
- select music for the background.
- Once done, I had to record the audio (either in their professional studio or through the software Audacity) and ask them to overlay the sound on the compiled images and text.

Calculating how long it would take to compile and organize the information for each OER was something that I had not fully understood at this start of this project. Though the four (4) videos that were produced by *The Quilted Squirrel* were excellent, the time I had to dedicate to this process was something that I think future OER developers should factor into their OER production processes.

Additionally, while working with Educational Technologists Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio at ESC, I also learned a lot about what it means to be “the first” to do something within the institution. We found that a variety of tools necessary to make quality, OERs and the internal processes needed for doing so did not yet exist (e.g., we do not have a way to quickly request tools for this project and we did not have a list of supported and un-supported software that we could easily access to begin our OER development). We also learned that without access to some tools, we need to develop some familiarity with other tools very quickly in order to complete the project(s) in a timely manner. I was very happy to work with both Adam and Allison because they were both willing to “jump in” with me.

As part of the ESC piece of this project, I needed to learning more advanced skills with tools such as Screencastomatic, Audacity, Learnscape, Vimeo, Blogger, Photosynth, Wordpress-Commons, Wordpress-Public, WeTransfer, Zoom, Skype. I also had to gain some familiarity with tools like

² One of the issues we encountered with Allison's OER was that ESC did (and still does not at the time of the report) have a site able to store the interactive OER she developed in Camtasia.

³ I did not have a supplementary grant for this project and my reassignment did not provide additional funds for the production of these professional videos.

Camtasia and Dragon, since Adam and Allison were using them to develop my OERs. If it weren't for our ability to adapt to unforeseen issues encountered during this project, we would not have been able to do this work. I want to thank both Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio for doing so. If not for them, I would not have been able to complete this project!

It also became quite apparent, early on, that a formalized process for developing OERs was critical. Allison Moreland, Adam Deyglio and I developed such a process for this project and I utilized a similar process with my external production work with the design firm, *The Quilted Squirrel*. I have included a summary of this process, written jointly by both Allison Moreland and I here:

- Identify content to be covered
- Identify timeframe for project completion (start and end dates)
- Identify personnel needed for a project of this type (skill set needed and time available)
- Identify learning objectives
- Identify connection to course(s) and other course materials
- Identify technologies that could support the objectives (video, audio, captions, interactives, etc.)
- Develop documentation (powerpoint, narration, scripts, outline, quiz questions, interactive ideas, etc)
- Record and revise audio, as needed
- Record and revise video, as needed
- Edit and revise video, as needed
- Implement technologies
- Identify storage for completed OERs
- For Camtasia, specifically:
 - Place audio in media
 - Add transitions to media
 - Capture video sequence into Camtasia
 - Add interactives, quizzes
 - Publish Camtasia files
 - Test files on server

Since this project was one of the first of its kind at ESC, we encountered a lot of issues completing some aspects of this work, including:

- issues with accessing/purchasing software in a timely manner,
- having insufficient college storage space to house developed OERs
- having insufficient time to develop OERs within the allotted reassignment period
- having insufficient funds to support my expenses (i.e., no external funds to support my OER development with *The Quilted Squirrel*) and
- having insufficient resources/personnel to fully support a project of this size.

It is worth noting that these issues are typical for any project that explores a new avenue of research. I am happy to report that some of these issues have already been addressed since the start of this project. However, funding for parts of this project (e.g., my work with the Quilted Squirrel) and the use of some tools (e.g. Audacity) were still not fully supported by academic resources and/or ESC.

The remainder of this section was written by Allison Moreland and Adam Deyglio.

1. Adam Deyglio's Comments, Educational Technologist-HVC

General Comments

I enjoyed working with Prof. Rogers, helping edit and merge video files for her OER's and also her informative video shot on location in the Dominican Republic. We had one phone conversation, I was able to gather enough information concerning her expectations and we began an email/wetransfer correspondence for the project. The most complicated part of the project was the closed captioning of the video files. Before using Kaltura I used Dragon software but this software did not offer the highest accuracy. When uploading the videos to Kaltura the captioning editing became much easier.

I was also requested to record two presentations Dr. Rogers had presented for SUNY COTE. Using the Camtasia video editing/capture software I was able to record these two Blackboard Collaborate sessions. Blackboard Collaborate does not output very clear audio files so I needed to do audio editing on these videos to assure Dr. Rogers was able to be accurately heard by the viewer. This issue is more a problem of the medium used to record the presentation and not a problem with the Camtasia software.

There were two separate videos I worked on covering the Dominican Republic, one shot on location in La Vega and a final OER on Hispaniola. The Hispaniola OER was one video file which I was able to edit and fix audio, much like the screencast-o-matic and photosynth OER's. I uploaded the video to Kaltura fixing the captioning to the best of my abilities. The one shot on location was more in-depth, including 5-6 video files, 20 images and an audio track. Merging all of these videos was more time consuming. I needed to work with Dr. Rogers to on translating the archeologist's interview from Spanish to English. I used the Camtasia overlay feature to display the translations. The only complication I ran into on this project was more computer related. I upgraded to Windows 10 while Camtasia did not update to the new operating system, therefore corrupting my initial file. I since downgraded to windows 8.1 and was able to complete the last project.

Recommendation

The only recommendation, if Dr. Rogers were to create more OER videos for the institution, would be to purchase a USB microphone, preferably a Blue Yeti. This microphone will capture crisper audio and will also aid when creating closed captioning. I've personally used this microphone when creating trainings for my previous institution and have had very professional results. If portability is a concern, I'd then recommend a Samson Go-Mic. Either of these tools will be able to capture very crisp audio. Other than a microphone recommendation I think everything else on the project went very smoothly with minimal issues. I enjoyed working with Dr. Rogers and assisting in her project.

Timeline for each Project

Project 1: OER Screencast-o-matic Video 6/3/2015 2PM - 3:45PM Video Editing 6/5/2015 1PM-3PM Start Video Transcription 6/9/2015 10AM-2PM Finish Video Transcription 7/14/2015 12PM-2PM Edit Kaltura Video Transcription

Project 2 OER Blogger Video 6/29 12PM-3:30PM Video Editing 7/3/2015 9AM-12PM Start Video Transcription 7/6/2015 9AM-10:30AM Video Transcription 7/6/2015 12:45AM-2:00PM Finish Video Transcription 7/10/2015 2PM-4PM Edit Kaltura Video Trabscriptions

Project 3 OER Photosynth 7/5/2015 12PM-3PM Video Editing 7/13/2015 12PM-3PM Edit Kaltura Video Transcriptions

Project 4 OER Hispaniola 7/10/2015 12-2PM Video Editing 7/13/2015 9AM-1PM Editing Kaltura Video Transcriptions

Project 5 SUNY COTE 7/22/2015 12PM-2PM Recording and Editing Project 6 SUNY COTE 7/24/2015 12PM-2PM Recording and Editing

Project 7 Dominican Republic On location video 8/17/2015 9AM-2PM Video Editing 8/25/2015 9AM-1PM Adding Images and Text 9/31/2015 9AM-12PM Cleaning up video and adding Spanish translations

2. Allison Moreland, Educational Technologist-GVC

Process

- Identify content to be covered
- Identify learning objectives
- Identify technologies that could support the objectives (video, interactives, etc.)
- Develop documentation (powerpoint, narration, quiz questions, interactive ideas, etc)
- Record audio, as needed
- For Camtasia, specifically:
 - Place audio in media
 - Add transitions to media
 - Capture video sequence into Camtasia
 - Add interactives, quizzes
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 - Test files on server

Planning the Project (Key Considerations)

- Media production often takes longer than anticipated: plan enough time in the schedule
- Software considerations: Ensure that the project has budget for required software and that enough time has been allotted for procuring software
- Audio recording, see attached guidelines for recording: Audio does not have to be perfect (YouTube quality is generally fine), but it should be free from extraneous noises and errors such as cutting off too soon. Inserting 10-15 seconds of empty audio helps with editing and placing audio into the media.
- It is likely to take 40-60 hours of time to produce a 25-30 minute interactive video, depending on the amount of media used, number of interactives, and time to publish media rich files. Revisions to the files add time, depending on complexity of the edits. Publishing the files is a lengthy process, approximately a 90:60 ratio (90 seconds to publish 60 seconds of content files). Publishing is usually a two-step process of publishing from PowerPoint to Camtasia and publishing completed Camtasia files.
 - Publishing from PowerPoint to Camtasia happens in real time (60 seconds of audio=60 seconds of publish time).
 - Publishing completed Camtasia files happens in about 50% real time (60 seconds of audio=50% of publish time, depending on interactivity).
- Allocate time for ensuring that the files will publish correctly (i.e., that presentation plays automatically and without human interaction).
- Allocate time for testing published files on a server

Best Practices

- Manage the project like a project, with project schedules and estimated time to complete tasks
- Use templates to make production faster (PowerPoint, narration, etc.)

- Develop editorial standards
- Plan interactives in advance to identify required actions and results

FINAL THOUGHTS

Although there are a growing number of initiatives in OERs, a number of questions still remain: 1) how will OERs be universally assessed for quality; 2) how will they be evaluated into faculty tenure, reappointment, and promotion; 3) how will academic fears of technology and information ownership be quelled in light of unanswered copyright and licensing issues; 4) what type of funding will exist for these types of initiatives internally at the College; and 5) how will OERs remain sustainable moving forward. I asked myself many of these questions as I completed this project last term and some still remain unanswered. As I stated in my recent article on OERs:

In its current nascent state, it is impossible to fully predict the purpose and significance of the OER movement. . . . Nonetheless, it is our responsibility as academics, faculty and scholars to facilitate the spread of knowledge. It is my opinion that OERs can be one vehicle to help us do so. Their significance lies in the potential to raise the quality of teaching and learning in higher education and encourage a more collaborative and accessible environment for learners worldwide (Rogers, 2014, pg. 55-56).

I believe that the support I received from ESC for this project is one such step in the right direction. Thank you for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhianna C. Rogers PhD., RPA

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Appendix A

Audacity Settings

Important note about saving audio files, please save as a .wav file. MP3s are compressed and Camtasia and Articulate further compress the files, which can lead to distortion.

To modify settings in audacity:

1. Open Audacity.
2. Click Edit>Preferences.
3. Follow the screenshots to change the settings.
4. Click **OK** to save changes.

















