Open Educational Practices and Reflective Dialogue: The Role of the Framework for Information Literacy

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CHAPTER 16

Open Educational Practices and Reflective Dialogue: The Role of the Framework for Information Literacy

Craig Gibson and Trudi E. Jacobson

The Higher Education Landscape

Academic librarianship is currently haunted by a specter that looms over much of higher education: the practices of the corporatized university. These practices create an environment where values associated with inquiry, reasoned debate, reflective dialogue, and respect for excellence become secondary to “values” of research impact, scholarly productivity narrowly considered, and partnerships with commercial entities; and student success measured only by persistence, GPAs, and graduation rates. The combination of “value” assumptions associated with the metrics of the corporatized university has overturned the traditional roles of faculty, lessening autonomy of individual faculty members while simultaneously diminishing prospects for community and dialogue. Scholarship and research have become hyperspecialized, while faculty themselves have seen their campus leadership roles attenuated—roles that might produce opportunities for connecting with colleagues and with students beyond standard classroom contact and
infrquent office visits. The employment status of many faculty is more uncertain than ever, with the “adjunctification” and precarious status of those who work on contracts—and who therefore find contributing to their campuses very challenging. Students themselves often lack agency and opportunities to contribute to the life of the campus under the regime of the corporatized university, except as consumers of the curriculum and of the myriad services offered on campus. The assumptions underpinning these altered approaches to the life of the academy also produce narrow regimes of accountability for governing boards, legislatures, and accrediting agencies, through more easily quantified success indicators. While these are large generalizations about higher education, they represent trends found on most campuses and speak to the growing chorus of dissent about corporate influences overlain on traditional academic values associated with teaching, learning, and scholarship.

The reality of this shift in the academy toward a more standardized, efficiency- and metrics-focused mode of operation is commented upon at great length by numerous scholars of higher education and policy analysts.1 The inexorable drive to measuring “value” in this way is sometimes decried, but often accepted as inevitable, the price to pay for the accelerating neoliberal economy and for demonstrating accountability to a larger public. One especially notable recent study of how higher education has evolved into a standardized and efficiency-focused experience for faculty and students alike is Davidson’s The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux.2 Davidson’s book describes the stifling effects of standardized curricula, large depersonalized classes, rote learning methods, the use of the credit hours as proxies for learning, and myriad other efficiency-oriented practices that are part of most universities of the present. It identifies emerging practices at some schools that create greater student agency and choice in learning: assignments and curricula codeveloped between faculty and students; student projects and work shared widely on campus and with communities beyond campus; portfolios of project-based work; and thematically organized, interdisciplinary research in which students participate as learners with faculty. In effect, Davidson offered a vision of learning itself that is open, inclusive, and student-focused, rather than institution-focused. The questions raised by Davidson’s book and her vision for a “new education” contrast a “closed,” standardized approach to learning to an emerging set of open educational practices that create conditions for learning achieved through community building and reflective dialogue.

Closed Teaching and Learning

“Closed” patterns of teaching, learning, curriculum development, and assessment described by Davidson reduce opportunities for community formation, for reflection and dialogue, and for challenging assumptions about what matters in teach-
ing, learning, and scholarship. Traditional approaches to scholarship, teaching, and learning, overlain with the closed practices produced by corporate influences, too often cast librarians in peripheral service roles, rather than as potential contributors to a fuller range of teaching and learning options for students.

The “closed practices” of traditional or corporatized models of teaching and learning are characterized by: (1) uniform or standardized curricula; (2) exclusive focus on intellectual or cognitive development of students, rather than on affective or social development; (3) use of learning analytics to identify students who have difficulties with learning course content; (4) use of standard learning management systems, with focus on a narrow range of learning experiences made possible by them; and (5) use of standard measures of student success: persistence, graduation rates, and GPAs. While all of these elements are present on most campuses, the relative degree to which they are used creates a continuum of educational experiences for students and teaching experiences for faculty. These “closed practices” are not new, but result from years of increasing efficiency-based influences that impact the core educational mission of colleges and universities, which by its nature cannot be efficient. The more rigid and widespread use of these practices produces a more “closed” experience for both students and faculty, where there is more uniformity in learning experiences, less student agency and choice, and greater focus on predetermined outcomes and standard metrics of success. Examples of these include courses with little instructor-student or student-student dialogue; the uncritical use of educational technologies in course designs; academic programs that focus on individual assignments at the expense of group projects; and the use of an assessment regime that focuses narrowly on prescriptive or predetermined learning outcomes. These practices produce uniformity of results, but close off opportunities for the productive uncertainty that accompanies all real learning.

Toward Open Educational Practices: Exemplars

Obviously, other movements have arisen within higher education that create potential for open educational practices. Most notable among these are programs developed around an array of “high-impact practices” that give students sustained experiences with complex learning challenges, ranging from first-year learning communities to undergraduate research to service learning to capstone courses and internships. Another example is the “maker movement,” allied loosely with project-based learning focused on student creativity. This flourishing shift in pedagogy sees students as agents in creating artifacts and products not through standardized curricula tied to learning analytics, but through messy experimental processes that may span disciplines and afford students opportunities to engage in their first “communities of practice.”
Still another illustration is found within faculty development: that of faculty learning communities, where scholar-teachers engage in research projects about their own teaching practices and share and learn with each other in supportive ways, overcoming the “pedagogical solitude” of which Lee Shulman wrote as one of the ills of the academy.\(^5\)

These examples illustrate a fundamental point about counteracting the influences of the corporatized university: they are about community formation and creating spaces for dialogue—which is necessary for the deep, sustained learning for all members of the academy, students and faculty alike. They are safe spaces, not to protect the participants from challenges or uncomfortable discussions, but zones of psychological safety where their members can find a voice, contribute to something larger, and find opportunities for growth. Even more telling, all of these practices create more parity among students and faculty. With high-impact practices, students overcome novice struggles and may even become budding experts; with creative projects, students become apprentices in forging interdisciplinary connections; and in faculty learning communities, faculty themselves come to terms with their ongoing and sustained status as learners who will always grapple with the complexities of learning at ever more advanced levels.

Librarians, along with their colleagues and counterparts in writing centers and Writing across the Curriculum programs, have sometimes been players in these initiatives on their campuses—as advocates for students from an interdisciplinary perspective and as observers of student struggles with learning in less formal, less structured settings. While librarians have participated to some degree in these partnerships, they have also continued the many legacy forms of instruction developed during the past several decades—the single instruction session, the single assignment, the detached credit course, the tutorial, the instructional handout. These forms of instruction, while filling important niches within an overall instructional plan, constrain and close off more systemic thinking about influence on teaching and learning missions of their institutions. The collaborations of which librarians have been a part, notably in campus partnerships with writing centers, open up new possibilities for community formation. Other partnerships have included work with centers for student success, first-year experience programs, campus tutoring centers, and teaching and learning centers. These relationships create the foundation for forming wider communities for innovative teaching and learning practices, for understanding more deeply the student perspective on the complexities of learning, and for participating in the life of the campus.

One of the beneficial effects of community formation on campuses—in opposition to the efficiency-measures-focused, corporate mind-set—is creating space for reflective dialogue. Networking and conversations among faculty, students, librarians, and others occur on all campuses. Rarer are opportunities for reflective dialogue because it is a countercultural practice within the academy. Part of the
challenge is time for reflection itself—the frantic, accelerating pace of academic life, with ever-increasing expectations for outputs or outcome measures—precludes the time for looking inward, challenging one’s beliefs or assumptions, or having deep conversations with colleagues and risking the vulnerability in having one’s beliefs and practices challenged.\(^6\)

The other challenging dimension of this difficulty is that of dialogue itself. While conversation and debate flourish on all campuses—in classrooms, faculty meetings, student unions, faculty clubs, governing bodies—dialogue itself, in the sense of reciprocal testing of beliefs and search for facts and truth, is much less common. Creating opportunities and spaces for reflective dialogue across campus, within the classroom and the formal curriculum and beyond it, is one of the most compelling opportunities for faculty, librarians, students, and administrators—because such interaction, sustained for a period of time, makes ongoing community possible.

In the current polarized political and cultural environment, colleges and universities find themselves caught in cross-fires—in some ways, later-generation versions of the “culture wars” of the 1990s, but with accelerating effects caused by social media, more pressures to produce measurable outcomes, and less time to think and reflect. The earlier “culture wars” saw debates over the canon, in what texts should be read and valued. The current academy is now strife-ridden over controversial speakers and the acceptability, or not, of hate speech; “trigger warnings” on syllabi and in class about controversial topics; status issues of previously marginalized groups; and the recasting of courses and curricula to reflect social justice concerns. In this environment, reflective dialogue finds fewer venues, but can flourish through intentional cultivation and with the right leadership. In addition to the foundation for enlarged campus communities created by high-impact practices, reflective dialogue can be nurtured through initiatives such as civic learning and civic education, global learning, integrative and interdisciplinary education, diversity and inclusion, and faculty collaboratives designed to investigate options for educational innovation and to involve faculty in dialogue with peers across institutions. All of these initiatives, organized and sponsored by AACU (American Association of Colleges and Universities), seek to create larger reflective conversations about teaching and learning practices that open up spaces for dialogue among students and faculty alike.\(^7\)

One of the nascent and promising opportunities for community formation and reflective dialogue arising in recent years is the set of pedagogical practices known as “open educational practices” (OEPs), which have arisen from the use of OERs (open educational resources) as well as various strands of pedagogy based on active learning, project-based learning, and the high-impact practices previously described. These have arisen organically out of the work of many faculty and a few notable thinkers, but without a universally accepted set of standards. In this sense, these practices continue to be emergent and “open.” They are evolving
out of the lived experiences of both faculty and students and reported on widely, in blogs and podcasts, at conferences (for example, the Open Education Conference, Critical Digital Pedagogy Institute), and even in a few peer-reviewed journals, such as the *Open Praxis* journal. This very grassroots-based movement is also countercultural to corporate practices because it envisions course materials that can be widely shared, instead of being packaged and sold in “closed” containers; because it sees student-generated ideas as essential to building courses and curricula; and because it gives power over teaching and learning, and the materials associated with them, back to the key stakeholders—faculty and students together—rather than to vendors, large companies, or consortia with profit-driven missions.

Open educational practices, as an organic, emergent suite of practices, depend greatly on the metaphor of “open framework.” They are not prescriptive. They are general strategies that can be adopted in numerous ways on local campuses and are based on a small number of big ideas that have grown out of the “wisdom of practice” of expert teachers identified by Shulman. They comprise a loose framework for course design, student participation, collaboration with colleagues, and sharing of curricula and student work with the larger world.

**Open Educational Practices/ Open Pedagogy**

Open educational practices are built upon the use of open educational resources. While the discussion about OERs often revolves around their use in order to offset a portion of the spiraling costs of higher education, their potential far exceeds their simple substitution for commercial textbooks. They provide the impetus to think more deeply about the role of content in a course, models of pedagogy, and the roles of students and instructor. OERs have the ability to create dramatic shifts in traditional teaching and learning models. Wiley expressed this idea using an analogy:

> Using OER the same way we used commercial textbooks misses the point. It’s like driving an airplane down the road. Yes, the airplane has wheels and is capable of driving down on the road (provided the road is wide enough). But the point of an airplane is to fly at hundreds of miles per hour—not to drive. Driving an airplane around, simply because driving is how we always traveled in the past, squanders the huge potential of the airplane.

Open educational practices often facilitate social learning, which focuses not on the transfer of content from instructor to student, but rather on the activities,
conversations, and other grounded interactions surrounding that content. Social learning may occur within formal spaces such as physical classrooms and online course environments, as well as beyond them.

Finding and joining a community that ignites a student’s passion can set the stage for the student to acquire both deep knowledge about a subject (“learning about”) and the ability to participate in the practice of a field through productive inquiry and peer-based learning (“learning to be”). These communities are harbingers of the emergence of a new form of technology-enhanced learning—Learning 2.0—which goes beyond providing free access to traditional course materials and educational tools and creates a participatory architecture for supporting communities of learners.10

An example of a social learning opportunity that might be either extracurricular or course-based is Brown University’s Decameron Web project, which serves as both an open discussion forum about the Decameron and related topics and as a resource where scholars and students contribute content and access existing material.11 The project’s creators say, “We believe that the new electronic environment and its tools enable us to revive the humanistic spirit of communal and collaboratively ‘playful’ learning of which the Decameron itself is the utmost expression.”12

The conception and use of OEPs are still nascent, as even the use of OER content is new to many instructors. Wiley asserted that “copyright is so universal in its overreaching that it has become ubiquitous, pervasive, ambient. The restrictions of copyright shackle and direct our behavior as invisibly but constantly as the proverbial water the proverbial fish is incapable of seeing.”13 Universal change continues to be slow in the several years since publication of his blog post, yet progress is occurring—often with OER adoption as instructors tentatively move beyond the closed system of copyright. Others have moved beyond the foundations provided by OER and have embraced OEP as a values-based practice that reflects changed ideas about learning and student agency.

A standard definition of open educational practices emanates from the international Open Educational Quality Initiative network: “Open Educational Practices (OEP) constitute the range of practices around the creation, use and management of open educational resources with the intent to improve quality and innovate education.”14 Open educational practices adopted by instructors allow them to engage in open pedagogy, which may range from smaller changes to those that are dramatically more empowering to students. “At its zenith OEP should combine high levels of OER with pedagogies which stimulate learner-generated
content produced by learners acting autonomously exploring, collaborating, and generating knowledge.”

Cronin developed a definition of OEP in conjunction with a study about the use of OEP by instructors at an Irish university. Her definition, which extends to open digital spaces and openness between personal and professional boundaries, provides more specifics about types of pedagogical practices: “Collaborative practices that include the creation, use, and reuse of OER, as well as pedagogical practices employing participatory technologies and social networks for interaction, peer-learning, knowledge creation, and empowerment of learners.”

Cronin referred to the work of Lane:

...who suggests that open education initiatives can be considered in two broad forms.* The first seeks to transform or empower individuals and groups within existing structures, e.g. by removing specific prior qualifications requirements, eliminating distance and time constraints, eliminating or reducing costs, and/or improving access overall. A second form of open education seeks to transform the structures themselves, and the relationships between the main actors (learners, teachers, and educational institutions), in order to achieve equity.


Cronin’s pedagogical practices and Lane’s second form of open education overlap with theories of social learning, and with the development of faculty-student partnerships. Such partnerships might assume a number of forms, including designing course elements, responding to student experiences, and assessing student work. Students who were invited by their instructors to cocreate course curriculum noted that a strong learning community was formed, one in which there was a sense of shared responsibility and in which respect was engendered for different views, leading to a sense of trust. This example counters closed practices such as standardized curricula and an exclusive focus on students’ cognitive development. Student agency and choice are encouraged and respected, and uniformity in learning experiences is not a goal, as courses taught in this manner will be altered each time they are taught.
Elements of Open Pedagogy

Open pedagogy, which is intertwined with OEP—the terms are frequently used interchangeably—has been defined through its component elements. It is important to keep in mind that as with any emerging area, its boundaries are malleable, and while different theorists and practitioners will identify common elements, there will also be divergences. The two lists examined here, for example, by no means replicate each other. Coincidentally, each of the two has identified eight key determinants. Hegarty’s model for open pedagogy uses the following attributes, with details about each attribute’s contribution to open pedagogy and links to OEP:

- participatory technologies
- people, openness, trust
- innovation and creativity
- sharing ideas and resources
- connected community
- learner-generated
- reflective practice
- peer review

Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke, whose compilation was generated by a Twitter discussion, selected eight qualities:

- agency (learners should be allowed to operate independently)
- choice (learners choose their own pace, direction, and connections)
- expansion (learning networks are open-ended and expanding connections)
- creativity (new possibilities require new perspectives and ideas)
- student-constructed (students are responsible for their own learning networks and actively plan for growth of networks)
- open-ended problems (process rather than product, real solutions to real problems)
- unmeasurable outcomes (traditional outcome measurement aligns with closed learning)
- risk and goodness (there is the possibility of reward and goodness with the unknown)

The two sets of characteristics share common ground. Both focus on the need for creativity; the importance of community and connections between learners in the form of learning networks and the technologies that enable such networks (which also aligns with social learning); and the empowerment of learners.

Each also brings unique elements to the discussion. Hegarty specifically emphasized the role of support, comfort, and trust as new open pedagogy models are developed and used. She identified the importance of sharing ideas and resources and the role that peer review plays in attesting to the value of new cre-
Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke’s identification of unmeasurable outcomes highlighted that an exclusive focus on traditional outcomes limits the types of learning that are validated. Some important learning outcomes simply are not measurable.\(^\text{23}\)

Hegarty’s reflective practice is focused on the instructors. Had it been a broader category of self-reflection, it might have been linked to Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke’s learner choice as it is difficult to make informed choices without self-reflection.\(^\text{24}\) So, too, would student construction and growth of learning networks require introspection. Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke focused on solutions (for real problems) and outcomes (unmeasurable), areas that were not addressed by Hegarty.\(^\text{25}\) Nor was the rather vague notion of goodness, though the element of risk coupled with goodness may have some overlap with Hegarty’s elements of people, openness, and trust.

Paskevicius developed a model relating OEP to instructional practice after reviewing the empirical research literature connected to OEP. It situates OEP within existing instructional practice, focusing on four areas that have the potential to include open elements: learning outcomes, learning resources, teaching and learning activities, and assessment and evaluation.\(^\text{26}\) He based it on Biggs’s constructive alignment model that includes constructivism (“the centrality of the learner’s activities in creating meaning”) and alignment between the objectives and assessments within a course.\(^\text{27}\) He also proposed a working definition of OEP based on his model that helps instructors to envision how they might shift from current methods of teaching to methods informed by openness:

Teaching and learning practices where openness is enacted within all aspects of instructional practice; including the design of learning outcomes, the selection of teaching resources, and the planning of activities and assessment. OEP engage both faculty and students with the use and creation of OER, draw attention to the potential afforded by open licenses, facilitate open peer-review, and support participatory student-directed projects.\(^\text{28}\)

Examples of open pedagogy follow, including several that are course-based and one that provides a platform for a range of open learning experiences. These examples are analyzed in light of the OEP models introduced.

Examples of Open Pedagogy

In a blog post about open education as resistance to the hierarchical teacher-student relationships that reinforce the banking model of education and that discourage dialogue, Morris and Stommel emphasized that “much goes missing when we...
remove learning from learners’ hands, and manicure it for ease of instruction.”

The examples here place the learning firmly in our students’ hands, using a variety of strategies.

Shaffer argued for what he called the “critical textbook,” which engages students in a way that a fixed textbook does not:

...a physically and legally malleable resource—a Google doc, a wiki, a whiteboard—can help our students act as scholars and teachers, curating and creating new knowledge. We have the technology to build a new kind of textbook—what I call the critical textbook. The critical textbook is hackable (both in principle and in practice), open (both open-access and open-source), and belongs to no one person. It is not a tome of knowledge; it is a metaphor for knowledge—full of good stuff, but not beyond revision.

Wang described such a project in a linguistics course at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, where students, working in small groups, contribute a chapter to a Wikibook entitled “Introduction to Linguistics.” Students were also asked to peer-edit, peer-comment on the contributions of others, and peer-teach what they have learned. The goal for this project was to encourage active student engagement leading eventually to autonomy. This project fits Paskevicius’s OEP categories of teaching and learning activities and assessment and evaluation.

Davidson advocated for asking students to design the course syllabus, in whole or in part. She has found this strategy to be as successful with first-year students as with graduate students. Variations include asking students to complete a partially written syllabus or having students select readings for units. In one case, she and a co-instructor “left the room on the first day of class and had students structure, organize, and design the course.” She recounted that she and her colleague were not disappointed in the result. All four of Paskevicius’s OEP categories would be in play for this final example, a dramatic incorporation of open educational practices and open pedagogy.

DeRosa asks students in a composition course what they feel they need to learn and works with her students to write course objectives. They also co-create grading rubrics that allow the students to grade their own work. The work for this course is done on individual sites that students developed and are theirs following completion of the course. Again, all four of Paskevicius’s OEP categories are encompassed by this example.

Without specific details of the examples provided here, it is difficult to determine exactly which attributes and qualities of the Hegarty and Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke models of OEP are present in each. Evident are participatory tech-
nologies (Wang); people, openness and trust; and learner-generated components, drawing from Hegarty’s attributes, and agency, student-constructed, open-ended problems, and risk and goodness from Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke’s qualities. It is also possible that additional qualities such as creativity, learner choice, and unmeasurable outcomes are additional qualities involved. In addition, it should be noted that the properties of OEP are still emerging, and therefore they do not align precisely with examples that are labelled as OEP. However, it is clear that these examples allow for student engagement, motivation, learning, and trust-building in ways that do not tend to occur in classes that use traditional, or closed, pedagogical practices. Students involved in courses that use more open practices are more likely to take ownership of their learning experiences.

While much of the emphasis on open educational practices is focused on course applications, OEPs are also to be found in cocurricular settings. New York City College of Technology, a City University of New York institution, offers OpenLab, an open platform for the use of faculty, staff, and students. It is available “to support teaching and learning, enable connection and collaboration, and strengthen the intellectual and social life of the college community.” The platform is used to host courses, projects, clubs, and portfolios, and there are over 15,000 members. Courses hosted on OpenLab extend the learning environment beyond the classroom, encouraging discussion and the sharing of work. There is an option to open the course to non-enrolled OpenLab members, broadening the conversation. The Projects section includes a wide range of projects, including course- and research-based. One of its resources is the Living Lab Learning Library, where innovative teaching resources and ideas are shared, including some tagged as Open Digital Pedagogy. It is accessible to all, not just OpenLab members.

Aligning Open Pedagogy and Open Educational Practices with the Information Literacy Framework

Classes taught using OEP move beyond the traditional (closed) models that students are comfortable with. Students used to more established teaching and assessment methods may resist OEP that would encourage reflective social learning, including increased dialogue. To address their potential discomfort and to help them participate more fully, it is beneficial to directly confront the issues that might distress them. The Framework suggests ways of doing this.

The ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education is developed around six core concepts that capture critical ideas connected with informa-
The concepts are designed to be flexible in their implementation so that they can be used in a wide variety of settings. Each of the six is accompanied by suggested knowledge practices and dispositions that accord with the concept, though these lists are not meant to be exhaustive. They do, however, provide a solid starting point to consider how the Framework both supports and can draw inspiration from open pedagogy and open educational practices.

One theme found in open pedagogy is that of sharing beyond the classroom. This takes the form of availability of content and ideas for practice with the world at large, but it also has the potential for alliances between instructors sharing OER and OEP and generating potentially rich conversations between groups of learners. Hegarty’s eight attributes include several that encompass this theme: participatory technologies, sharing ideas and resources, and connected community. Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke focused on potential expansive learning networks that might accompany sharing, and even unmeasurable outcomes, as there may be a ripple effect with the elements being shared. The examples described in the preceding section include the element of sharing beyond the classroom. In the case of New York City College of Technology, use of OpenLab is designed to support connection and collaboration, discussion, and sharing, capturing the sense of this theme from both Hegarty and Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke.

Sharing content does not work well in the familiar closed model of uniform or standardized curricula. Instructors and also students (in courses emphasizing partnerships) who are interested in borrowing activities, content, assessments, or strategies from others consciously seek out these materials to improve the course they are designing or helping to design. When aligning the theme of sharing content with the Framework, there are two possible directions to follow. One is knowing what sharing entails, and the other is the creation of content to be shared.

For the first strand, the frame “Information Has Value” is particularly pertinent. Included within that frame are knowledge practices that recognize the legal and socioeconomic aspects of sharing content freely:

- Articulate the purpose and distinguishing characteristics of copyright, fair use, open access, and the public domain.

- Decide where and how their information is to be published.

Students may be more familiar with the tenets of copyright rather than open sharing of content. In order to make the decision to freely share their intellectual creations, they must understand why they might want to do this, beyond being asked to do so by their professor. Where the information they help to create will be published, and how, is also likely to be selected by the instructor, but in some cases, this decision might be made by students. And if not in this course, then there will certainly be future opportunities when learner agency will be involved.
An additional knowledge practice is from the frame “Information Creation as a Process”:

- Develop, in their own creation processes, an understanding that their choices impact the purposes for which the information product will be used and the message it conveys.

This knowledge practice is related to where and how the information will be published, but extends beyond the format and the venue, taking into account the audience’s needs and understanding.

Related to these knowledge practices are dispositions or attitudes that will facilitate learning in these areas:

- See themselves as contributors to the information marketplace rather than only consumers of it.

- Understand that different methods of information dissemination with different purposes are available for their use.

The first of these is from “Information Has Value,” and marketplace should be interpreted in a broad sense. The second comes from “Information Creation as a Process.”

The second component of sharing involves the content to be shared, and there are numerous relevant knowledge practices and dispositions to be found in the Framework. They emanate from several frames, highlighting the creative and malleable connections between OEP and these core concepts.

A selection:

**Knowledge Practices**

- “Acknowledge they are developing their own authoritative voice in a particular area and recognize the responsibilities this entails, including seeking accuracy and reliability, respecting intellectual property, and participating in communities of practice.” (“Authority Is Constructed and Contextual”)

- “Determine an appropriate scope of investigation.” (“Research as Inquiry”)

- “Give credit to the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation.” (“Information Has Value”)

- “Cite the contributing work of others in their own information production.” (“Scholarship as Conversation”)

**Dispositions**

- “Develop awareness of the importance of assessing content with a skeptical stance and with a self-awareness of their own biases and worldview.” (“Authority Is Constructed and Contextual”)
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- “Respect the original ideas of others.” (“Information Has Value”)
- “Exhibit mental flexibility and creativity.” (“Searching as Strategic Exploration”)

Open pedagogy involves core themes and values, but the ways in which they can be deployed as practices are infinitely varied. The Framework is adaptable, with components that are able to be joined in ways that support OEP and student learning goals. The frames’ dispositions are of particular value in the design of learning activities, as dialogue-rich social learning demands the metacognitive self-reflection reflected in these components.

Metaliteracy

The next section outlines a sample course-integrated OEP assignment that addresses some of the issues discussed in this chapter. It is drawn from learning goals and objectives aligned with metaliteracy. Metaliteracy, which influenced the development of the Framework, focuses on the overarching set of abilities required of learners in evolving, connected, and collaborative spaces. It incorporates affective, cognitive, behavioral, and especially metacognitive abilities. Metaliteracy emphasizes the responsibilities that accompany the role of learner as creator. Beyond metaliteracy’s connection with the Framework, there are areas of overlap between the goals and practices of metaliteracy and OEP. These connections are particularly evident using Hegarty’s attributes of participatory technologies, sharing ideas and resources, connected community, and learner-generated content and structure. The assignment is provided as an example to show how components discussed in this chapter worked together to meet the needs of one course.

Open Information Literacy/Metaliteracy Assignment

An assignment developed for a sophomore-level political science course at the University at Albany exemplifies several open pedagogy themes as drawn from the Framework, including sharing and student agency. It is the result of a collaboration by a professor and a librarian and is connected with open digital badging content that aligns with the metaliteracy learning goals and objectives. (Many digital badging systems are proprietary. However, this one was developed with the intent that the content would be open for reuse by others.) While this assignment is linked to a specific learning system, its approach might easily be adapted for a variety of disciplines and settings. As a template, it is malleable, a characteristic of OEP in general. Indeed, librarians might consider the possibility of creating
a social learning opportunity that would enable the development of open Framework-related badges via Credly.

Students gain familiarity with the metaliteracy badge quests, or activities, prior to this assignment. They thus have the opportunity to see the structure and purpose of a quest, which is a short instructional unit, meant to be engaging and thought-provoking. Each quest culminates with students demonstrating understanding of the topic through written responses that often require a reflective element. In this course, the professor assigns several quests that align with course learning outcomes, and, in preparation, the librarian attends a class to talk about metaliteracy, information literacy, and use of the badging system. The professor grades submitted quest responses, asking students who have not fully understood to redo their work. Near the end of the course, students are asked to create a quest that will address the broad topic of Expanding Horizons within the context of one course module: the impact of generations on politics. Within the badging system, Expanding Horizons relates primarily to the metaliteracy objective “Recognize diverse cultural values and norms to create and share information for global audiences.” Particularly important for the assignment is another objective, “Demonstrate the ability to translate information presented in one manner to another in order to best meet the needs of particular audiences; Integrate information from multiple sources into coherent new forms.” In the course itself, the instructor aligned Expanding Horizons as a topic and as an assignment with one of the course’s learning objectives: To become a “producer of information and arguments in your own right—through formulating your own opinions and communicating reasoned arguments and recommendations of your own.”

The librarian and instructor take most of a class period to describe what the students are being asked to do, including selecting a specific topic, writing content, finding a video or other open resource that might enhance their quest, and developing a concluding assignment for other learners that will help to demonstrate understanding of the material. They also write a reflective paragraph about what they themselves learned during this process. The students are informed that they will be presenting these quests to the class and that one or more of their creations might actually be used in the online system. Students are encouraged to

- assume the role of creator
- be creative and have fun
- engage in a learning activity that allows them to inform others
- further their learning about the topic of generations in connection with political science

The alignment with the sharing and the student agency themes is clear. For success in an open assignment such as this, it is important that class members assume a role different from that generally expected of them. Creating content for a broader audience in an appropriate and engaging manner requires a different mind-set than doing so for the professor alone. Beyond this affective shift, they
also need to understand intellectual property issues in connection with material they might want to incorporate into their quests and know that they have the choice of making their work available online or not if asked to share it beyond the classroom.

Students must also grapple with the idea that they are assuming some authority for teaching others through their quests and the responsibilities that that entails. They need to determine the appropriate scope of the content they will focus on, acknowledge the work of others, and be flexible and creative. This last is an attribute not always requested of students in their assignments and may require particular attention in directions.

Comparing this assignment to the eight qualities identified by Reynolds, Gibbs, and Zemke, agency, creativity, open-ended problems, unmeasurable outcomes, and risk and goodness are all present.

This open assignment, and the time accorded to students’ presentation of their quests, also encourages discussion among class members. The librarian joins the class for the two days that this assignment typically takes and observes that students are very interested in talking together about topics presented from a viewpoint that they may or may not agree with, but that is reflective of the thoughts of a person of similar age. The written submissions include a reflective component, in which students discuss both the unusual nature of the assignment and their goals for their quest. While the instructor does not ask for a similar reflection on traditional assignments and thus comparisons are not possible, the reflections make it evident that the students take their responsibilities as information creators seriously. A number of them also express pride in what they have developed.

When this assignment was first used, there was a gap in the badging system, as there was no Expanding Horizons quest, only a placeholder. However, as a result of this assignment, the placeholder was superseded by the work of one of the students. There is the potential to add additional quests to the system to provide an outlet for the creations of other students.

Conclusion

Librarians’ contributions to the large teaching and learning goals of their institutions can most fully develop through new partnerships with faculty as codvelopers with them, and with students, of a new set of open educational practices that expand the possibilities for community formation, conversation, and dialogue. While librarians have for several decades worked with faculty on teaching practices based on active learning and “high-impact practices” and have formed alliances with writing programs, student success centers, and teaching and learning centers, those collaborations have achieved incremental progress and uneven success. In the current political climate, open educational practices that include students as partners in and contributors to their own education provide librarians
and faculty alike the opportunity to cultivate the sense of inclusion and creativity that many members of the academy remark upon as missing in the current corporatized environment with its focus on standardized efficiency. The Framework for Information Literacy provides points of inspiration for development of open assignments, open course design, and open sharing of student work—a new learning ecosystem that provides the necessary conditions for respect, tolerance, and understanding of different perspectives. If librarians build a repertoire of open educational practices with faculty and students, they will contribute to the flourishing of community in the search for common ground.

NOTES


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