Communication

Communication is the act of conveying information or understanding from one person to another. In the context of advocacy, the purpose of communication is often to persuade a person to change their opinion or take specific action.
Where are you joining from?
What are some of the things you find CHALLENGING in communicating about open education?

- Overcoming faculty resistance
- Copyright—what is allowed and what’s not
- The definition of the concept itself
- People don’t know about it
- So many things to define, open pedagogy, OEP, OER etc
- Dealing with defensive faculty who feel like if you talk about open you are shaming them for not using it.
- Choosing what to share.
- Trying to describe OE or open concisely.
- Different understanding of open, open education, and OER
What are some of the things you find CHALLENGING in communicating about open education?

- Stakeholders having no idea about the benefits of OE
- Difficult to explain the concept of “open”
- Difference between fair use in the classroom vs open
- People thinking open is all about cost
- It is difficult to articulate the value of worth for teachers
- Stressing relevance versus cost
- Shared understanding of open
- Resistance, perceived loss of income
What are some of the things you find EFFECTIVE in communicating about open education?

- Referring to UNESCO recommendations
- Specific examples
- the WHY, what’s in it for me the (teacher)
- interesting question :)
- Making sessions discipline specific and not just a general one.
- Short and sweet messages. Curated info
- Doing instead of just talking
- Highlighting the things open makes possible that traditionally copyrighted materials prohibit
- Asking about personal exp with textbook costs/challenges
What are some of the things you find EFFECTIVE in communicating about open education?

- Explaining how it contributes to equity and student success
- Easy ways to incorporate open into practices - ex. finding CC images instead of copyrighted ones
- Sharing stories about other faculty members who have adopted or adapted a resource
- Telling a story
- Develop OER
OER are freely available, high-quality learning materials that can be downloaded, edited, and shared to better serve all students.
Advocacy Communication

→ Define your goal
→ Identify your audience and "what's in it for them"
→ Craft and deliver your message
→ Assess the results
What are some of the end goals that open education can accomplish? "Open in order to..."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improve quality</th>
<th>Decrease cost</th>
<th>Put the learner in the center!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve access</td>
<td>reach equity and social justice</td>
<td>true academic freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improve student learning</td>
<td>Improve accessibility</td>
<td>keep or update resources for long-term</td>
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What are some of the end goals that open education can accomplish? "Open in order to..."

- **Co-creation**: It means freeing curricula from the printed textbook straight jacket.
- **Improve equity for at-risk students**: Better and mindful textbooks.
- **More sustainability**: Involve students in their learning.
- **Equity**: It means providing students textbooks that work for them.
- **Equity**: Customizing the learning experience to a specific context.
What are some of the end goals that open education can accomplish? "Open in order to..."

- Create more resources
- Increase number of successful graduates
- life-long learners
- Students
- lecturers
- Parents
Defining Your Goal: If you had a magic wand, what would you want people to understand or do to advance open education?

- It takes time but is worth it
- Institutionalize the OER Librarian position :) sustainability of OE initiatives
- Get rid of predatory publishers...
- Awareness of more than just their courses, but the ability to make a difference globally
- Its teamwork, and you need support staff to help faculty
- For the people with the most power to de center themselves and their minor discomfort for the greater good of those with less power
- Make it default choice.
- Time consuming, but worth it
- Support OE in relation to achieving SDGs
Defining Your Goal: If you had a magic wand, what would you want people to understand or do to advance open education?

- Better and mindful texts
- Institutions must develop salary and advancement criteria advancing OER use and creation
- Clearer open citation practices
- Takes resources for sustainability - not one and done
- Create more resources
- In a rational world promotion and salary increases from the administrators
- That adoption is an option
- The many ways OER can be used to improve student learning
- Properly structured they can use it to get grant support w overhead
Defining Your Audience

The first step to effective communications is to identify whom you are communicating to. Your "audience" is the most important group of people you need to reach or persuade in order to achieve your goal.
Who are some "audiences" you might need to communicate to? (Think about who the key stakeholders are.)

- Administrators
- Deans
- Faculty
- Faculty, admin
- Funders - sponsors/donors
- colleagues in the faculty
- policymakers
- students
- Board members
Who are some "audiences" you might need to communicate to? (Think about who the key stakeholders are.)

- students
- library staff
- government
- deans, university president, state board, faculty
- Librarians
- Community
- faculty, admin, students, student groups, student government
- Bookstore managers
- Vp level leaders. Get open into strategic plan
Who are some "audiences" you might need to communicate to? (Think about who the key stakeholders are.)

- professional associations
- Faculty
If your goal is to "get more faculty to adopt OER," who is your most important audience?

- Student Government: 4
- The Provost: 0
- Individual Faculty: 10
- Department Chairs: 5
- The Public: 0
"What's in it for me?"

Once you've identified your audience, the next step is to craft a message that will appeal to them. The best way to do that is to think about open education from their perspective. What's in it for them?
For faculty: what are some of the challenges they face and "what's in it for them" if they adopt OER?

- Richer resources
- Happier students who are better prepared for class.
- Making learning materials more relevant to their students
- Time to implement
- Student generated resources
- Challenge is they need to find the time, and what's in it for them is that they have more control
- Getting published
- More pedagogical options
- Ability to decolonize content
For faculty: what are some of the challenges they face and "what's in it for them" if they adopt OER?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>More student engagement</th>
<th>Opportunities to collaborate (internally and externally)</th>
<th>collaboration</th>
</tr>
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<td>collaborating together on resources</td>
<td>OER and associated learning activities can help with remote learning in COVID chaos</td>
<td>Reward structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher enrollment in their classes</td>
<td>Recognizing the ridiculous expense of textbooks by choosing and even better publishing OER</td>
<td>Tailoring content</td>
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For faculty: what are some of the challenges they face and "what's in it for them" if they adopt OER?

- Intrinsic rewards for faculty
- Broad recognition of publishing
- not all institutions acknowledge OER for tenure/promotion
- Collaboration across institutions makes high quality resources
- Intellectual property
- Reputation for the institution
- Supporting faculty, acknowledging educational costs, and the willingness to do something about it.
- Academic freedom--some faculty might perceive an OER program from the provost as a threat to that freedom
- Faculty might perceive as threat to academic freedom or intellectual property
For the provost: what are some of the challenges they face and "what's in it for them" if they fund an OER grant program?

- Community impact
- Reputation for the institution
- Meaningful engagement
- Marketing their program compared to other institutions to students
- Higher retention rates
- Potential for improvements in key metrics that legislatures and other stakeholders care about.
- Challenge: faculty might balk if it is seen as a top-down dictat.
- Challenge: politics, sensitivity to faculty perceptions
For faculty: "what's in it for them" if they adopt OER?
Tip 1: Show Rather than Tell

It's great to include facts and key statistics, but always make sure to context with examples, stories, and illustrations. Bring your information to life by painting a picture or telling a story. Make it local.
Tip 2: Keep it Simple

When we're passionate about a topic, it's easy to want to tell someone everything. Avoid diving into details and jargon, and focus on the bigger picture and "why" behind this work.
Tip 3: Keep it Positive

While there are some really negative aspects of the status quo, it’s not helpful to dwell on them (e.g. publisher bad practices, etc.) The solution is the important part, so make sure to spend your time there.
Tip 4: Know Your Audience!

We've covered this already, but it's worth saying again! The best communications meet your audience where they're at and explain "what's in it for them."
Tip 5: Focus on "Open in order to..."

While many open advocates are in this work for their own passion and belief, open is not a goal: it is a means to broader goals. It's not just about "open" it's about "open in order to..."
Delivering the Message

The messenger can be just as important as the message itself. Consider both the "channels" for communicating you have access to, and what "allies" you have who can help.
If your audience is the provost and your message is "OER is the best model for course materials during the pandemic," who is the best messenger?
<table>
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<th>What are some communications &quot;channels&quot; you can use?</th>
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<td>Professional development workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>one on one consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic department meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word of mouth among peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events, webinars, meetings, workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>department meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallway (non pandemic times)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>email (ha!)</td>
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What are some communications "channels" you can use?

- Social media - Linked in especially
- Partner with Teaching and Learning Center
- Listserv
- We printed some OER texts for course reserves in the library that we will promote
- Mugs
- Panels of student/educator using OER
- Tee shirts
- OoenEd tshirt
- In service programs
What are some communications "channels" you can use?

Posters to dean forum (or senate if appropriate)
Assessing the Results

In choosing your communications channels, think about the ways you can keep track of what’s working. Use a spreadsheet to track who you’ve emailed, track twitter analytics, add a survey question about “how did you hear?”
Crafting an Elevator Pitch

- Hook: opening sentence making it timely, interesting, relevant
- Problem: describe the challenge in a way they will understand
- Solution: describe open education and "what's in it for them"
- Ask: concrete action you want them to take