

Introducing a Holistic Review of OER

Letter from the OER Reviews Editor, John Raible

John Raible¹

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Introducing OER Reviews Editor, John Raible

Dr. John Raible is an Instructional Systems Specialist with the National Park Service. Previously, he served as a Senior Instructional Designer at the University of Central Florida's Center for Distributed Learning. In this role, he worked with faculty to transition courses from a face-to-face environment to a blended or online environment. His research areas include the integration of emerging technology into online curriculum, accessibility for online learners, and the use of OER materials. He has presented at local, state, national, and international conferences; in addition to being published in multiple peer-reviewed journals. John has taught online and blended courses at both the community college and university level.

John's work with Open Educational Resources is multifaceted. He started by seeking alternatives to expensive commercial textbooks through the use of eBooks from other providers. University contracts prevented this so he turned to zero cost materials that lead to OER. Partnering with the library, he and others brought awareness and change to university leadership on the importance of OER and flexibility with university contracts.

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John used his position as an instructional designer to help faculty transition away from commercial textbook to OER with grant funding from the State of Florida. His partnership with faculty, instructional designers, and librarians led to the development of 4 new OER textbooks and hundreds of thousands dollars in student savings.

John has partnered with others to use the COUP (Cost, Outcome, Use, and Perception) framework to examine the implementation of OER. He took research to another level by conducting his dissertation study on faculty perception of OER adoption across an entire public higher education system. The results of his work has contributed to the growing body of OER knowledge.

So why does he do it? One word: access. Access to information is critical to a properly functioning higher education system. Page by page, access is being restricted to many things in higher education. OER has the potential to ensure access for everyone.

Letter from the OER Reviews Editor

A traditional book review allows for the critical examination of a static published work, but

rarely provides an opportunity for the continued growth and advancement of the text. The Reviews section of JOERHE gives readers and authors an opportunity to converse about Open Educational Resources (OER) in a way that is not usually possible with a traditional book review.

In the early stages of imagining this new journal, there were many conversations about having a book review section as is common for traditional scholarly journals. Instead of reviewing traditional books, we decided to review published OER. Reviewing a published OER is a unique task because the reviewer has the opportunity to not only critically evaluate the OER content, but also to become a contributor to the work. The permissions granted by open licensing expands the possibilities for partnership, collaboration, and growth in open education, and OER Reviews seeks to provide a place for this collaboration to be nurtured.

Careful consideration was taken to make sure that the review process was a practical and useful assessment for OER advocates and practitioners. The OER Review provides an expert reviewer's opinion as well as an accompanying OER assessment rubric. The rubric, adapted from the *Affordable Learning Georgia Quality Standards for Open Educational Resources* [1], provides readers with a quick way to assess an OER for their own scholarly outputs and teaching objectives. It asks the reviewer to assess the content's relevance, accessibility, clarity, and ancillary

materials. Providing this dual level review ensures that the reader receives a blend of expert opinion and clearly defined evaluative criteria which will enable them to not only better assess whether the OER is suitable for adoption, but also use the rubric as a blueprint for adaption. This holistic review process highlights the Revise and Remix elements of the 5Rs of OER [2] and hopes to encourage the continued growth of the resource. JOERHE looks forward to continuing to review published OER and invites educators to propose published works for review in future issues.

References

- [1] "[JOERHE OER Textbook Rubric](#)" is a derivative of "Affordable Learning Georgia Quality Standards for Open Educational Resources" by the University System of Georgia, used under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license. "JOERHE OER Textbook Rubrics" is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license by John Raible
- [2] The 5Rs of OER were created by David Wiley and published freely under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence at <http://opencontent.org/blog/archives/3221>

Note: 'Letters from the Editors' are not peer-reviewed and reflect the individual opinions of the editor(s).