Open Peer Review

Reviewer: Teresa Schultz

Recommendation: Revisions Required

Scope, Objectives, Content

Is the article in scope for Journal of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education? Does the topic discuss an element related to open education, open data, open access, or other open topics? Is the topic an important one, or is it trivial or of low priority?

Yes, the article is definitely in scope of JOERHE and would be of interest to readers.

Organization

Does the article proceed logically? As applicable, does the article adhere to a recommended structure and the section guideline?

For the most part. I do suggest that the authors consider breaking out the background of their institution from the lit review and either putting it with the intro or creating a new background section. I would also advise them to hold off from evaluating their results until the Discussion section - at some points, it gets confusing as they refer to results they haven't discussed yet. I think the flow would go better if they presented just the results in their entirety and then discuss them in Discussion.

Methodology, Approach, Conclusions

The methodology for data gathering and analysis should be appropriate for the problem addressed. Inferences from data should be sound--the author should not reach unsupported conclusions. Not all papers will use a scientific research methodology, but all should employ sound reasoning and an adequate balance between description and critical analysis. Consider: Is the article factually accurate? Is it clear the

author knows, or has investigated, previous work on the subject of the article? Has the author failed to reference recent or seminal work on the subject?

The methodology makes sense, and I was happy they included the survey instrument. I do have some questions I would like them to clarify, however, such as whether they received IRB approval for the survey, how many faculty received the survey (would help showing what percent responded), and to define what they mean by "teaching faculty" (i.e. who does it include/not include?)

I also would like to see them present more results from their survey, or at least better explain why they did not include all questions. It also seems like some of these questions that were not included could provide interesting results when compared to questions they did include. For instance, I'm interested in knowing how faculty responded to the question about who chooses their course material in comparison to if they use IA/OER/Course reserves. Does admin decision making play a role in their use of IA? Likewise, I think they could do more comparison of the variables they did report on - for instance, how many people were unaware of all three options (IA/OER/CR) vs. those who were only unaware of OER and those only unaware of IA, etc. Is there a lot of overlap, or are we looking at potentially somewhat distinct groups?

I was also a little confused about just which responses were included in the results. There's a mention of 197 that completed at least 90% of the survey, which I assumed meant the results were focusing on those 197, but then I noted that one of the questions had 199 responses.

I do wonder if some of their conclusions are actually supported by the evidence. They claim "This discrepancy seems to point toward a gap in our promotion of OER services such as consultations and instructional design support, which could ease instructors' adoption of OER" but I can see other reasons than a gap in promotion for this, such as the time needed to convert to OER and the upper hand that many publishers have in accessing faculty/admin about IA and in making it so easy to implement.

For Figures 2-4, I was unclear if these were multiple choice questions, i.e. respondents could select multiple options. If so, it would good to make that clearer in the captions, and I'm also not sure if that means you should use a different graph style - the one you used seems to imply 100%, but maybe that's me.

Finally, I think this article is treading a delicate ground, which I respect. There are many in the Open Ed world who look pretty negatively on the IA push from publishers (I admit I'm one of them), but I also can understand wanting to maintain good working relationships. But I'm wondering if the authors are skirting around some legitimate questions about the benefits/negatives of doing cross-promotional work. Is it the library's place to try and promote the product of a for-profit company? Especially when the data seems to show IA is doing a lot better in terms of awareness than the library-backed initiatives? When the authors discuss what they changed in response to the journal, they mention doing presentations at faculty meetings and targeted referrals - but I'm left unclear as to what role the library played in this vs. the bookstore and publisher reps. Were the bookstore/publisher reps including the library when they contacted faculty? If so, that sounds great and would be worth knowing. Or was this rather a library-led initiative that more just provided free marketing help to for-profit companies? That I have a bigger concern about. The anecdote about the bookstore helping to identify a book that could be made open is nice, but as a one-off story, it doesn't really show much about how those who support IA are really trying to promote

the other services as well. The authors do seem to address this concern in the Conclusion when they write "Perhaps the best takeaway from this survey was that a general awareness campaign and collaboration does not benefit our programs equally: instead, we found the most rewards came when our team members highlighted the unique benefits of each of our programs, and referred faculty to one another, as needed. " but this also comes from a bit of out of nowhere and doesn't seem to match what they wrote in the Discussion.

Writing Style, References

Please indicate whether there are problems with expression or flow, but do not comment about grammar or basic edits. Do NOT take the time to do copy editing - that will be handled later in the process. However, general comments pointing out problems with style or format are useful.

Writing style is pretty good overall. There are some grammar issues, but nothing major.

Application:

Does the article contribute knowledge or practical examples that will inform/improve others' practice or education?

I think the article could do a little more to connect this research project to the broader field. First, in the Discussion, compare your findings to those from some of the articles you cite in your Lit Review. Also, as a study of one institution, this can't be more broadly applicable, but it could be nice to have a section (maybe address in the conclusion) with how a similar study could be conducted at other institutions/advice you have for doing so.

What are the stronger points/qualities of the article?

Overall I think the topic is a good one, and the study presents interesting results. It's also well written. It's definitely a promising article.

What are the weaker points/qualities of the article? How could they be strengthened?

I would like to see some more clarification throughout, more data, and a bit deeper look at this idea of cross-promotion of IA/CR/OER and its positives/negatives.

Peer Review Ranking: Scope

Does the topic discuss an element related to open education, open data, open access, or other open topics?

Highly Relevant

Peer Review Ranking: Clarity

Clarity of expression and flow? Does the article proceed logically?

Clear

Peer Review Ranking: Contribution

Contribution to Higher Education research and/or practice

Contributes

Peer Review Ranking: Research Assessment

If this is a research paper, is the methodology appropriate?

Highly Appropriate

Peer Review Ranking: Research Assessment

If this is a research paper, is the methodology appropriate? Does the article contribute knowledge or practical examples that will inform/improve others' practice or education?

Sound

Overall Evaluation

0- Neutral