Open Peer Review

Reviewer: Denis Shannon

Recommendation: Accept Submission

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?

I think this piece fits the scope for JOERHE. The piece discusses the concept of upgrading, which is an additional way to increase equity in higher education. The inclusion of the syllabi for the courses the author mentions in the article is great, and makes it easier for others to adapt the methods discussed in the piece into their own courses.

Organization

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

Yes, the column proceeds logically. It was easy to follow and flowed well.

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 conclusions the author makes appear to be sound: changing the way assignments are graded (or not graded) has changed the way students engage with their assignments. The article focuses on two cases, and doesn't jump to any conclusions that are not supported by what the author experienced in their courses.

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.

I don't think there are any issues with expression or flow. The tone of the piece is less formal than would be expected in most journal articles, but for the Innovative Practices section of the Journal, which I understand this piece is planned to appear in, I think the tone is appropriate and will encourage others to try and adapt the materials to their courses.

Application:

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

Yes, it does.

What are the stronger points/qualities of the article?

The article is straightforward, clear, and provides plenty of material for people who may be interested in adapting what they have learned to their own courses.

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

The article focuses on two case studies with no formal control, so it is not as authoritative as a study that used a more robust scientific approach, but I don't think that is an issue for the Innovative Practices section of JOERHE.

Peer Review Ranking: Scope

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

Relevant

Peer Review Ranking: Clarity

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

Very Clear

Peer Review Ranking: Contribution

Contribution to Higher Education research and/or practice

Contributes

Peer Review Ranking: Research Assessment

Are the conclusions sound and factually accurate? Does the column contribute knowledge or practical examples that will inform/improve others' practice or education?

Sound

Overall Evaluation

2- Accept