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>> You've tuned into Hubtalk, a podcast about teaching, learning and technology.

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>> Okay, welcome back to this episode of Hubtalk. Today we're going to be talking about educational resources and Open Oregon and with us today is Amy Hopper, the coordinator for State Wide Open Education Library Services and the Open Oregon Educational Resources. Amy, welcome, thank you for joining us today.

>> Thanks so much for having me.

>> So, as we start talking about OER, could you just give us a little overview of what OER is and what all it includes.

>> Yeah, so, Open Educational Resources are just anything that you want to use in your course that has an open license or it's in the public domain. So by contrast a lot of commercial resources are end or all rights reserved copyright. But if you have that open license, then you have certain permissions of what you can do with your course materials and these are the things that instructors really like to do with their materials, so you have permission to download and save a copy, so you're never relying on a third party server when mid-terms come around, your students can download and save a copy, so it's like the opposite of a rental, they can keep it forever. You have permission to make changes, you can translate into another language, you can make an accessible version, you can remix multiple resources together and then you also have permission to share out your revised version. All of this you have permission without violating the original creator's copyright, as long as you provide attribution back to them. So it gets really exciting for faculty who like to do this kind of stuff with their course materials. And, like I said, it can be anything, it's not just textbooks, it's also, you know, your syllabus or your course shell or your videos or your modules or whatever it may be. So that's kind of like the basics of what is OER. And I will just say, like, people sometimes mix up the O and it's open, meaning openly licensed, it's not necessarily online. So these materials are available online for free or in print at low cost.

>> Okay, so that's good to know, it's not only an online or say hybrid course. Someone could be using this in a face to face course and it's just the licensing aspect.

>> Exactly.

>> Okay, that's good to know. So, tell us just a little bit about your role and your position and what Open Oregon is.

>> Yeah, so Open Oregon has been a statewide program for textbook affordability since 2015 and we are working with all 24 of Oregon's public community

colleges and universities and it's for open education and also textbook affordability of any sort. And, so, the kinds of things that I do are help faculty with grant projects, where you get funding to redesign your course using open educational resources, a lot of professional development opportunities, [inaudible] advocacy around textbook affordability policies that happens at the state level. And just kind of being an OER librarian at large, not every college and university has an OER specific librarian, so being able to fill in those gaps and help faculty answer questions and support the folks that are the librarians and instruction design roles who help with open education on campus I'm kind of their support as well.

>> How do you get into the open part of librarian work?

>> That's a good question. So I was a distance learning librarian at Portland State for 5 years before I had this position and while I was there I did a little bit of affordability work in that role, because something that happens with course packs sometimes is that students have to pay for access to those materials two times. They're paying through their tuition and fees for access to the library database and then they get charged copyright clearance when they buy the course pack. So I was helping faculty, like, go through their syllabus and see where you can link to library resources instead of paying a second time for copyright clearance. And I was in a fixed term faculty position, meaning I, you know, having to get renewed every year, it was really precarious, and, so, I was kind of like looking around at the job landscape when this position was created and that was, I later learned thanks to advocacy from the Community College Business Learning Association, also really a huge credit to Steve Smith, who wrote the position description and advocate for Lynn Betton [assumed spelling], to house the new position. So I applied for that, started in 2015 and what's interesting is that the role has grown into being a program administrator. You know, I'm like a mid-level bureaucrat now, instead of a librarian, but I also use my library degree all the time in this job, so I think it has really prepared me to do what I do.

>> That's really cool. So, why is affordability important in education?

>> That's a great question. And I think that that question is really on point right now especially. Like, this is really the right time to be asking that question, because with the pandemic students are facing a lot of new hardships and we're also – it's sort of ripped back the veil on some of the pre-existing issues that students were facing and barriers that students were facing and they've just made everything rise up to the surface. And there was a recent report from the Student Public Interest Research Group that showed that the students that were already struggling the most are having an even harder time affording their textbooks during the pandemic. So, you know, it's having that inequitable impact on the more vulnerable in our communities. But what's really exciting to me about open education is that it has this really powerful impact in terms of economics and access to education for students, like all of that is so important and it also has some really exciting potential in terms of teaching and learning

and innovation and the cool pedagogue stuff that faculty can do when you have those permissions of the open license and you can start, you know, mixing and matching and revising and inviting your students to contribute to the course materials. Like, there's – it's sort of two sides of the same coin and for me it's like really a both/and, like both of those are so compelling and so, you know, keep me so interested and, like, learning all the time in this job. So, yeah, I think that it's sort of like a both, it's like the economic piece of it and the teaching and learning piece of it and that intersection where open ed sits is a really really interesting space, in my opinion.

>> Well and just that early on you mentioned that students can download materials and, so, then they get to keep it for life, so they don't feel like they have this textbook that they have to sell back because they paid a lot of money for it and they're not losing money on selling it back, so they can keep materials, which hopefully if they're going into a program that would help their own learning process by being able to refer back to those materials and things as well.

>> Exactly. Yeah. And I will say in terms of affordability, I mean, Meredith at your bookstore is like a national leader on affordability for course materials. Like, you all are so lucky to have somebody like her really advocating for students.

>> Yeah, that's great. But another acronym that people may have heard is a Z degree, can you tell us a little bit about a Z degree and the importance of it.

>> Yeah, so the idea is Z degree is kind of short for zero textbook cost degree. So the idea is that you would get through all your degree pathway courses without having to buy a textbook. And this might be using open educational resources or free resources or library resources, right, the zero really refers to like how many dollars did you spend. And it's a strategy to really raise awareness at a college in a coordinated way, because you've got to have a lot of commitment and buy in, in order to really have students be able to enroll in the courses they need when they need them, right? Like, for something like Com 111, where it might be Speech 111, I'm not sure, you've got to have enough sections that are zero textbook costs offered each term that a student that's in a Z degree program can actually, like, meet that commitment if the college is going to make it. So it's one way to really beef up an affordability initiative at a college, but there's also other strategies that can be effective, like, you know, you might decide, like, okay, a Z degree sounds really cool, but we want to focus on the highest enrollment courses. And maybe those don't add up to a full pathway, but they're going to affect the most students, right? So, there's just kind of different ways to look at it. I mean, a third way, of course, is the coalition of the willing, right, like, start with the faculty that are really enthusiastic and let them help spread the word in an organic way. So there's a lot of strategies and it kind of depends on what's going to make sense at your own college which one you're going to pursue.

>> That's really great info as well, I hadn't thought about all those different

options. Tell us some ways that faculty can find and implement OER materials.

>> The first place that I would recommend looking is if you go to openoregon.org and then click on the tab for resources, that resources page is all of the OER adoptions that I know of in Oregon at our colleges and universities. And let me tell you, we just crossed the 1,000 entries line.

>> That's really cool.

>> It's really cool, there's a lot on that page, so don't try to browse, use control F. There's a search bar at the top of the page and there's a dropdown menu where you can also search by discipline, there's a checkbox where you can line up to courses with ancillaries. And I really have to give credit to Tamara Marnel [assumed spelling], she was a librarian at PCC and COCC and now she's with the Orbis Cascade Alliance and she has incredible coding skills and she's responsible for making all the functionality on that page. So, it's just really helpful to know what is being used at your own college and at the college down the road. People can opt in to have their name and email address associated with their course, which means they have opted in for you to reach out and say, "Hey, are you still using this, how did it go, can you share your test bank with me?" Right, like it's a sort of community building place on that page. So that's really the first place that I would recommend the faculty look, but there's also a couple other really nicely repositories. The Open Textbook Library is – it's what it sounds like, it's really for textbooks, but have open licenses, which is like a very sort of nice clean place to search. And then if you're looking for non-textbook OER, there's another database called OER Commons. And my only caveat with that one is that it's got a lot of K-12 content, so you should use the dropdown menu when you get to that search so that you're not distracted by a lot of K-12, like, irrelevant materials, you can limit just to community college and lower division and do your search, like, in the first place and then your filtering in advance.

>> Okay, that's great. So, Open Oregon crushing that 1,000 mark and having that searchability of what other community colleges in Oregon doing is huge I would think and universities as well.

>> Yeah and it's a totally unique list that doesn't exist anywhere else, it's so cool. And the whole idea came from a group of librarians. It actually, like, really early on it started somebody suggested, like, "Oh, can you make a guide to available OER by discipline?" And this group of librarians was like, "Actually there are a lot of guides out there, what we really need to know is this unique thing, like, who's using what in Oregon?" And that was just such a good insight and it's grown into such a valuable resource. So I'm really excited about that 1,000 entries.

>> Well, yeah and plus it would just provide a great way of networking with other professionals at community colleges to share ideas even beyond the OER material of if I'm teaching, like, first year experience, finding others at other schools as well.

>> Exactly, exactly.

>> If a faculty member is interested, how would they go about developing OER material and then sharing that with others, what's that process in a nutshell?

>> So that's a good question, yeah. There is going to be a new call for grant proposals and the reason that I'm sort of pivoting to this is that it's a lot of work to redesign your course, right? And when you change your course materials you've got to do a course redesign. A lot of times you can adopt existing OER as is, but like you're saying, if you want to create something, that's even more work. So it's really nice to get some compensation to support the time and effort that you're putting in. So I would say, keep an eye out on the Open Oregon website for that call for proposals. And then in terms of sharing, there's a link to a forum on the top of the Open Oregon resources page where you can submit the OER that you decided to use or create. You can talk to your colleagues, you can present at conferences, you can reach out within your discipline, you know, any kind of way that you want to spread the word about what you're using and also if you're in the grant program then I'm also going to be helping, you know, share out what's been created through that program.

>> Okay, that's great. That's a great segue then into, what are some of the professional development opportunities through Open Oregon? So you mentioned the grant funding, which is huge to compensate for a course redesign, what else is out there for faculty?

>> So in terms of professional development we do review workshops, where faculty have an opportunity to be paid a stipend to write a review of open educational resources that they might adopt and we'll be doing more virtual workshops in the fall, so that's something to look out for. Every other year we have a statewide symposium. This year's was virtually on May 14th, but there's a lot of asynchronous content that's still available for folks that want to check out what's happening around the state. So there's sort of like a rolling professional development opportunity and that's all on the calendar page of the Oakland Oregon website.

>> Great, so it sounds like there's, I mean, a lot of opportunities, like you said, throughout the year. If people want to get in touch with you I'm assuming they can go to Open Oregon and reach out and ask you questions directly.

>> Oh, definitely, yeah, there's a contact link there and that goes to my email and people are also welcome to email me if you want to post my email on the podcast page or whatever it is. Yeah.

>> Okay.

>> Open Oregon is also on Twitter, but it's Open underscore Oregon and there's another Open Oregon that's, like, kind of mad at me for having a name that's similar to theirs. So, don't forget the underscore.

>> Thanks, Amy, for joining us. This has been really enlightening, just about

all the opportunities that are out there and how faculty can get involved. And is there anything else that you'd like to add just in closing?

>> Oh, thanks so much for having me, it's nice to, you know, get a little bit of Chemeketa, even though I haven't been able to come visit for over a year.

>> And hopefully we can have you back again sometime to talk more about specific opportunities for the professional development that's coming up and we can help advertise that as well, so thank you.

>> Yeah, thank you.

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