Book Review: Best Practices in Designing Courses with Open Educational Resources

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Abstract

Ron Stafford reviews *Best Practices in Designing Courses with Open Educational Resources*, written by Olena Zhadko and Susan Ko.

Keywords

OER, HigherEd, Revolution

Best Practices in Designing Courses with Open Educational Resources (eBook)

Olena Zhadko and Susan Ko
Publisher: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group Date of Publication: 2020 Place of Publication: New York
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Have you ever wondered if the cost of textbooks is financially crippling students? Have you thought about radically upending your instruction and moving to OERs (Open Educational Resources)? I bet you think this is not the time to alter courses. Especially with Covid-19 shifting the higher education paradigm? WRONG! This is the time, and using Best Practices in Designing Course with Open Educational Resources to serve as your guidebook, you cannot go wrong.

The beauty of Zhadko and Ko's book is its approachability. Most monographs on OERs start with a lengthy academic discussion on the foundations of the OER revolution. Not this one; the authors supply an introduction of the OER movement, how to find OERs, and move into practical applications. The authors organize materials logically, walking the reader through the steps needed to plan, implement, and sustain OER initiatives for individual classes or an entire school. The authors take great care to explain each step of the process, beginning with a high-level view and zooming in to the details needed to make the process successful. Approaching the material in this manner is one of the most successful aspects of the book. The authors were wise to make each part of the book a self-sustaining unit. Each part serves as a way-station on the journey to OER adoption. The structure allows a novice to

learn what OERs are and how to find them quickly. A faculty member who has written or previously

selected OERs can jump directly to the section on course design and teaching with OERs; administrators

can easily reference the sections on scaling up and sustainability to gain knowledge.

The varied entry points, approachable text, and real-world examples make this book accessible

to any educator interested in moving one course or an entire curriculum to OERs. Wisely, the authors'

inclusion of advice and encouragement from practicing educators strengthen the book. These kernels of

wisdom serve as entrance points, allowing anyone to interact with the text and pull out needed

information and encouragement. However, if a reader struggles with an idea or concept, notes within

the text or endnotes will point to the appropriate reference material. Instead of being a weighty

monograph on OER, the book is an approachable guidebook. It easily allows readers to quickly find the

information they need and begin their journey towards OER adoption.

This book is necessary for anyone who is thinking about moving their courses to OERs. It lays a

clear and concise roadmap to follow and provides a shot in the arm when you feel like you cannot do it.

Allow this book to be your guide, and you and your students will find success.

Ron Stafford, Head Librarian, Northeastern Technical College. OER guru, and educator who just happens to work in a library.