Instructional Resilience: Leveraging an OER Initiative to Support Instruction in the Era of Covid–19

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The OLOR (Online Learning Object Repository)

- Space for digital learning objects from across Library departments
- Prioritization of discoverability, findability, and proper attribution of objects to their creators
- Need for analytics of access and use of materials
- Open Access
- Focused collection development policy
Key Stakeholders

Digital Initiatives
- Built the web-environment
- Implemented key features

Subject Librarians
- Directly engage in instruction
- Content experts

Campus Collaborators
- Academic Support Units (ASUs) (e.g. WCC, CEL, SSO)
- Faculty members

Images: pixabay.com; pxhere.com
**Instructional Context During Covid-19 at UWaterloo**

- Most courses entirely online (some exceptions for labs) since March 2020
- Asynchronous instruction identified as a particular area to support
- Existing asynchronous resources (Library research guides) have increased usage by 8.6% during the pandemic, compared to the previous two years.*

*Based on the averaged page views of the 100 most-used research guides, for the months of March to October.
Accelerated Timeline

§ Originally conceived as a multi-year project

§ In response to the pandemic, plan shifted to launch in beta prior to the start of the 2020/2021 academic year

§ **May 2020**: Initially populated with content

§ **June 15, 2020**: Announced as live in beta

§ **September 2020**: Started advertising to faculty and other campus stakeholders

§ **November 2020**: New filter features added to enhance Browse functionality
OLOR Implementation Strategy

§ Internal Considerations
  § Content Development
  § Flexible Collection Policy

§ External Considerations
  § For students: OER for Information Literacy
  § For faculty and campus partners: Campus Presence

IMAGE CREDIT: Wannapik.com
Internal: Content Development

**Challenge:** New virtual instructional environment

**Solution:** New team-based content development process

**Success:** The OLOR encouraged instructor buy-in

- The OLOR provided a tangible output for content
- The OLOR provided a centralized means of discovering and sharing peer-created material

**IMAGE CREDIT:** pixabay.com
Internal: Flexible Collection Policy

**Challenge:** Continuous access to instructional material

**Solution:** The OLOR offered flexible hosting options

**Success:** The collection policy for the OLOR was broadened to include narrowly focused content

§ The OLOR provided a critical librarian-controlled virtual space to support the range of student and instructor access preferences

IMAGE CREDIT: thenounproject.com
External: OER for Information Literacy

Challenge: Academic libraries continue to work on ways to teach information literacy

Solution: Provide asynchronous learning modules to extend learning beyond the classroom

Success: The OLOR serves as a central virtual location for students to discover and use OER on information literacy

IMAGE CREDIT: pxhere.com
External: Campus Presence

**Challenge:** In a virtual world, the Library presence on campus is diminished

**Solution:** Create a robust online presence that conveys areas of Library expertise

**Success:** The OLOR serves as the Library’s virtual campus presence for instructional material to be shared with instructors and other campus collaborators

IMAGE CREDIT: pxhere.com
Next Steps for the OLOR

- Enhance usability (UX testing)
- Advertise (locally and beyond)
- Continue building content
Questions

https://www.flickr.com/photos/86979666@N00/7623744452  
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Explore the OLOR!

https://lib.uwaterloo.ca/online_learning/

Welcome to our Online Learning Object Repository. This resource is still in development. Tell us what you think.

Learning resource type
- Interactive course (23)
- Infographic (18)
- Handout (8)
- Presentation slides (5)

Audience
- Undergraduate (38)
- Faculty (26)
- Graduate (23)
- Staff (20)

Subject
- Research (15)
- Searching (12)
- Databases (11)
- Open educational resources (11)

Critical Appraisal in STEM
Infographic detailing the RADAR framework for evaluating sources. See also the interactive module on RADAR.

Learning resource type: Infographic
Audience: Undergraduate
Subject: Evaluation, STEM, Reading
Author: Kathy Szigeti, Tom Harding, Jessica Bloom

Research and the Library: Math Communication Courses
Integrated lessons for the Math Communication Courses, focused on where to find information, how to evaluate information, and how to search for information.

Learning resource type: Interactive course