

Panel Discussion: Challenges of Open Educational Resources

Panelists

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Open Education Resources (OERs) are defined as “*technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes*”. They are typically made freely available over the Web or the Internet. Their principal use is by teachers and educational institutions to support course development, but they can also be used directly by students. Open Educational Resources include learning objects such as lecture material, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabi, curricula and teachers' guides.” UNESCO (2002, paragraph 3)

Johnstone (2005) puts OERs into three categories:

1. Learning resources – courseware, content modules, learning objects, learner-support and assessment tools, online learning communities
2. Resources to support teachers – tools for teachers and support materials to enable them to create, adapt, and use OER, as well as training materials for teachers and other teaching tools
3. Resources to assure the quality of education and educational practices

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Today, OERs are becoming increasingly popular. Many initiatives have been taken to assure that the OER movement will continue. However, there are many challenges facing OERs.

The purpose of this panel is to create a dialog on several challenges that face OERs. These challenges are:

- OER Sustainability
- OER Access
- OER Support
- Instructional Design of OER
- Assessment of OER

The discussion will conclude with remarks about future directions of OERs. The audience will be invited to participate in discussion.

References

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Biographies

Alex Koohang is Professor of Information Technology and Chair of the Division of Information Technology at Macon State College, Macon, Georgia, USA. Dr. Koohang has published and presented numerous scholarly articles and monographs. He serves as the Editor-in-Chief of *the Interdisciplinary Journal of Knowledge and Learning Objects*. He is also the senior editor of *Interdisciplinary Journal of Information, Knowledge & Management*. Dr. Koohang is a Fellow at the Informing Science Institute. He has won a number of awards in recognition of his dedicated commitment to service, research, and leadership in the field of Information Technology. Dr. Koohang's current research interests are in the areas of learning objects, open education, open access, open source, e-learning, and knowledge management.

Tom Seymour is a professor and North Dakota Senator in the Business Information Technology Department at Minot State University, Minot, North Dakota, USA. Dr. Seymour has extensive experience with distance education programs. He is currently a Peer Reviewer for online programs with the NCA Higher Learning Commission based in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Seymour's current research interests are in the areas of e-business, open education, open access, open source, e-learning, and knowledge management.

Robert Joseph Skovira is a Professor of Computer Information Systems in the Department of Computer and Information Systems at Robert Morris University, Moon Twp. PA 15108. He teaches undergraduate and graduate (MS) courses including Introduction to Java Programming, Advanced Java Programming, Secure Programming, Global, Economic, Social, and Ethical Issues of Computing, Decision Support Systems, Information Design, and Ethical and Legal Issues of Technology. In the Doctor of Science of Information Systems and Communications program, he teaches Ethnography of Information Systems.

Gary J. DeLorenzo is an Assistant Professor at California University of Pennsylvania in the Math and Computer Science Department. He is responsible for developing major tracks and curriculum for the Computer Information Systems program, teaching information technology courses, and collaborating with colleagues on research and curriculum accreditation. Dr. DeLorenzo's research interests include open access/open source, global impact of business educa-

tion and computer information technology, ethnographic and cultural impact of information systems, and data warehousing. He has over 30 years in manufacturing and banking in various information technology positions such as manager, senior systems analyst, technical consultant, programmer and auditor.