

[Annual Report 2011 -2012]

[UNESCO/COL Chair in Open Educational Resources]

[Rory McGreal]



UNITWIN/UNESCO/COL Chairs Programme Progress report

Period of activity: April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012

Title of the UNESCO/COL Chair or Network: UNESCO/COL Chair in OER

Institution/Country Athabasca University, CANADA

Report established by: Rory McGreal

Function / Title: Chairholder & Associate VP Research

To be sent by electronic mail to both: unitwin@unesco.org and i.nichanian@unesco.org

or to UNESCO, Division of Higher Education
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Summary

(Not exceeding 300 words, outcomes/results/impact)

I. Address and Contact

	Address of the Host Institution	Address of the Chairholder
Name	Rory McGreal	Rory McGreal
Function/Title	Associate VP Research	UNESCO/COL Chair in OER
University/Institution	Athabasca University	<i>Information is the same</i>
Faculty/Department/Centre	Research Centre Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute	
Street	Athabasca University	
Postal Code	1 University Drive T9S 3A3	
City	Athabasca University	
Province	Alberta	
Country	CANADA	
Phone	+1 780 9949579	
Fax	Fx:+17806756822	
E-mail address of the Chairholder or its representative	rory@athabascau.ca	
Website of UNESCO/COL Chair or UNITWIN Network	http://unescochair.athabascau.ca	

II. Available resources

For each type of resource placed at the disposal of the Chair/Network, please specify its source (cf. Annex 1)

1. Human resources

- Status of the Chair in the organizational structure of the Institution (number of posts contributing to the Chair) **10**
- Number of academic staff (full time and part time), full professors, researchers, lecturers Profs: 4 Assoc. Profs: 2; Assistant Profs: 2
- Number of visiting staff: **1**
- If there are other staff or groups contributing to the Chair or Network, please indicate their number and status (postgraduate students, advisors, consultants, experts, NGOs, etc) **Consultants: 2; Postgrad: 1**
- Number of administrative staff: **4**

2. Other resources

Financial contributions: April 1, 2011 to March 31 2012

Athabasca University contribution

Chair (\$100K /yr) portion of salary:	\$ 100 000
Support staff & costs (\$50 K X 2 @ 10% X 1 yr.)	\$ 10 000
Participating faculty (10% @ \$120K X 5 X1 yr.)	\$ 60 000

External funding

Hewlett Foundation new grant for mapping of OER	\$ 40 000
Open Education Foundation (OEF) in kind contribution of Director	\$ 5 000
Social Sciences and Humanities Council Insight Grant	\$ 22 000
TOTAL	\$ 237 000

Material resources (indicate their nature and use):

Server space for housing OER repository and websites	est.	\$ 2 000
Computers for staff and faculty	est.	\$ 1 000

Space placed at the disposal of the Chair or Network

One office for the Chair and desks for staff and faculty	est.	\$ 12 000
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To facilitate easy handling of data, for each type of resources listed above, please provide the amount whenever available or an estimate sum in US Dollars or Euros.

III. Activities

(Please, provide short information for each activity)

1. Academic activities

Education (leading to certification)

As part of the Chair priorities identified by participants in a founding meeting in New York, the Chair has established a functional OER Knowledge Cloud that can be used to support the OER PhD initiative being led by the Dutch Chair. The Cloud now has more than 300 searchable scholarly articles and reports.

As part of the OER Knowledge Cloud initiative, an edited book on OER was commissioned and 27 chapters have been submitted and reviewed. It is now being prepared for publication by AUPress.

A MOOC was delivered by UNESCO partners and others on the topic of Change. See:

<http://change.mooc.ca/>

- Duration: six months
- Target groups: instructors; professionals + 140 participants
- Geographical: Worldwide

A graduate level online Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Open Education has been developed for delivery this Fall

- 4 months duration
- Target groups: graduate students; professionals
- Geographical coverage for partners and participants: worldwide

The UNESCO/COL Chair website and blog are functioning:

<http://unescochair.athabascau.ca> as is the open courseware website"

<http://ocw.athabascau.ca>

Training (short term)

Open Access Week Online Seminar: Fun and Fear in Open Spaces

- Duration: one week
- Target groups: instructors; professionals (cf. Annex 2) + 140 participants
- Geographical coverage for partners and participants: worldwide (cf. Annex 3)

Workshops:

UNISA, OER Workshops and meetings on OER, Pretoria, South Africa, March 2012 (Invited)

OER Workshop at Anton de Kom University, Paramaribo, Suriname, February, 2012 (Invited)

Academic Impressions: Bringing Mobile Learning to your Institution, Houston, TX, February, 2012 (Invited)

IASTED. 15th Intl Conference on Software Engineering. *Workshop on OER*, Dallas TX, Dec. 2011 (Invited)

Estonian Distance Education OERWorkshop, Tartu, Estonia, April, 2011 (Invited)

Workshop on Online Education: University of Tromsø/Murmansk, Tromsø, Norway May 2011. (Invited)

Estonian Distance Education Workshop, OER & DE in Canada, Tartu, Estonia, April, 2011. (Invited)

Research

The Chairholder focused on OER research and the goals of the OER Chair by studying and disseminating information both internally and across Canada information on copyright and the new copyright Bill C-32. The highlights were newspaper articles, presentations to librarians and an invited presentation to the Parliamentary committee on Bill C-32. Other research included collaborative work with the OER Foundation on OER for assessment and credit for students, in which we investigated assessment and accreditation practices, including Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) internationally.

The OER mapping exercise continues with initial contacts with partners and others.

- Title: OER mapping; assessment; accreditation; OER; Open access
- Duration: continuing
- Target groups (cf. Annex 2): administrators, instructors, professionals, policymakers
- Geographical coverage for partners and participants: world wide (cf. Annex 3)
- Intended use of results: Build the OER network

Edited book

Graf, S., Lin, F., Kinshuk, & **McGreal, R.** (Eds.). (2012). *Intelligent and adaptive learning systems: Technology enhanced support for learners and teachers*. Hershey PA: IGI Global.

Refereed articles

McGreal, R., & Chen, N.-S. (2011). AUPress: A Comparison of an Open Access University Press with Traditional Presses. *Educational Technology & Society*, 14(3), 231 - 239. Retrieved from http://www.ifets.info/journals/14_3/19.pdf

Refereed proceedings

Tan, Q., Zhang, X., Kinshuk, & **McGreal, R.** (2011). The 5R Adaptation Framework for Location-Based Mobile Learning Systems. *10th World Conference on Mobile and Context Learning (M-Learn 2011)*, October, 18-21, 2011, Beijing, China. BEST PAPER AWARD [

Reports

McGreal, R., Dron, J., & Ellerman, E. (2012). Virtual platforms at Athabasca University: International Development Research Institute.

Mackintosh, W., **McGreal, R.**, & Taylor, J. (2011). Open Education Resources (OER) for assessment and credit for students project: Towards a logic model and plan for action. Available from <http://hdl.handle.net/2149/3039>

2. Conferences/ Meetings

Invited Speaker: Conference Presentations & Workshops

Canadian

International Development Research Centre, *AU and Virtual Platforms*, Winnipeg, February, 2012
Thompson Rivers University, Workshop on OER, *OER Chairs and OERu*, Kamloops, BC, Oct 2011
Campus BC/Commonwealth of Learning Workshop on OER, *OER in Canada*. Vancouver, October 2011

International

UNISA, Workshops and meetings on OER, Pretoria, South Africa, March 2012
Lecture on Evolution/Creationism in Elearning: OER for the future, Univ. of Piraeus, Greece, March 2012
Presentation on Open Educational Resources & Mobile Learning, Univ. of Kavala, Greece, April 2012
Virtual Educa: ICTs for Learning using OER. Paramaribo, Suriname, Feb. 2012
Keynote: Intl. Conf. on ICT as a Change Agent in Higher Education, U.of Mumbai, India, Feb., 2012 [teleconf.]
Keynote: *OER and mobile learning* Intl Council for Distance Education Conference, Bali, Indonesia, Oct. 2011
Keynote: *Future of Education*. ICALT 2011, Athens, Georgia, July 2011
Panelist & speaker: 6th African Conference on ICTs for Development & Learning, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, May, 2011

Refereed Presentations

Pervasive Learning Workshop, *PERCOM, 2012*, OER for pervasive learning, Lugano, Switzerland
IADIS Mobile Learning Conference, Mobilising website at an open university, Berlin, March 2012
SALT New Learning Technologies Conference, OER and Mobile Learning, Feb. 2012
Open Education Conference. The UNESCO Chairs in OER. (with F. Mulder, S. D'Antoni), Oct. 2011
Open Ed Conf. A comparison of an Open Access Press with Traditional Presses (with N. Chen), Oct. 2011
Open Ed Conference. Assessment and accreditation of OER: An update (with W. Mackintosh), Oct. 2011
Cloud computing for Distance Education, *EDEN Conference*, Dublin, June 2011
OER in online learning, *Ed-Media*, Lisbon, June, 2011
Cloud Computing for Adult Literacy, *Canadian Network for Innovation in Education*, Hamilton, May 2011
OER and mobile learning, *OCWC Conference*, Cambridge MA. May, 2011

International Experience

Partner in ENPI-CBCMED EnviroMED-Tools Europroject led by University of Cyprus
Chair of OPAL awards committee, November 2011

International Program Committee, International Workshop on Multimedia Technologies for Distance Learning (MTDL 2011), Scottsdale, AZ, November 2011

Reference Group for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Project for the adoption, use and management of OER to enhance teaching and learning in Australia

European Foundation for Quality in E-Learning (EFQUEL) Consultative Group of the Open Educational Quality Initiative (OPAL)

Legal Entity Appointed Representative (LEAR), European Commission Directorate –General Informatics
Member of the Global Advisory Council of the Observatory of Borderless Higher Education

3. Interuniversity Exchanges/ Partnerships

Universities:

- MidRand Graduate Institute, South Africa
- Open University of the Netherlands
- Open University UK
- Universidade Federal de Goias, Brazil
- Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain
- University of Duisburg-Essen (Essen Campus)
- University of Southern Queensland

Organizations:

- OER Foundation (17 Higher Education Institutions on 5 continents)
- African Virtual University
- Association of African Universities
- Brazilian Association for Distance Education (ABED)
- Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
- DEHub, Australia
- European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU)
- International Association of Universities
- National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine
- Observatory of Borderless Higher Education
- Open Courseware Consortium (OCWC)
- Open Education Resource Foundation, New Zealand
- SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition)
- UNESCO
- UNESCO Canada
- International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)

4. Publication and multimedia materials

(Please estimate costs of publications and expected revenues from their sale)

No revenues: These are OER

Publications

McGreal, R., Dron, J., & Ellerman, E. (2012). Virtual platforms at Athabasca University: International Development Research Institute.

Mackintosh, W., McGreal, R., & Taylor, J. (2011). Open Education Resources (OER) for assessment and credit for students project: Towards a logic model and plan for action. Available from <http://hdl.handle.net/2149/3039>

See Research section for other publications

Multimedia material

Many module added as OER on the Open Courseware Organization website:

<http://ocw.athabascau.ca>

IV. Outcomes

Please describe shortly (up to 500 words) the major outcomes of the Chair/Network with special reference to their impact on the human, social, economical and cultural development at local, national, regional or international level. Whenever applicable indicate the impact of activities on promoting gender equality, rural development, attaining the Millennium Development Goals, Education For All and Sustainable development etc. We would like also to receive more detailed information on the activities of the Chair or Network at national level for e.g. implication of the Chair/Network in national Policies.

Specific outcomes already completed institutionally include the operationalisation of a standards-based learning object repository using an open source content management system – Alfresco. This XML repository can house OER in an open format for output to any kind of application or device. It has been populated by more than 600 courses in which an increasing number of OER are housed. Institutionally, the Chair has set up the OER Knowledge Cloud website and the OCW site listing OER created/adapted at Athabasca University. Nationally, I was an invited speaker at workshops at Thompson Rivers University, BCcampus and an ICDE workshop in November. Internationally, I have been an invited speaker to workshops in the USA, South America, Europe, India and South Africa . We have also re-established the UNESCO network for OER and worked closely with international partners including the OER Foundation on building the OER university initiative, where we participated as founding members: and we are continuing the process of mapping the international OER community.

3. Progress towards outcomes

This was an important year for the OER/COL Chair. The Chair has actively campaigned in the university, provincially and nationally explaining the new copyright Bill C-32 in relation to OER and its significance for universities. Internally, we have created a formal committee on copyright and OER to move the OER initiative forward at AU. Provincially, we have met with representatives of Advanced Education and Technology to promote the use of OER and support the UNESCO/COL Congress declaration.

The major impacts of Chair activity have yet to be realized. At AU, we now have committed ourselves to OER and are presently in the process of removing ourselves from a copyright collective in order to focus on OER and university-licensed materials. In the province, we have been working with the Alberta Rural Development Network, measuring the impact of their certification program and with the Department of Advanced Education and Technology supporting an etext initiative using OER. In Canada, we are involved in a Europroject (POERUP) to report on OER activity and policies across Canada. The release of the OER Knowledge Cloud was a major accomplishment that should prove fruitful. Internationally we are participating in the OER Foundation –led assessment and accreditation for students, collaborating on initiatives including submitting OER proposals to funding agencies. We also are supporting the new UNESCO OER list.

V. Forthcoming activities

(Please outline the action plan for the current biennium)

Background

This workplan for the UNESCO/COL Chair in OER focuses on maintaining the international OER Community and enabling an international OER Network. The objective is to build the capacity of institutions, particularly those in the developing countries to create, adapt, modify, localize and reuse OERs, and to conduct research into the benefits and problems associated with introducing and deploying OERs in institutions. Building on the present OER Community, the Chair will complement it with the formation of an international OER Network, essentially moving from a Community of Interest to develop a Community of Practice, recognizing the priority areas identified by UNESCO - Africa and youth, as well as the need for gender equity.

Outputs and outcomes will include sustaining the international OER Community; enabling an international OER Network; mapping OER initiatives worldwide; maintaining a significant online presence; and planning for a scholarly journal on OER for information sharing and dissemination.. The resulting map will illuminate not only the present OER landscape, but also opportunities for interaction and collaborative action. The work undertaken will include activities at the institutional, national and international levels

Institutional Capacity Building

- Train AU faculty and staff in the creation, development, adaptation and use of OERs to promote high quality learning at lower cost;
- Undertake collaborative research on OERs and priority issues, such as quality and cultural appropriateness through the Technologically Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute (TEKRI);
- Conduct research on current problems in creating and using OERs in a cost effective and efficient manner;
- Conduct and assemble scholarly research on OERs, disseminate it actively to other Canadian institutions and those in other countries via online lectures and publish research findings online in open access scholarly and popular journals.
- Initiate policies promoting OER in the university and support the initiative to oppose the Access Copyright restrictive licensing.

National Capacity Building

- Raise awareness of OER through appropriate national entities such as the Canadian Virtual University and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO;
- Promote inter-provincial collaboration in OER creation and use.

International Capacity Building

- Support interaction and information exchange in the international OER Community;
- Enable a decentralized international OER Network to promote North-South-South triangular collaboration;
- Initiate a collaborative mapping exercise of OER initiatives worldwide;
- Undertake an awareness raising discussion across the entire network of UNESCO/COL Chairs and UNITWIN Networks;
- Conduct research on the use of OER and related issues, such as access;
- Collaboratively develop or use post-secondary programs as OER, with partners in the South and in fields relevant to the concerns of the South;
- Maintain an online presence, enabling collaboration and information sharing.

Goals

Specific goals include:

- Enable the formation of an international OER Network of institutions and organizations;
- Collaboratively develop a map of the landscape of OER initiatives worldwide;
- Support the international OER Network with a blog and wiki;

- Develop and support a network of OER researchers through online seminars and face to face meetings;
- Train at least 100 OER cadres in developing countries in the coming year (using OER), who will become empowered and capable of instructing others online;
- Undertake and disseminate research on OER;
- Provide consultancy and advisory services.

VI. Development prospects

Action aimed at obtaining a stable permanent status of the Chair/Network in the structure of the Institution

Short and medium term:

Raise the profile of the UNESCO/COL Chair and include relevant institutional partners

Long term:

Secure sustainable funding for the Technology Enhanced Knowledge Institute (TEKRI) with the OER Chair as an integral component.

Expanding activities: Include interdisciplinary institutional partners.

Broadening partnerships: Widen the scope of OER activity to include non-TEKRI researchers in Nursing, Computer Science, the Arts and Social Sciences.

Mobilization of resources: Include partners in proposals to funding agencies and make effective use of the CFI equipment that has been awarded.

