

# Office of Open Learning Annual Report to the Academic Policy Committee

## 1. Executive Summary

### A. Introduction

The Office of Open Learning (OOL) provides leadership in the design, development and delivery of high-quality online, open, and hybrid learning opportunities for all learners. OOL fosters a teaching and learning environment that provides the tools and policies necessary to empower educators and learners to achieve their aspirations for innovation, excellence, impact, and openness. Underpinned by scholarly practice, we advocate for, explore, and implement the emerging technologies our institution needs to be on the leading edge of educational innovation.

The mandate of the Office of Open Learning is to:

- Provide support and professional development for instructors of online, open, and hybrid learning and teaching through formal and informal development opportunities
- Use an iterative instructional design process underpinned by scholarship, accepted quality standards, and a commitment to accessibility and openness in all learning designs
- Work collaboratively with faculty and students to design, develop, deliver, evaluate and iterate high-quality, engaging, media-rich learning environments that respect the diverse disciplinary cultures and contexts of the University's faculty and students
- Provide rapid eLearning multimedia production services, including emerging techniques such as 360-degree video, immersive learning environments, simulations, augmented and virtual reality, and custom learning objects
- Provide a comfortable, safe and supportive environment in which faculty can explore innovations in technology, pedagogy and curriculum
- Provide faculty and student support for adoption and implementation of emerging educational technologies
- Obtain funding for research and development of online and open learning environments
- Provide project management of online teaching and learning grants and projects
- Assist faculties and departments to design, develop, and increase enrolment in innovative, high-quality online, hybrid, and open courses and programs
- Support faculty in scholarly teaching practice, educational research, and embedding high impact practices in online, hybrid and open courses
- Champion the adoption, adaptation, and development of Open Educational Resources (OERs), including open access texts, simulations, and other learning tools
- Continuously evaluate the needs of online and hybrid learners and educators for highly reliable, usable, and accessible educational technologies, and collaborate with appropriate campus partners to meet those needs
- Expand the boundaries of teaching and learning practice, including emerging educational technologies, pedagogies, and credentialing practices, and provide evidence-based consultation and advice to faculty on their adoption
- Enhance the University of Windsor and OOL's profiles as provincial, national, and global leaders in the design and delivery of online education, the Scholarship of Online and Open Teaching and Learning (SoOOL), and open educational practices

### B. Goals and Objectives of Reporting Year

#### 1. *Provide an exceptional undergraduate experience:*

- a) Continue to partner with faculty members, departments, faculties, and central units to develop successful funding proposals for development and research in online and open teaching and learning
- b) Successfully complete the current 2-year round of eCampus projects
- c) Continue to partner with faculties, departments, and individual faculty members to expand online and hybrid course and program offerings, and enrolments to meet SEM Plan and SMA2 targets
- d) Champion the adoption, adaptation, and development of Open Educational Resources (OERs), including open textbooks, and updating existing UWindsor OERs to platforms outside the LMS
- e) Secure commitment to an appropriate permanent space for OOL that is fit for purpose and serves the campus community's needs for rapid eLearning development, including a rapid eLearning lab/ design makerspace

- f) Continue to develop Students as Collaborators in online, open, and hybrid learning programs to expand student awareness of options and to support teaching and learning innovation
  - g) Complete transition of OOL budget to support more strategic needs of the unit and the University community, including appropriate staffing and funding for innovative technologies
  - h) Reintroduce the OOL Strategic Development Grants with a focus on open educational resources
  - i) Pilot and evaluate several educational technologies including Riipen, Labster, CanCred Open Digital Badges, Scalar digital publishing tool for open texts and open educational resources
  - j) Continue to support and embed core educational technologies, including Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Echo360 cloud based student engagement platform, and WordPress ePortfolios
  - k) Begin implementation of OOL-CTL joint external review recommendations
  - l) Assist UWinsite team in the design and implementation of online training and support tools for the new ERP
2. ***Pursue strengths in research and graduate education:***
    - a) Develop a regional Symposium on Online and Open Teaching and Learning in partnership with local colleges
  3. ***Recruit and retain the best faculty and staff:***
    - a) Expand the range of options for faculty to engage in and learn about online and open learning, and emerging educational technologies and pedagogies, including launching non-credit Certificate in Online and Open Learning
  4. ***Engage and build the Windsor and Essex County community through partnerships:***
    - a) Develop a regional Symposium on Online and Open Teaching and Learning in partnership with local colleges
  5. ***Promote international engagement:***
    - a) Obtain institutional membership in the International Consortium of Distance Educators (ICDE) and work towards membership in OERu

### **C. Successes**

- Successfully partnered with faculty from across campus and external partners to complete 6 eCampusOntario-funded projects developing online programs and an open text book worth **\$2,572,733** in funding
- At least 51 new online courses (11 in partnership with St Clair College through eCampus Funding) and 6 new online programs in development
- In partnership with faculty, completed 4 eCampus funded research and innovation projects worth **\$145,283**
- Partnered with Faculty of Science to run two limited eCampus Technology Sandbox pilot projects with Riipen (experiential learning facilitators) and Labster (high fidelity virtual labs) and explore digital badging with CanCred
- **Open textbooks:** One open textbook in development with student partners (Business), one in development in Engineering; three open textbook adoptions in Science, including one adaptation (funded by eCampus Ontario); Estimated total amount saved by students on textbook purchases = \$350,000
- Supported Faculty of Education in design and development of online M.Ed. and online Technology Education programs and courses
- Expanded ePortfolio use, including all new Education and Nursing students, with over 3,500 ePortfolios (75% increase over 2016-17)
- Inaugural *Alan Wright Award for Exemplary Online and Technology-enhanced Teaching* awarded
- Provided 1427 consultations (25% increase over 2016-17) for a total of 2044 consultation hours (30% increase over 2016-17)
- Launched non-credit Certificate of Online and Open Education – expecting 5 graduates in first offering
- Offered 45 workshops and course design sprints/institutes
- **Student Collaborators:** OOL sponsored projects directly employed 66 student collaborators, a further 93 either volunteered or received small stipends for their work, and 550 students contributed to OOL supported research projects.
- 22 local, national and international conference and invited presentations and conference workshops
- Created over 400 video and other custom learning objects
- 217 online courses listed in eCampus Ontario portal (including 77 AQ and 6 IB Certificate courses through CEPE)
- **13,997 enrollments** in online and hybrid courses in 2016/17 (**6,801** unique students taking at least one online course)

- OOL was awarded the inaugural provincial best in show award for commitment to open practices at the *Technology Enabled Symposium and Showcase* in Toronto
- OOL Director received *2017 Leadership Award – Team* at the annual Employee Recognition Awards

#### D. Challenges

1. Moving office spaces is highly disruptive to work; current space still does not have signage or adequate security
2. Lack of access to a suitable lab/studio space for efficient and effective rapid eLearning development for online, hybrid, technology-enhanced, and open access courses places us behind most universities in Ontario; Windsor was the first university in the country to build a lightboard but has been unable to secure a location to permanently set it up and make it easy for faculty to use
3. Staffing: Lack of capacity in key skill areas (graphic/media design, web-development, 3D media) and reliance on short-term contract hires and student labour to develop complex, high-profile projects
4. Access to data on courses and programs remains challenging, but will hopefully be addressed with improved access in the new UWinsiteStudent.
5. Ongoing lack of technical support for faculty teaching online or hybrid classes out of hours
6. Lack of dedicated academic and technical support for online students, including out of hours
7. Lack of full programs in online mode makes marketing difficult
8. Inconsistent quality and difficulty in finding publically available online information about courses and programs, including up to date credit transfer data being provided to OnCAT
9. Ongoing low capacity of wireless internet access in many parts of the campus (especially for hybrid or technology-enhanced courses), especially in large classes
10. Critical lack of diversity in teaching spaces, especially for active and hybrid teaching and learning
11. Addressing areas of overlap in mandate and functions with other campus units, including the Centre for Teaching and Learning, as noted in the external review and stakeholder engagements
12. Lack of recognition (including in the RTP process) for adopting, adapting, or creating open educational resources

## 2. Report

### A. Area's Goals and Objectives and the University's Strategic Plan

#### 1. ***Provide an exceptional undergraduate experience:***

- a) *Continue to partner with faculty members, departments, faculties, and central units to develop successful funding proposals for development and research in online and open teaching and learning*
  - OOL spearheaded 6 successful 2-year grant applications to eCampus Ontario for online course and program development and open educational resources totaling \$2,752,733 (including a collaborative grant with Western University worth \$802,120 in total). These grants are developing 4 new fully online programs and one open textbook. OOL also worked with faculty to complete an additional \$145,283 in Research and Innovation grants from eCampus Ontario for 5 projects, one of which developed hundreds of video based math learning objects, and another involved adapting an existing open textbook for two large astronomy courses, including developing 1,500 practice questions and problems to supplement the text.
- b) *Successfully complete the current 2-year round of eCampus projects*
  - These projects have been developed to at least a minimum viable product and continue to be refined as the courses and resources are piloted and adjusted.
  - Formal processes for approval and launch of the new programs are underway with most courses piloting starting in Fall 2018
  - As an example of the value of these grants, one of the funded projects (creating an open textbook in Pension Finance), has led to numerous invitations to present the work nationally and internationally, and an ongoing research project with the lead faculty member and one of the undergraduates involved. It has also resulted in the development of an openly licenced textbook (launching publicly Winter 2019) with 8 undergraduate students as co-authors.
  - Another grant led to the development of a framework for identifying courses where support may improve retention and outcomes for students, and a model of the resources required to achieve

this. The model is being further tested in fall 2018. With this project UWindsor also became the first in Canada and the second globally to pilot online peer-led Supplemental Instruction.

- c) *Continue to partner with faculties, departments, and individual faculty members to expand online and hybrid course and program offerings, and enrolments to meet SEM Plan and SMA2 targets*
  - 217 online courses listed in eCampus Ontario portal (including 77 AQ and 6 IB Certificate courses); 40 new or redesigned online courses will launch in 2018-19
  - 13,997 enrollments in online and hybrid courses in 2016/17 (6,801 unique students taking at least one online course)
  - eCampus Ontario funding led to the development of 4 new or redesigned online programs and two external partnerships (Western University and St Clair College)
  - Supported development of two new online programs in Education (launching fall 2018)
- d) *Champion the adoption, adaptation, and development of Open Educational Resources (OERs), including open textbooks, and updating existing UWindsor OERs to platforms outside the LMS*
  - Using open textbooks and OERs is a significant recruitment tool for courses and programs
  - At least 4 UWindsor courses adopted or adapted open textbooks, or replaced textbooks with Open Educational Resources (OERs) with the assistance of OOL and funding from eCampus Ontario. It is estimated that the move to open resources in these courses saves students approximately \$350,000 in textbook costs annually. Three additional courses considering or developing open textbooks
  - Our St Clair College partners (eCampus grant) mostly chose to develop or adopt OERs in the 11 courses we co-developed
  - OOL was awarded the inaugural provincial best in show award for commitment to open practices at the *Technology Enabled Symposium and Showcase* in Toronto
- e) *Secure commitment to an appropriate permanent space for OOL that is fit for purpose and serves the campus community's needs for rapid eLearning development, including a rapid eLearning lab/ design makerspace*
  - The search for a suitable space to develop elearning content is ongoing; lack of access to a suitable space is a continued significant impediment to our work.
- f) *Continue to develop Student Partners in online, open, and hybrid learning programs to expand student awareness of options and to support teaching and learning innovation*
  - Student collaborators are a critical component of the success of OOL's projects.
  - OOL sponsored projects directly employed 66 student collaborators (including one graduate and one undergraduate intern) a further 93 either volunteered or received small stipends for their work, and 550 students contributed to OOL supported research projects.
  - These opportunities represent significant experiential learning opportunities for students
  - OOL staff presented at the international *Students as Partners Institute* on some of our projects.
- g) *Complete transition of OOL budget to support more strategic needs of the unit and the University community, including appropriate staffing and funding for innovative technologies*
  - This activity is mostly complete, but will take approximately 2 years to fully implement. Budget has already been transferred to support other forms of programming from primarily supporting course delivery to a focus on development, technical and pedagogical support, and technology
- h) *Reintroduce the OOL Strategic Development Grants with a focus on open educational resources*
  - The decision was made to completely revise the process and focus of the previous grants to better serve the strategic needs of the institution. This work is ongoing, especially in light of changes to the Provincial government priorities and changes to internal leadership within UWindsor
  - OOL supported several projects on campus without additional funding, including several projects in FAHSS and Science creating educational multimedia, and has committed in-kind support to research projects, events, and conferences organised by students and faculty.
- i) *Pilot and evaluate several educational technologies including Riipen, Labster, CanCred Open Digital Badges, Scalar digital publishing tool for open texts and open educational resources*

- Progress with these projects has been slow and each is in pilot phase. Labster was tested out in two classes in Fall 2017 and Winter 2018 with students reporting high satisfaction; further piloting is planned for Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 semesters
- One Riipen project was created as a test, but ultimately was not offered; discussions with the Faculty of Science are ongoing and additional funding has been received to extend the pilot. The Psychology department also plans to use Riipen in their new online Industrial and Organisational Psychology graduate diploma.
- CanCred Open Digital Badges infrastructure was set up and OOL continues to explore the best ways to implement digital badges as part of a provincial working group on the topic
- Scalar digital publishing and Pressbooks instances were set up and new open textbooks are being created in these platforms.

- j) *Continue to support and embed core educational technologies, including Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Echo360 cloud based student engagement platform, and WordPress ePortfolios*
- Echo360 has been phased out, in part due to the lack of wireless capacity on campus hampering uptake
  - Blackboard Collaborate Ultra use continues to grow and OOL primarily supports this tool
  - WordPress ePortfolios continue to grow in popularity across a number of programs, with 3,500 portfolios now hosted on the multisite instance (a 75% increase over 2016-17). OOL is looking to upgrade the current hosting service to provide more robust access to this important tool
  - OOL has begun exploration of the Domain of One's Own (DoOO) approach to digital presence and has a subscription to Reclaim Hosting, the world's first and largest DoOO provider
  - OOL is exploring Zoom hybrid web and video conferencing to service the needs of the Physics department for their new online programming shared with York and Trent universities
- k) *Begin implementation of OOL-CTL joint external review recommendations*
- This work is ongoing. OOL and CTL have begun regular meetings and the directors are working with an external consultant to assist in the process
- l) *Assist UWinsite team in the design and implementation of online training and support tools for the new ERP*
- OOL prepared the initial suite of online videos to support the campus learning how to use the new UWinsite Financial System, with additional videos requested. These videos are all openly licenced and hosted on YouTube

## 2. ***Pursue strengths in research and graduate education:***

- a) *Develop a regional Symposium on Online and Open Teaching and Learning in partnership with local colleges*
- The first *Open Education Summit* was launched as a partnership between UWindsor, St Clair College, and Lambton College. The one-day summit was held in Windsor on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2018 with a follow-up eCampus Ontario Extend event facilitated at Lambton College on 8<sup>th</sup> May.
  - The event was attended by over 100 faculty, staff, and students from the three institutions (including both St Clair College and Lambton College Presidents and senior management), plus external representatives from the Windsor-Essex public school board, Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, and Humber College.
  - The program included keynotes from Dr. Rajiv Jhangiani (Special Advisor to the Provost on Open Education and a Psychology Professor at Kwantlen Polytechnic University) and Dr. Alan Wright, workshops, a panel discussion on open education, and several concurrent presentations.

## 3. ***Recruit and retain the best faculty and staff:***

- a) *Expand the range of options for faculty to engage in and learn about online and open learning, and emerging educational technologies and pedagogies, including launching non-credit Certificate in Online and Open Learning*
- The OOL launched the non-credit Certificate in Online and Open Learning in Jan 2018 and 6 faculty and grad students are expected to graduate as the first cohort in November 2018. The certificate includes three new online courses, each of which had 10-20 participants in their first offering.

- The *Alan Wright Award for Exemplary Online and Technology-Enhanced Teaching* launched with inaugural winner celebrated at the annual Celebration of Teaching Excellence
- 45 workshops and intensive multi-day course design institutes offered with 126 faculty and grad students attending (not including situated workshops), plus approximately 300 students in ePortfolio workshops; 111 ePortfolio drop in sessions were offered and 30 ePortfolio workshops

4. ***Engage and build the Windsor and Essex County community through partnerships:***

- a) Develop a regional Symposium on Online and Open Teaching and Learning in partnership with local colleges
- See 2a) above.
  - OOL is continuing to work with departments and St Clair College to develop online transfer pathways

5. ***Promote international engagement:***

- a) Obtain institutional membership in the International Consortium of Distance Educators (ICDE) and work towards membership in OERu
- UWindsor is an institutional member of the International Consortium of Distance Educators (ICDE) (funded by the OOL); the Director was an invited participant to the ICDE global strategic planning retreat in Toronto (Nov. 2017) and has been invited to be part of a small group of online learning experts to meet with the UN in Paris in 2018 to develop strategies for expanding access to education globally through online and other means.
  - The Director was invited to participate in a planning retreat with OERu institutions held at Ryerson University. Work continues towards institutional membership of OERu. The model requires considerable work to determine course equivalencies and overcoming other administrative challenges.
  - OOL faculty and staff continue to present their scholarship, often with faculty and grad students, at local, national, and international conferences; OOL's Twitter presence continues to grow with nearly 89,000 impressions in 2017-18 (average 7,349/mth)

B. Future Actions/Initiatives

1. Continue to partner with faculty members, departments, faculties, and central units to develop successful funding proposals for development and research in online and open teaching and learning
  - a. Support current projects successfully through initial launch phases, and assist in any necessary enhancements to courses once launched and evaluated
2. Continue to partner with faculties, departments, and individual faculty members to expand online and hybrid course and program offerings, and enrolments to meet SEM Plan and SMA2 targets
3. Champion the adoption, adaptation, and development of Open Educational Resources (OERs), including open textbooks in courses and programs; begin exploring potential for Z-Cred (zero or low-cost learning resources) courses and programs
4. Launch new OOL website, including a showcase for OERs created by UWindsor faculty, staff, and students
5. Secure commitment to an appropriate permanent space for OOL that is fit for purpose and serves the campus community's needs for educational multimedia, including a rapid eLearning studio/design space
6. Continue to develop the Certificate in Online and Open Learning, including the potential to open it up to non-UWindsor affiliates, and exploring options with CEPE for development of programming
7. Technology support: Continue Riipen, Labster, and CanCred Open Digital Badges pilots, and begin pilots with Pressbooks (open publishing tool), Zoom (hybrid video/web conferencing system), H5P (accessible interactive learning objects), Examity online live exam proctoring system (replacing BVirtual), and Mukurtu (indigenous content management system)
8. Continue to support and embed core educational technologies, including Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, and WordPress ePortfolios. Work to transition WordPress to a more suitable host given ongoing growth. Work with campus partners to grow utilisation and embed Lynda.com
9. Assist UWinsite team in the design and implementation of online training and support tools for the new UWinsite Student system
10. Partner with Provost's Office to support a second round pilot of the course redesign framework and Supplemental Instruction

11. Continue to develop opportunities for meaningful student collaborations and experiential learning opportunities to support innovation in online, open, and hybrid learning programs
12. Complete transition of OOL budget to support more strategic needs of the unit and the University community, including securing appropriate staffing and funding for innovative technologies
13. Reintroduce the OOL Strategic Development Grants with a revised focus
14. Continue to work on implementation of OOL-CTL joint external review recommendations
15. Continue to explore potential benefits for institutional membership in OERu and the Open Education Consortium
16. Begin to explore meaningful engagement for the OOL in supporting indigenization of curricula, practices, spaces, and technologies

C. Recommendations for Senate consideration (if any)

1. Develop a transparent set of definitions of all characteristics of courses and programs (e.g. on-campus, online, hybrid, flexible, technology enhanced, intensive, active learning, zero or low cost resources) to leverage the capacity of the new student information system to make these characteristics visible to students and the public
  - a. **Rationale:** *It is currently very difficult for students to find any information about the characteristics of courses, including their delivery mode, assessment approaches, and learning resources. Part of the current challenge is a lack of capacity to indicate these things using the existing course proof and SIS system, but the move to PeopleSoft will allow for significant enhancements to the course metadata that can be displayed to students and used to filter courses. Perhaps the most challenging aspect for departments and faculty in describing their pedagogical approaches is that there is no set of institutional definitions available to them to help ensure consistency of application*
2. Consider ways to recognize and reward engaging with open educational practices, including adapting, adopting or creating open textbooks and other Open Educational Resources through the RTP process
  - a. **Rationale:** *There is strong evidence for both the cost-saving and enhanced student learning outcomes of Open Educational Practices (OEPs), and the transformative pedagogical and social potential of engaging in such practices. However, faculty often find investing time in developing, adopting, and adapting OERs to be challenging because it is not recognized explicitly in the RTP criteria of the institution. There has been a strong movement in the US and elsewhere to develop mechanisms to reward and recognize engagement with OEPs, and some Canadian institutions are also now supporting faculty in this way (SFU and UBC both recognize it with RTP and small financial incentives. Institutions that engage meaningfully with OEPs and utilize OERs and other low or no-cost learning resources are seeing significant enrollment increases and retention improvements. UWindsor already has an MOU endorsed by Senate to encourage faculty to consider OERs, but they need further recognition through the processes that matter most to faculty, including RTP.*