

Establishing an Effective Peer-Review Process for OER Course Materials

Why Peer Review of OER?

- To provide an assurance of quality that will encourage faculty adoption
- That this assurance should include not only validity of the information, but also of accessibility, inclusiveness of perspectives, navigability, and interactive learning

An Erroneous Comparison?

- Faculty question the quality of commercial textbooks less vigorously, if at all, even though commercial publishers' review processes are not transparent.
- In the end, all learning materials should be rigorously reviewed, regardless of type of publisher.

The Models

Review at the Repository Level

- Host of an OER repository manages the peer review process.
- Typically run by a non-profit org or higher education consortium
- Examples: <u>Open Textbook Library</u>, MERLOT, Ontario's Open Library

Review at the Program Level

 Institutional OER publisher manages peer review for the titles they publish.

Review at the Author Level

- Peer review is the author's responsibility.
- Usually either encouraged or required by the publishing program but could be individually motivated – adding value to one's work.
- May manage it themselves or engage someone else to coordinate.

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ibraries

MSU Libraries' Pilot

The University Press Model

- <u>UP peer review best practices</u> respected by faculty and freely available on the web
- Designed to be adapted depending on the situation—great for any OER program

How it Works

- The OER Librarian manages peer review.
- Authors suggest reviewers and the OER Librarian also researches potential reviewers.
- There is an attempt to engage one from each list.
- Two reviewers for each project at \$200 stipend per review
- Semi-blind—reviewers know who the authors are, but reviewers' identities are not shared.
- The rubric is adapted from two others (OER Review & Equity-minded Chapter <u>Review Final Checklist</u>) and covers content, user experience, pedagogy, and DEIA-related questions.
- Ratings and comments are anonymized and combined in this document.
- Peer-review conference between OER Librarian and author(s)
- Authors prepare a written response.
- OER Advisory Committee "reviews the reviews" to make a recommendation: publish, publish with changes, publish with additional changes, do not publish.
- "Peer Review Statement" in the book includes date and notice that author(s) may have made improvements based on teaching practice.

Interesting Variations

- Peabody Institute (Johns Hopkins **U.):** Prompt to reviewers are customized to each book--here's an example.
- State U. of New York (SUNY): Dual review—peer review for the authors plus "open review" to be gathered publicly on the web—here are their guidelines for reviewers.
- Virginia Tech: Paid student reviewer, who have taken the course with the previous (non-OER) textbook (\$15/hour). Here's their <u>student-review</u> <u>rubric</u>.
- **U. of Southern Queensland:** Authors themselves tasked with managing peer review--creating a review guide, posting a call for reviewers, and manage workflow and communications. Here's their <u>detailed</u> guidelines.

Additional Resources

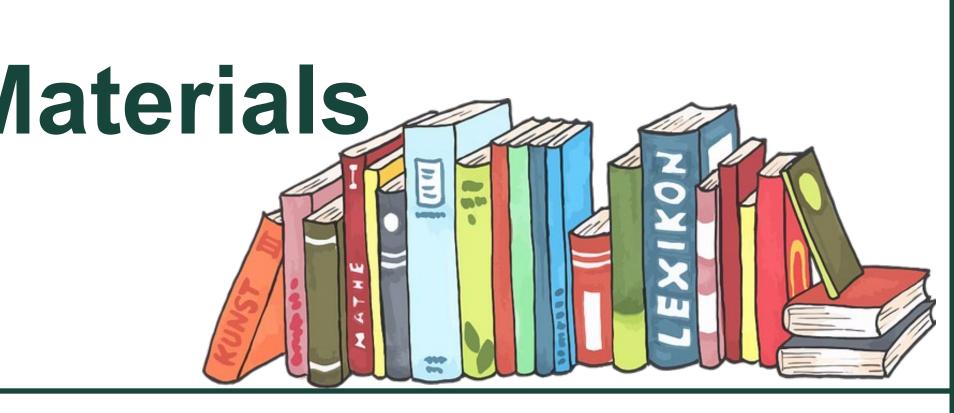
How-to Documentation

- Feedback & Review Overview (Rebus Community)
- <u>Conduct Peer Review Using Rubric</u> (Council of Australian University Librarians)
- <u>Peer Review</u> (BC Campus)

Literature

- Atenas, Javiera, and Leo Havemann. "Questions of quality in repositories of open educational resources: a literature review." Research in Learning Technology 22 (2014): 20889.
- Perifanou, Maria, and Anastasios A. Economides. "<u>Measuring quality, popularity, demand and</u> usage of repositories of open educational resources (ROER): a study on thirteen popular ROER." Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning 38.4 (2023): 315-330.
- Yuan, Min, and Mimi Recker. "Not all rubrics are equal: A review of rubrics for evaluating the <u>quality of open educational resources.</u>" International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning 16, no. 5 (2015): 16-38.

Open Education Talks 2025



Other Folks' Rubrics

 Rubrics for Evaluating Open Education <u>Resource (OER) Objects (Achieve.org –</u> K-12 focused non-profit organization)

 Open Textbook Criteria (Affordable Learning Georgia)

Open Textbooks Review Criteria (OTN's Open Textbook Library)

Checklist for Evaluating Open Educational Resources (Austin Community College)

• <u>Criteria for Peer Review</u> (eCampus Ontario)

 ROTEL Peer Review Rubric (Remixing) Open Textbooks through an Equity Lens project)



