Evolving Pedagogies: Saying no to the textbook

Ron K. Christiansen

Salt Lake Community College

TYCA-West 2013

Where are we?

How many currently use textbooks in your writing courses?

How many use OERs (open educational resources) in your composition courses?

Do you have students generate course content/curriculum in your courses?

Do you know how much money your students spend on your textbooks?

Where I'm at: textbooks, OERs, etc

˝ 1 year pilot: Intermediate Composition without a textbook

˝ FTLC (faculty teaching and learning center) grant to revamp my course

˝ Two articles in our FTLC newsletter
  ˝ Leaving the well Rutted Contours of my Pedagogical Past
  ˝ Sheer teaching: how we need to start worrying and love the textbook less

˝ Collaborative evaluation of my revamped Intermediate composition course on
  (with my colleague Jennifer Courtney)
  ˝ focus groups
  ˝ survey of all three sections

˝ OERs (open educational resources)
  ˝ Writing Spaces: An open Textbook Project
  ˝ Real Grammar Wiki http://realgrammar.wikifoundry.com/
  (created by Nikki Mantyla, an adjunct instructor at SLCC)

TETYC: Readers Write (2012)

Christiansen's "Leaving the well rutted contours of my pedagogical past"

VS.

Rodrigo's "Why we won't see textbooks in our disciplinary rearview mirror in the near future"

Writing Spaces

- Peer reviewed
- Creative Commons
- Parlor Press
- Grand Valley State University

- Engaging Readings
  - "Read like a writer" by Mike Bunn
  - "Annoying ways people use sources" by Kyle D. Stedman
  - "Reflective writing and revision: What were you thinking" by Sandra L. Giles

Cost? 00.00

A Writing Spaces writer on writing an OER

I further acknowledged that it is quite rare that teachers of writing get to write so directly to students in such an informal manner. Although textbooks are directed at students, they are often more formal affairs... And because the genre of this essay is still developing, there are no formal expectations for what this paper might look like. In my excitement, I realized that perhaps I had been granted more freedom in writing this essay than is typical of an already established, although never static, genre.

As a result, I decided to make this essay a mix of personal anecdotes, examples, and voices from teachers of writing. Such an essay seems to be the most fitting response to this situation...Why am I telling you this? Because it seems only appropriate that given the fact that I am talking about genre awareness, I should make you aware of my own struggles with writing in a new genre

"Navigating Genres," Kerry Dirk

OERs as credible resources

"How to read like a writer" by Mike Bunn

- USC faculty: vitae lists as a publication
- Dissertation on reading: *Reconceptualizing the Role of Reading in Composition Studies*
- Intro: Personal, accessible, insightful
- See example (paragraph, p. 81)

OERs as playful—the antithesis of textbook speak

"Annoying ways people use sources" by Kyle D. Stedman

˝ Engaging analogy: "How slow driving is like sloppy writing"

˝ Avoids authoritative stance: "Because I'm not here to tell you rules, decrees, or laws…"

˝ Memorable: "Armadillo roadkill" & "dating spider man"

Re-use, Re-mix

- Annotated list of these annoying moves
  - Easily remixed to fit curriculum
  - Reuse (as we have always done) but now legal, above-board, creative commons

- The Curious Researcher by Bruce Ballenger
  - Brining OERs through the back door
  - Reused with…a textbook

Rapid growth

Open Educational Resources

Teachers as makers

The WAC Clearinghouse teaching exchange

 file drawer full of workable assignments…online

Writing Commons

˝ An Example resource: Writing reviews

Open Ed Conference in Park City

˝ Themes—public domain, creative commons, badges, OER networks, content creators, MOOCs

Problems with OERs

˝ **Some instability in the production**—Writing spaces deadline for 4th volume was 8/2011 yet...still only two volumes

˝ **Lack of physicality, solidness, "thereness"—**students originally printed out my readings but have increasingly been resistant. Many bring them on e-readers but few mark up the text.

˝ **Coherence**—it's a lot of work for faculty to pull together a variety of sources and maintain a sense of direction. Shelly Rodrigo points out in your TETYC counter to my Readers Write piece.

Questions for Conversation:

″ What role should textbooks have in our educational conversations and curriculum?

″ How can open educational resources and student generated curriculum (SGC) impact/shape teacher burnout and the need to change curriculum?

″ Can we use OERs and SGC while still maintaining educational objectives?

″ Can education be more organic? Can OERs and SGC help?

″ What is an education? How far do we go with the "open" model?

″ What are the disadvantages of OERs? Stability? Authority?

″ What do we lose when we get rid of textbooks?