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[This presentation transcript has been edited for grammar and clarity.]

Q1: How do you use the land-grant mission to serve the community beyond campus borders, and how is OER creation happening beyond your campus?

Anita:

I would love to talk about how Virginia Tech is a *global* land-grant institution. This is something that comes up very frequently in our internal conversations about our institutional identity. This is a lot to do with how I've shaped the open education program at Virginia Tech.

Everything that we create -- everything that faculty I work with to create is publicly shared. Sometimes this means putting in just a little bit more money into a project to make sure that it's something that other people can access beyond our students.

In the past 12 years, we have created over 30 open educational resources. These include textbooks, slide decks, question banks, virtual and augmented reality, online calculators, homework systems, both homegrown and hosted. So I'm not an expert in all of these areas, of course, but I rely really heavily on colleagues who have expertise in design and development. In 2024, our production was absorbed by the new University Press, Virginia Tech Press. So our OER are coming out of the press now, but we still think that this is a way -- the public sharing and the open access -- are a way of participating in the virtuous cycle of open resources, where we allow other people to adapt and create.

Something that's unique -- maybe it's not unique, I don't know how many people do this. We have always included a form in all of our open educational resources to collect information from people who want to self-report.

This is a really wonderful way of showing your impact, and knowing, to whom you have been connected, and who your work is impacting. It's also a wonderful way to collect researchers, potential research partners, collaborators, potential reviewers, people who can give you feedback on the work, and a ready-made list to announce new editions, significant errors, and available ancillary materials.

I also want to also highlight that some of the open education work at Virginia Tech has been connected with K-12. A colleague of mine is the liaison between the university and the public school system - also possibly unusual that a university would have such a position. She came to me and said, we have professors who are creating learning resources for students in the K-12 system, and we need copyright advice. And we need open licensing advice, and we need accessibility advice, and we need advice to connect, people who have not been in K-12 for a very long time, to know how this environment works, and how you can much more effectively work as a grad student or undergrad student, or faculty member with K-12. We presented here at the Open Education Conference a few years ago, and we wrote a book called *Making OER With and For Pre-K-12: A Collaboration Toolkit for Higher Education*. Some of that work was used later in a USDA grant-funded project that focused on outreach to rural middle school girls in the area of cyber biosecurity ... trying to get girls in rural areas at a middle school age to be aware that they could do this kind of work -- a kind of pipeline for future careers. We created a series of learning resources that are teacher-oriented as well as student-oriented, included teacher training to teachers and extension agents regarding what open educational resources, how you know something is an OER, how you would make an OER, what are some of the best practices, some basics about copyright. So, lots of engagement in some unexpected areas, but it is really lovely. So, I'll pass it on to Carolyn.

Carolyn:

Thank you. Just to touch on a few of the points that were covered here. I work in the Center for Scholarly Publishing, which is home to scholarly communications. We have several platforms and tools by which we make information openly and freely available. Our imprint for library publishing is New Prairie Press. Within New Prairie Press, we have a number of tools. We're really excited to be moving New Prairie Press to the Fulcrum and Janeway platform, which is going to open up some interesting opportunities for us as we look at what types of materials are shared there and even some publishing opportunities and editing services that could be worked out with them.

Within New Prairie Press, we publish journals, conference proceedings, open educational resources and monographs from faculty and staff across disciplines at K-State. We also have Pressbooks, LibreText. All of these are openly accessed and available freely for anyone to use, and we get a lot of submission as well to our institutional repository (K-REx), which you'll find this across other institutions, particularly within land-grant schools. They host things, published by Extension, which we've talked about, right? And these are accessed very broadly. Even the historical materials are heavily used, particularly in developing countries, which may have very

different technology/opportunities. And so they're looking for things that, for us, seem old, but for them, are really important.

We're also seeing things like old diseases, or pests come back around. If you're in Texas, you're hearing about some pests that haven't been there for years. So, agricultural materials have very long legs—they live a long time, and are relevant historically.

Speaking of K-12 outreach, the Kansas Board of Regents has a group of OER supporters that the committee, which is now the Kansas Board of Regents Open Up Learning Kansas, and has a committee to support that. The committee's been really important in outreach—keeping OER in front of our legislators, and the importance and the impact of that. Through that, we can work together. We have a subcommittee that does training for educational institutions across the state at all levels, from R1 universities down to K-12, technical colleges, and community colleges. We've been able to get sponsorship for a LibreText subscription for Kansas Board of Regents institutions. So, that's been super important. I've already talked about K-REx. So, with that next question, Hilary. Thank you.

Hilary: Kiarah and I [Hillary] are going to tackle the next question:

Q2: What resources does your library, university, or OER team offer to support the community? What are your future plans?

Hilary:

So, when I think of resources at NC State, I think of, like, who are our people? What groups do we have doing things? And the three I'm gonna try to cover really quickly are the Alt Textbook Project, our outreach to Collaborative Extension, as well as our Open Pedagogy Incubator. So, as far as the Alt-Textbook Project, again, that's a grant system that we have where we award instructors, um, funds to adopt, adapt, create, or implement OPEN into their classroom. I think a really good example of a current grant being worked on by a faculty member who also has a Cooperative Extension appointment is she wants to create a textbook using Pressbooks. For her agriculture and Extension Education course. So the students in that course are basically going to get the history of Extension, how it fits in with the work they're doing. And it's really going to serve as a career readiness. So, obviously, that'll be used in the classroom, but the real hope is that this will be used as a point of onboarding for Extension professionals or some kind of training material, because what we're learning is a lot of Extension folks coming in, regardless of their appointment...they don't have that context or that history of how to engage with each other or the land-grant system or their community. So the hope is that using this as a training material will leverage that history and that context so they can more effectively serve the communities and each other.

And then there's our outreach to Cooperative Extension, and that's more of what's in the works and what's coming next for our group, right? With Extension and the Alt-Text sort of work that we do, we get the information out there primarily through faculty channels,

So we're trying to get it to instructors who tend to be faculty. But a lot of the work being done in Extension is being done by professionals with non-faculty appointments. And they're already doing work to educate the community and to educate each other, and they're developing OERs without even realizing it. So I think the best way to start this outreach is almost to do a top-down approach. We have a really good relationship with different Extension Directors across different districts as well as Department Extension Leaders, who are faculty that are located on campus, and they liaise with the different areas across the state to make sure that there's, like, equal access to information and opportunities.

And because the library has had a really successful relationship with them, we're kind of in a privileged spot to be able to get in front of them and say, "Hey, here are these grants, you're already doing this work, can you let your folks know, can we talk more to them about it?" So I think that's something we're going to be more intentional about going forward.

Lastly, really quickly, there's our Open Pedagogy Incubator. We have a few people in the room who are a part of that, so I hope I'm saying everything correctly. Um, but so that's something that NC State has taken the lead on across the University of North Carolina system, where we are helping faculty develop, explore, and implement different tools into their teaching. And so, the point of this year-long program was to help them develop a toolkit that they could then take into their teaching or whatever community it is that they're serving with (primarily students and academics). This year, we want to extend that project to collaborate with NC Live. Which is a statewide consortium that offers free electronic access to high-quality materials, and you can access it if you're in North Carolina through your community college, through your university, or your public library. But we want to partner with them so that we can better pipeline into the North Carolina community college system. And all of this is really helping to build a statewide community beyond NC State's classrooms. Because we're making sure that folks, instructors and students, have equal access to the same information and same opportunities to be successful.

To go over all this, it's really like a pipeline effect with what we're doing at NC State. So starting on campus, typically with faculty, then it goes to point B, which is a great way to get the information out to the community.

Kariah:

I love all of your examples. Christine and I are, nudging each other up here. We need to do this, we need to do that. This is great. So, I am relatively new to my role as agriculture librarian, but when I started, I was assigned 12 subject areas but I quickly realized that I have a 13th subject area, as if I need more. Um, but it is this, uh, UADA, so University of Arkansas Division of

Agriculture and Cooperative Extension, as we've all been discussing. And I just started to realize how much, um, those communities impact students and vice versa, and just this, like, reciprocal knowledge sharing that's happening in so many courses and just education and outreach, and so I realized I need to tap into this. I need to make sure that these folks know that, they are a patron group of mine. I committed to serving their needs as well. I really wanted to initiate contact with them but also to not just share and spread awareness about what's available to them through open education, but also to build something with them, and to collaborate with them, and assess their needs and figure out what they needed, what they weren't aware of, those sorts of things. And so, I got my first opportunity to do that. This January. I was contacted by a librarian from the National Agriculture Library, and also the head of a group called ACEDA, which is the Arkansas Community and Economic Development Alliance. So many acronyms. So, we were asked to do a presentation with this group. They were started by the UADA. It's a group of individuals, they don't have to be affiliated with UADA, they can just be community members that are interested in agribusiness, entrepreneurship, um, anything. Anyone can show up. They're located in Little Rock, so we did a presentation, virtually to them. It was really great because we had representation of information from the national, the state, and the local level. I viewed it as my goal not just to share resources from the University of Arkansas, but if I'm really going to be serving these patrons, I need to talk to their public library. I need to talk to academic institutions in their area, and figure out ... okay, so we can't give you access to this, but your public library can. Or, we can give you access to this that you didn't know about. Databases, other open education resources. And so, we gave that presentation. We got a lot of great feedback. It was really more of a conversation, like I mentioned, of assessing their needs as well. I think what most surprised me was their feedback on just being able to trust librarians as a support system, and so not any librarian at a certain institution, but just librarians as a whole. That they could come to a librarian at an institution that they're not affiliated with, technically, or maybe they are in some way, and receive support from that library, whether that's a conversation or, um, a resource or whatever that may be and so that was great. That was a first kind of stepping stone, hopefully, towards more of what everyone is doing, but especially some of Hilary's examples.

Then, second, I have a project that I'm working on right now with the Arkansas Folk and Traditional Arts Division, which is located in our university libraries. There's a lot of cross over and touchpoints with agriculture, food making, tradition, all of those things. So, I'm working with some agriculture professors, um, in education and communication to create an oral history project of agricultural leaders across the state and across the U.S. and to have those oral histories, not only for students, but for community members, and use the U of A as kind of a repository for them, but to hopefully share those in various ways. And so, I'm really excited about that. I'm also excited to implement that into the agricultural communications curricula for students and teaching them how to conduct oral histories as a way of knowledge sharing and, um, a resource to be... to be given out. Um, and also just as a research method and practice. So, I'm excited for that and looking forward to that.

What challenges have you encountered when trying to connect the university with the community? What aspects have been challenging to take on?

Christine:

One of the challenges I've found is finding creative ways to get around the budget limitations. When we are using our resources, they are frequently paid for with student funds, so that has to directly relate to either the scholarship of students or of faculty. We want to create materials that exist that can support other people as well. So, one of our big projects that we're working on this year is we have a student food bank. And the food bank has decided to put together kits for students who live in dorms or in places where they don't have a full kitchen. And provide recipes and directions on how to cook rice in a microwave with a hot pot. Those types of things.

I just happened to be at an Associated Student Government meeting presenting on what we were doing with Open Ed, and I got to chatting with them, and I was like, "well, what if we hosted the cookbook for you? And you can just give the students a QR code, because, I don't know about you, but I don't print out recipes anymore, I pull them up on my iPad, even when I'm cooking." And they just kind of got blown away. Like, they were picturing, like, index cards attached to the kit or something. Our food bank doesn't seem to have anything different than any other food bank that I've worked in. And as I got to talking to people -- How many other groups maybe have stable housing, but they don't have a full kitchen. This becomes a resource that can be used across the country. You know, this is something, because you can't copyright a recipe -- becomes very clearly in that zone. But if you're in assisted living, if you're in a rooming house, those types of things. It just gives people additional options and then we can give them, you know, the good information on how to cook these things so that they are still nutritious.

But that leads me to my other issue, which is discoverability. How does the local K-12 school district or the local senior center know that we're creating these resources? Because I was a K-12 teacher. It never occurred to me to go look in the institutional repository of the local university to look for lesson plans. So that's the other big challenge I'm really trying to figure out right now, is, yes, our Arkansas folk and Traditional Arts has created lesson plans for 6th through 8th graders, how do we make that discoverable? How do we let people know these resources exist? How can we let other people know that this cookbook is coming out? Some of those types of things. That's where I kind of hit the other half of moving beyond budget, is what research is my faculty already doing that I can support? So, we're currently transitioning over some literacy lessons for migrant families. How can they engage in that? And it's because it's a Pressbook, it's downloadable. So even if they don't have internet access, if they have a device, they can do that, and then learn how to better interact with their children in literacy concepts. You know, it's already in their native language, so really kind of looking at how we can bring the scholarship to then support other groups. But at the same time, fighting what I think is an

ongoing battle for all of us, which is specific enough for your group, broad enough to be used elsewhere. And I feel like that is a constant tension we all fight with, because as an educator, I like Open because of the pedagogy of being able to make it very specific for the student sitting in front of me. But how do we do that? And that's one I haven't quite figured out yet. But those are kinds of issues and how I'm getting creative in working around them.

Carolyn:

As we found out, many of our topics are common to all of us, so you're probably hearing an echo chamber by this point in the discussion. One of the challenges we deal with is specificity of your content—How do you make it relevant to your own people as well as others? And certainly within the Kansas Board of Regents group that's working with OER, is from K-12 through college, right? How do you speak to /create materials that are meaningful and useful across learners of all different levels? This comes back to the adoption and revision of your content, and putting an appropriate license on it so it can be reused and re-adapted as needed. A good example of a resource that we helped develop was our French textbook, which is for French 1 through French 4. Foreign languages, as you probably know, often start, in either middle school or high school, right? And they continue on. So students may come into university with two years of French or Spanish behind them. But if students have gotten to a level using different resources, how do you start and continue without gaps in instruction, or without boring half of your audience? So, we now have a textbook that teaches from French one through French 4. We've done outreach to our instructors across K-12, and they're involved with the training that we do at the state level, as well, within specific disciplines—how to develop OER, and what's available.

Another challenge we deal with is the consistency of staffing, and priorities and budgeting for staffing. At Kansas State, we've really run across a number of challenges. In 2018, we had a fire in the library. And everything got moved out, and librarians were distributed across campus.

There was no hiring going on then, right? After the fire, the day they handed the librarians the keys to their new offices, they said, “Oh, you're going home to work because of the COVID.” It's the same day, right? And then we came back, finally, after COVID, and our dean, submitted her retirement. So then we wait for a new dean, and now we have a newer dean. Meanwhile, our department has been without a department head through all of this. Yeah, our academic services department head had taken us on. And boy, I would really like to have a publishing assistant—how do I get attention for that? How do I have someone to speak for me? Our budgets have been all over the place. Talk about changing priorities—very different.

Of course, now we have lost some of our money from research grants. So now we're looking at budget cuts, and that has to come out of collections. So what do we do? Budgets are changing rapidly. I rely upon student workers, and just about the time I get them trained, they graduate, darn them! So, lots of challenges there, and I think the more we

can talk about those, discuss those, the better ideas we'll have of how you creatively managed some of the issues that you're facing as well.

Questions and Answers

Hillary:

That was our last question, but we tried to really keep this at a 30-minute session so we can offer 10-minutes for questions, and they did it, so... It's always hard to play together at the clock! Well, now we want to take questions, comments, or stories from you all.

Question about how to engage with Extension “The main thing that stopped me reaching out to our Extension Office so far is it just seems like such a giant addition to the work we're already doing. It's extremely relevant, and not less important, but do you have thoughts on how to fold this into what's already going on?”

Hillary:

Yeah, so you are right, it is a full-time job to reach out to them, and I wish that wasn't the case. I wish we could just automatically do it. But with Extension, they do have unique needs that are not the same as the traditional faculty, or the person who is working on campus. And I think the reality is you have to cater what you're doing to them, and so I think the easiest thing to do, and what we did at NC State was we... we make it into, like, a whole grant project, but I think what you could basically do is say: contact your department extension leader (so you can just Google your institution department extension leader) it pops up and say, “ hey, we'd love to chat with you about this thing we have going on, we think this would be really relevant to Extension!”. Have a 30-minute Zoom coffee or meet with them in person, and sort of hear their ideas, and then from there, I think you could start a simple email campaign to help with them, and then it just becomes like the work that you're doing with everybody else. You'll probably get a spike in interest at first, but then just kind of like everything else, it'll sort of peter out, like other user groups. But it is a lot of lifting in the beginning.

Christine:

I'd follow up with this: I managed to get a master's student as a grad assistant who loves the library and never wants to leave, and so a lot of my, like, Pressbooks support, even though she's public advocacy. She adores Pressbooks, so I have just figured out a way to just get a perpetual master. She's on her third right now.

Kariah:

I also just wanted to add, similar to Christine's, but if you can recruit a subject librarian who is equally invested and maybe has an hourly or a grad assistant that is already in Extension or

working with Extension, I found that to be really helpful. The students know so much more than I ever could not having the daily interactions with Extension. And so sometimes what feels like a really large project probably is, in a lot of ways, but could also have just some simple steps that immediately they think of that I wouldn't have thought of.

Question: I'm just curious more about what happens when you reach out to Extension. How does that work?

Kariah:

Again, it's probably different for everybody, but just an example. They don't understand what we do. And I love, because I view that as an opportunity to share not my expertise, but to, like Hillary's saying, ask what they need. And I think that builds the bridge to start, even if you can't promise that yet. But that's just something quick I wanted to add. Students have been a lack of awareness? Is it...? Yeah, yeah. Okay.

Anita:

Yes, so I am not the Agriculture Librarian. My colleague is, and she has much stronger ties with Extension. What we found, though, is that Extension publishes: They produce all of these very useful documents that they want to share, and so we have had a conversation with them about, would you be willing to put a Creative Commons license on your work? We've also talked about the push for cost recovery. Would they want to make some of their materials more open access or less? So, there are some sticky issues with operational constraints that are just important to know about and to respect. We do say, could we work together on something? We have some overlap. What could this look like? What can we do for you? We've assisted in publishing the Master Gardener Handbook with our Cooperative Extension (*Virginia Gardener Handbook*), which is now open access, and its OER, actually. So, we are trying to be of service to Extension in places where they are interested in collaborating, and to not step on toes when they have institutional constraints that are important for them to manage.

Hillary:

And in case you're intimidated, Extension will be stupid excited to hear from you! Every time I've talked to them, they're like, "I wish everybody knew this!", and they are just so overjoyed because a lot of times if people are not on campus, they do feel forgotten about, even though they're employed by the university. If you can travel to see them, that's even better. That's great.

Carolyn:

I'm just going to add one more thing there. Having been an Extension agent and an agriculture librarian who was a liaison to the Extension Service in my former job, extension agents are very busy. And they, like all of us, are understaffed, so finding something you know that's going to speak to their needs so they understand that is really good. Often at a land-grant university,

there is some sort of Extension or Extension and Research conference. And if you don't go and you have an ag librarian, make sure they go, because it's a good place to meet people and to learn about their priorities. "You know what? Oh, I've got an answer for that." Because that is what librarians do, right? We answer questions and find solutions. And so that's a good place to go. And they are excited to hear from you, they just don't understand what we do, it's true.

Anita:

Please feel free to find us if you have other questions, or you want to talk more. Our email addresses are on the very last slide. If you would like to reach out, we would all be very happy to hear from you. Thank you.