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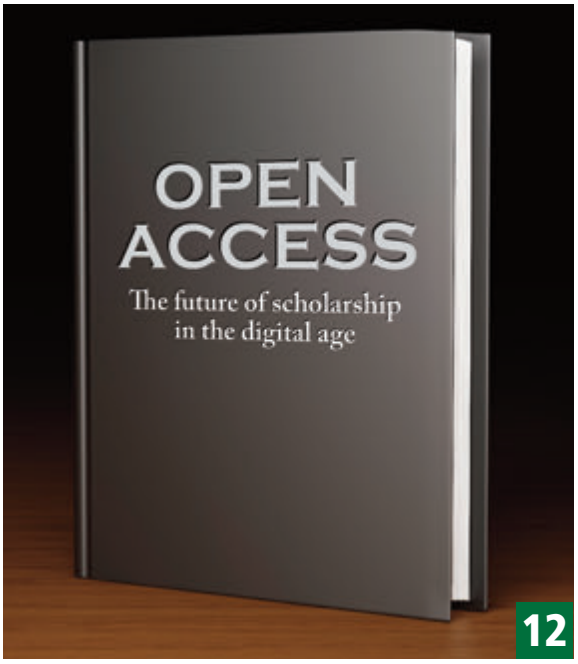

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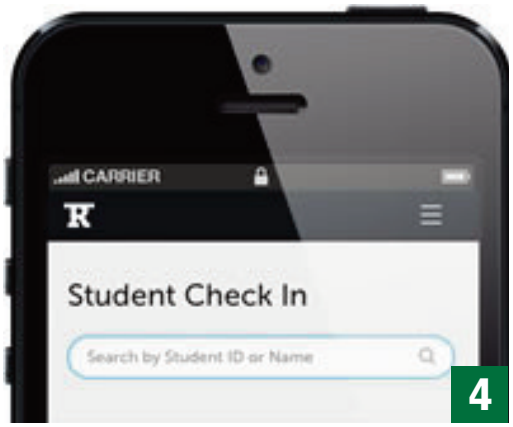

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Creating the device-agnostic BYOD classroom

A look at what it takes to develop a Bring Your Own Device initiative that incorporates device-agnostic lesson plans, content, and collaboration tools.

By Bridget McCrea

In the 2015 **Higher Education Edition of the Horizon Report**, The New Media Consortium pinpoints Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) as one of the most important developments in educational technology with a time-to-adoption horizon of one year or less.

"In higher education," NMC states, "the BYOD movement addresses the fact that many students are entering the classroom with their own devices, which they use to connect to the institutions' networks." The Horizon Report includes an example from California State University, which studied the BYOD phenomenon and found that students "could only engage in educational activities for six minutes before turning on their devices for support."

The open question on U.S. campuses is not if students are bringing their own devices or how to connect them to the institutional network, but rather: how do you support all these personal devices *at the point of instruction*, in the classroom? How can educators can effectively design lessons and utilize software in an environment where their students are using myriad different devices, computers, and operating systems?

According to some educational experts, the best approach to supporting BYOD for instruction is the "device-agnostic" classroom. Device-agnostic tools are applications that work across multiple systems without requiring any special customizations; they are compatible with most (or all) operating systems and can be used on various tablets, smartphones, and laptops.

Learning is enhanced when students use their own devices

At **Triple Point Advisors** in San Francisco, CEO Gauri Reyes, a former university professor, says the proliferation of BYOD on higher-ed campuses is being driven by students' desire to integrate their personal device usage with their educational activities. "While it definitely makes sense to keep the two [activities] separate," says Reyes, "the trend in modern technology is to merge the two sides together into one."

Merging those two sides can lead to good things, according to Reyes, who has seen learning fields enhanced, collaboration stoked, and educational spheres positively impacted when students use their own devices in class. The problem, she admits, is that there is a plethora of devices currently on the market, and not all of them share the same platforms or operating systems. This can create issues for educators who have to create lesson plans that incorporate tools like the iPad, iPhone, Android, tablet, and/or laptop. The age of the device itself can also come into play, she notes, particularly when some students have newer equipment and others have older, outdated versions of the devices.

"These devices all have different quirks," says Reyes, "and that makes it hard to predict which ones will ultimately be brought into the classroom, who will be using which ones, and who needs to know what about the devices and their capabilities."

Examples of device-agnostic applications

To help smooth out some of the BYOD-related bumps in the college classroom, applications like **Haiku Deck** (presentation software), **Tackk** (a multimedia scrolling poster), and **Snapguide** (for creating step-by-step guides) are all offered in iOS, Android, and/or web versions. The latter, for example, uses a browser-based interface to allow students to access the application from any device – regardless of operating system – and use it online without having to worry about software incompatibility issues.

One of the newer entrants to the device-agnostic BYOD market is **EXO U**, a platform that allows instructors to share information and collaborate with students across multiple operating systems. Shan Ahdoot, CEO of the San Francisco-based firm, says such applications help educators get "everyone on the same page" quickly and effectively without wasting classroom time or IT resources. "The goal is to create a consistent experience from phone to laptop to interactive whiteboard," says Ahdoot.

In the absence of such tools, Ahdoot says the BYOD experience can be challenging for instructors who have to use a combination of email, the campus learning management system (LMS), or other means of collaborating with students. Also, he says web-based applications don't always look the same on different devices. An online program like Evernote, for example, appears differently on an iPad versus a laptop versus an Android device.

Like Reyes, Ahdoot feels that BYOD as a whole can be a very productive and effective way to put devices into the classroom *without* a large financial investment (on the part of the institution) or the need for extensive IT support. Plus, he says, students tend to take better care of their own phones, laptops, and tablets compared to those that are distributed by an institution.

Design for cross-platform, whether approved or not

Even with its obvious positives, the BYOD movement comes with its own share of setbacks. For example, Reyes says instructors will continue to be challenged by the need to effectively develop lessons and content for multiple devices and operating systems. To those instructors that are already feeling that strain, Reyes says the best approach is simply to assume that the technology is going be brought into the classroom – and whether it's "approved" or not.

"Start by taking the most popular devices that are out there and making sure your applications, lesson plans, videos, or other content work on those devices," Reyes advises. "Just make the assumption that whatever you're developing or using has to work on iOS, Android, or another platform, and then create an environment where your students can learn, engage, collaborate, and communicate effectively." eCN

Bridget McCrea is a contributing writer for eCampus News.

The open question on U.S. campuses is not if students are bringing their own devices or how to connect them to the institutional network, but rather: how do you support all these personal devices at the point of instruction, *in the classroom?*

Taking online learning from an alternative to a "must"

Advocates say going online in higher-ed allows for educator collaboration, competitive advantage

Until recently, online learning has been viewed as either solely for those interested in adult education or as a branding tactic for innovative institutions.

And though online learning is still one of the most accessible ways of providing quality post-secondary education to those with diverse backgrounds and commitments, the popularity of blended learning models, and recent trends in cross-institutional collaboration, online learning is experiencing rapid implementation in today's colleges and universities.

Here, *eCampus News* asked distinguished online learning advocates to give their thoughts on why it's imperative to take higher education's perception of online learning from an alternative to a "must."

One size doesn't fit all

By Thomas Arnett, The Clayton Christensen Institute

Students learn differently. They have different interests and they approach new learning experiences with a range of background knowledge, cognitive ability and grit. Yet despite their wonderful individuality, the lecture-based classroom treats students like identical receptacles of information. It's hard to blame schools and teachers for relying on traditional instructional methods; one-size-fits-all lectures are economically practical for disseminating information to large groups of students. But unfortunately, they fail to ensure that each student masters the content they are taught.

This is where online learning has a powerful role to play. Online learning gives teachers greater ability to personalize their instruction to individual students' needs. Good online learning is far more than holding classes using teleconference technology or recording lectures and posting them online. Rather, high-quality online learning enables teachers to truly differentiate their instruction and frees them up to provide more individualized support to their students.

For example, the Relay Graduate School of education has leveraged online learning to reimagine traditional approaches to training teachers. Relay provides approximately 40 percent of its instruction through online videos and digital material. With core instruction happening online, face-to-face sessions can then focus more on discussing concepts, practicing teaching skills and providing teachers-in-training with individualized support. Many of Relay's course assignments also require teachers-in-training to integrate their new skills into real-life K-12 classrooms and then upload videos of their lessons onto Relay's online learning platform for prompt, detailed feedback.

Relay's graduate students not only receive the learning benefits of an online approach, they also become better equipped to implement online learning in their own classrooms one day. Thus the great instruction of today prepares the great instructors of tomorrow.

Thomas Arnett is an Education Research Fellow from the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation. His research focuses on changing roles of teachers in blended learning environments, the evolution of teacher education and professional development, and policies and innovations affecting technology access and infrastructure.

Because we need to reach today's generation

By Jon Bergmann, FlippedClass.com

When I first started teaching in 1986, the resources I had available to me were limited to: a box provided by the publisher of my textbook, a three-ring binder of curriculum provided by the district, and/or whatever I had in my head. Contrast this with 2015, where teachers not only have publisher materials and their own learning, but also a plethora of online information, simulations, lesson plans, and videos.

Should teachers embrace elements of online teaching into their daily practice or can they afford to teach out of "the box"? In 2014, **Project Tomorrow did a survey** of over 500,000 parents, students, teachers, and administrators. They included a few questions about how flipped learning, a teaching method which uses teacher-created online videos to maximize face-to-face time, should impact schools. The survey found that:

"School administrators are expecting new teachers to know how to flip their classrooms prior to completing their certification process. Last year, 41 percent of school leaders indicated that pre-service teachers should "know how to set up a flipped learning classroom," this year that increased to 46 percent."

This survey shows that there is an expectation that educators be prepared to teach in new and innovative ways - specifically utilizing flipped learning methodology. Teachers must employ instructional techniques which engage students in the process of learning.

We stand at a powerful moment in the world of education, where educators can leverage technology to bring about personalized learning for every student. The ultimate winners in this new era will be the students. Let's face it: we are teaching the YouTube generation. Online media is out there and it is ubiquitous for our students. The time is now to embrace digital learning as a means to reach today's generation.

Jon Bergmann is chief learning officer for **Flipped Class.com**, *and was a classroom teacher for 24 years where he pioneered the Flipped Class movement. He is now an author, speaker, and educational thought leader.*

Online is today's language

By Gregor Freund, Versal

Today's students–often referred to as 'digital natives'–grew up with apps. These are the kids who, when the iPhone first came out eight years ago, were toddlers. In most cases, this generation learned to interface with technology as they learned to speak and comprehend. Today, technology can be considered a first language.

As a result, technology is quickly becoming one of the most commonly used 'languages' in today's classroom. We're building Versal around the belief that using technology to teach these students is essential for students, teachers, schools and the broader educational experience to thrive in the years ahead.

To use Versal as an example, we offer teachers a canvas for creative educational publishing. At the core are customizable and interactive 'gadgets' that empower teachers to create compelling online content and engage these tech-savvy students. As big fans of open ecosystems, we also give those teachers an online platform to publish their work and share it with students in their everyday learning environments (LMSs, Chromebooks, blogs, class websites etc.). Teachers also work together to build curriculum

materials and share it among themselves. This sort of creativity and collaboration is key for ed-tech to reach its full potential.

Gregor Freund is the CEO of **Versal**, *an online learning creation platform.*

It's a format that provides a competitive advantage

By Robert Monroe, Carnegie Mellon University

Over the past three years, we have undertaken an ambitious project to offer our flagship MBA program in an online-hybrid format. One of the key motivations for offering the same MBA we offer onsite in an online format is to provide an academic experience that mimics a global, professional experience.

We believe that MBA students who participate in online formats will likely have a substantial competitive advantage in the global workforce due to the exposure and practice working with and through online technologies. What students learn one day can immediately be applied to their professional career the following day. This real-time application is facilitated by the technology.

Given the amount of collaboration and group work required in online formats across different time zones, students adept with these tools will have a competitive edge in multi-national companies where video conferencing is used daily to connect global teams. Students must familiarize themselves with the blend of technology tools, applications and solutions that are used throughout global business practices.

Our responsibility as academics is to provide students with the skillset and tools they need to lead successful and long-lasting careers. Recognizing the evolution of technologies incorporated into today's business practices, we must model our curriculum and programs in such a way that reflect what is happening in the workplace. There has been a natural evolution in education technologies–chalkboard, white board, PowerPoint and now online formats–that must advance to meet the needs of the current student and future workforce.

Robert Monroe is the director of the **Online Hybrid MBA** *at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper School of Business, which has delivered online education to students for the last few decades.*

It's great for preparing tomorrow's teachers

By Candis Harrington Shupe, Western Governors University

Online learning allows us to serve a diverse and nontraditional undergraduate and graduate student body—including adult learners with families and full-time jobs, members of the military stationed overseas, students coming back to college to finish their degree, and students located all across the country.

In our Teachers College specifically, it allows us to provide a robust program ensuring our teacher candidates receive similar experiences as their counterparts attending a brick-and-mortar university. WGU uses video of actual classroom instruction and research-based content, provided by Teachscape, to help reinforce the principles being taught and show the students pin-pointed, pedagogically-sound teaching examples of how those principles can be applied during classroom instruction.

The videos provide an effective alternative for students to complete their required observational hours prior to starting their in-person student teaching. Oftentimes our students' personal schedules or the policies and accommodations of

schools where they can do observations make it difficult for them to schedule and complete the in-classroom observational hours needed. By accessing the robust library offered, students can complete those observations anytime, anywhere.

Course mentors can send specific assignments to the teacher candidates in order to assess different competencies to ensure they are prepared to enter the classroom. This allows our students to focus their time more effectively and efficiently.

As a result of using these online resources as a part of our online program, we've found our teacher candidates are extremely engaged in their teacher preparation courses, which has resulted in higher pass and completion rates. Last year, 100 percent of our graduates of teacher licensure programs who took their certification exams passed and were granted licensure. In addition, according to a recent report by Edventures, WGU was the top overall producer of STEM teacher graduates, so we know online teaching and learning not only works, it works extremely well. And experts agree: the National Council on Teacher Quality named our secondary math education program number one in the nation.

Candis Harrington Shupe, M.Ed. is a Learning Resource Manager at Western Governors University, an accredited online university based in Salt Lake City.

It's a content mastery blessing

By Kathy Spradlin, Liberty University

Our Math Department decided to redesign our developmental math sequence from traditional, face-to-face courses to an emporium model, supported by online mastery-based learning technology and assessment, and scheduled lab hours. After the initial implementation, our faculty made adjustments to the program to improve course outcomes. We hypothesized that allowing late work to be turned in, with a penalty, and requiring lab hours would improve student performance.

Through the use of Pearson's **MyMathLab and MyLabsPlus** technology, our fall 2012 ABC rates rose by 22 percent in Fundamentals of Math and 14.7 percent in Intermediate Algebra, compared with average ABC rates prior to implementation of the emporium model. In addition, pass rates based on the number of our students completing the course rose 13.3 percent in Fundamentals of Math and 15.7 percent in Intermediate Algebra, compared to pass rates in the 12 prior semesters.

Overall, through the use of online learning technology, my students are spending more time doing math and less time watching someone else do math. Because mastery is required, they are getting a solid foundation in all concepts; whereas, in traditional courses, a student could pass with high grades on a few chapters and failing grades on others.

Students like the immediate feedback and opportunity for additional practice the online learning system offers. Unit pretests have been added to help students who know the material move ahead more quickly. Post-quiz reviews and post-test reviews are required of students who need remediation. Tutoring sessions and instructor conferences are scheduled for those students who need more personal instruction and assistance. I would suggest use of mastery-based learning technology and assessment to a colleague with the warning that merely adding computer homework onto traditional instruction is not the best use of an online learning system. The course should be redesigned with a balance of online learning and human interaction.

Kathy Spradlin is coordinator of Math Emporium and Developmental Math at Liberty University. Liberty offers than 200 programs online.

It allows educators to create and collaborate

By Nancy Zingrone, Northcentral University

I think online education of some sort is an absolute must for the future of education. I still take online education courses on WiziQ, have sampled courses from the MOOC provider Coursera on social psychology, behavioral economics, and the history of computing, and never miss an episode of CrashCourse history or psychology on YouTube. A gifted teacher from Mexico taught Spanish to me and a group of students from both hemispheres. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Virginia Society for Technology in Education have provided activities on teaching with technology in Second Life. Then there are the webinars from the TLT Group and the Center For Faculty Excellence at Northcentral University.

It is impossible to list all the online experiences that have enriched my own education. Learning online is not only effective and convenient, it inspires you to create and collaborate. I have been inspired to work in online education, to create blogs, online courses, YouTube tutorials and three channels, not to mention a library and learning center in Second Life. For the second year, I'm co-facilitating a free, three-platform course on virtual world education that takes place on WizIQ, **Integrating-Technology.org**, Moodle, and Second Life. We three co-facilitators not only live in different countries but in different time zones. The presenters and learners who have participated in our course are also from all over the world. We couldn't duplicate face-to-face the experiences we have all shared so far without a huge budget for travel, books and materials. But through online technology, the global has become local for us, the local global, and the conceptual concrete. What could be better? eCN

Dr. Nancy L. Zingrone, adjunct faculty at the School of Psychology, Northcentral University, teaches psychology to undergrads and masters students online for the University, as well as adult education at her own consulting firm and with online teaching colleagues on Moodle, WizIQ and in Second Life.

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Open Access Scholarship: Here's

The tenure system is still built on a publish-or-perish foundation, but what does it mean to "publish evaluate, and reward, a body of academic work that is collaborative, iterative, and communal in na Symposium to discuss how higher education can adopt open access scholarship to the benefit of th Lowney argues that traditional academic publishing has been irrevocably disintermediated, and that look beyond "revenue-driven publishers" to create cross-institutional, collaborative, peer-reviewed a the lodestar for future academic publishing, where scholarly sharing will only advance faculty schola scholarship to truly take hold, cultural changes have to occur in higher education. These essays may There we also welcome your thoughts on this important topic. **– Therese Mageau, Editorial Direc**

Understanding why scholarly publishing today is a cultural, not technological, issue

What should higher-ed do now that the genie is out of the bottle?

By Frank Lowney

The assessment of scholarly writing has traditionally been outsourced by institutions of higher education to revenue-driven publishers.

The central idea was that if a publisher judged a work to be good enough to help meet their financial goals, it was publishable and creditable. The prestige of the publisher determined just how creditable its assessment was. Thus, scarcity was assured and scholarly publishing sustained itself for a great many years.

Publishers took on the substantial capital investments involved in publishing on paper: editorial and marketing staff, paper, ink, printing operations, warehousing and transportation. However, those publishers also received content and peer-review services at little or no cost owing to institutions crediting those activities toward faculty promotion and tenure. In return, higher education was provided with very sophisticated assessments of faculty scholarship at next to no cost.

Faculty were provided with the opportunity to have their scholarly work validated in ways that would enhance their prospects for promotion and tenure. Research faculty additionally received improved prospects for their grant proposals as their publishing reputations grew.

This symbiosis worked astonishingly well for all those on the production side of scholarly publishing. Publishers met their financial targets, colleges and universities were able to inexpensively promote and assess scholarship, and faculty could gain the recognition and validation of their work which, in turn, earned them enhanced status and

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How We Get There

" in a digital age? How does an institution appropriately
ture? Two well-placed academics join this month's
e faculty, the institution, and scholarship itself. Frank
institutions of higher education have no choice but to
assessment systems. Salwa Ismail sees collaboration as
arship and research. Both writers argue that for open
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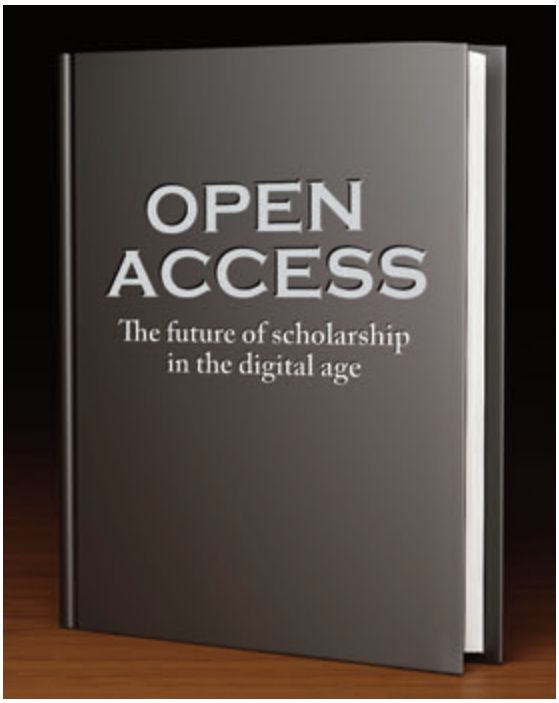

Why going Open is critical for the future of the university

How university libraries are making headway in the Open Access movement.

By Salwa Ismail

Pedagogical innovation and support has been a much discussed topic in academia, especially at this juncture, where an increasing number of universities are discussing what the university of the future should look like. The urgency of the world's post-secondary education needs is moving faster than universities can keep up, and hence, new models of diverse scholarship not only have to be piloted, but also modeled for mainline pedagogy and scholarship.

Academic culture that endorses and supports an open and free exchange of information, ideas, and output has the potential to not just increase research, but transform the scholarship that is an outcome of that research. Open Access, which provides unrestricted online access to peer-reviewed research, has been touted as a model that will reform the scholarly publications of the world, or at least of our country, since 2002[1].

Yet, despite this grassroots movement to promote Open Access by the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) to build unprecedented opportunities to create an Open Access environment, promotion and tenure committees have been slow to adopt (if at all) the output of scholarship in Open Access models over the traditional monograph publishing. A survey led by information scientists [6] found that 60 percent of the faculty respondents felt that publishing via Open Access would damage their chances of tenure and promotion.

From my own experiences, observations and discussions with faculty colleagues, this issue becomes more profound in disciplines such as

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income. Publish or perish wasn't so terrible because there was an entire ecosystem devoted to the publication of good scholarship.

On the consumption side, access to scholarly publications could be had through subscription or à la carte purchase. Academic libraries were the biggest customers for journal subscriptions and scholarly books, providing faculty and researchers no-cost access to as much of this content as an institution could afford. Except for textbooks, scholarly publishing was a nicely balanced market.

This was also a fine tuned and delicately managed symbiosis that had evolved over many, many years. It was imbedded so deeply into academic culture, sharing the fruits of academic work this way seemed to most at the time as simple best practice. So, what could possibly go wrong?

Three things: declining subsidies for public higher education, legislative open access mandates, and the emergence of e-publishing technologies. Let's look at each of these separately.

The e-publishing revolution

Although digital technologies entered the world of publishing in the mid 80s, the output continued to be in the form of paper. There was a very capable genie doing page layout and automated typesetting, but still confined to the bottle controlled by a small, elite group of publishers.

Thanks to Adobe's Portable Digital Format (PDF) and, later, the International Digital Publication Forum's (IDPF) EPUB format, it became possible to dispense with capital intensive paper entirely. Now, almost anyone could afford to create digital documents readable by almost anyone else with any kind digital device. The genie was out of the bottle.

The concurrent rise of the internet provided the last piece of the machine that would enable everyman as publisher. Those digital documents could be duplicated and dispatched to any part of the globe within seconds and at little or no cost to this new plebeian publisher.

Open access mandates

In the United States, United Kingdom, and elsewhere around the world, governments became acutely aware of the issues arising from taxpayer supported research not being freely available to taxpayers. This led to legislation and policy mandating open access to publicly supported research. Indeed, this concept has spread even to research organizations receiving no government support. It has even spread to the development of learning materials from entire e-textbooks to single concept simulations, diagrams, or images. These are collectively referred to as open educational resources (OER) and commonly reside in open educational repositories. Rather than asserting an "all rights reserved" copyright, these materials normally carry a "some rights reserved" Creative Commons license. Often, free use is permitted on condition of attribution alone. It is an idea whose time has obviously come.

Declining financial support for public higher ed

The last recession (2007-2009) saw radical cuts in state subsidies to American public colleges and universities. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, states are still funding higher education at below pre-recession levels and the outlook for the near future is not optimistic.

These as yet un-recovered higher education budget cuts resulted in tuition increases exceeding all other Consumer Price Index categories, including health care. It is no wonder that student debt rose to astronomical levels. At the same time, higher education budgets for library acquisitions were severely cut. Academic access to research journals and scholarly books actually declined.

Together, these three factors provide the motive, the opportunity, and the means with which to disintermediate the traditional scholarly publishing enterprise, and that process is ongoing. However,

the transition isn't going to be pretty because cultural change in higher education has never been easy and the obstacles are not insignificant.

Perhaps the most difficult obstacle in the path toward open scholarship is what to do about the assessment and valuing of academic work.

The current limitations of open access publishing

Even where traditional publishers continue to be involved, open access mandates dilute or negate the validation of academic work in the minds of many who serve on promotion and tenure committees. There are two models of open scholarship involving publishers: gold and green open access. Green OA is where an author publishes with a traditional publisher and then posts a version of that work on the web so that it is freely readable by any and all. Gold OA is where an author publishes with an OA publisher paying an article processing charge (APC) to cover the costs of publication, instead of that cost being covered, for example, by subscription fees to libraries.

The problem here is that Gold OA publishers needn't exercise the same cautions in deciding to publish since the APC provides all of the income they can legitimately expect. Indeed, a new kind of publisher, one that exercises no cautions whatsoever, is on the rise. Beall's List of **predatory open access publishers** shows the number of these organizations growing.

Similarly, Green OA publishers cannot expend as many resources on evaluating submissions as a closed publisher can because many of those who would have paid for access will now read the free open version instead. They simply don't have the income to sustain a high level of scrutiny. Consequently, promotion and tenure committee members find it increasingly difficult to differentiate between green or gold OA publishing and vanity publishing.

Yet, they must find a way around this dilemma. Failure to find satisfactory procedures to value open scholarship will only serve to disadvantage an institution in the quest to attract and retain top academic talent.

Even worse is the predicament of faculty who opt to create OA learning materials such as e-textbooks and other educational objects, posting them to open educational repositories that are not refereed or juried in some way. Since anyone can share open resources that are not subject to pre-publication assessment, the value of being "published" in these venues is questionable. Young, tenure track faculty may find themselves, like Sisyphus, exerting great effort toward open scholarship without promise of reward or relief. Publish or perish remains, but finding a traditional publishing venue is harder than ever and getting properly credited through open publishing is much trickier. They find themselves far more perishable than their predecessors.

Moving toward post-publication assessment

So if pre-publication assessment isn't working, what about post-publication assessment? Can we develop and implement systems and organizations that bring ex post facto assessment to the fore? We do have an exemplar in **Merlot**, an open repository with a fully developed peer review process coupled with crowd-sourced assessment. Merlot shows us that it has been and can be done. The trick will be to scale this concept to encompass all of scholarly publishing.

Recall that peer reviewers who work for publishers are usually compensated only by institutional recognition. Can that recognition encompass work done for organizations like Merlot? What about faculty who participate in crowd-sourced evaluation? Might those institutions find ways to encourage that too?

Publishers have failed to deliver high quality assessment of academic work under open access conditions. It's time to look elsewhere. Institutions of higher education can bridge this gap by crediting work in open repositories with peer review systems

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in place and by participating in the development of organizations like Merlot that conduct post-publication review in all areas of scholarly publishing. In other words, it is a simple matter of leadership.

Higher education is both the primary producer of scholarly work and the primary consumer of that same work. It is no longer necessary or prudent in this digital era to add unnecessary cost to scholarly publishing via outsourcing. The return is too small. It will actually cost higher education less overall to bring scholarly publishing in-house, not at the institutional level but at a much larger scale, so that critical publishing services, such as editing, can be made available to OER contributors in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

This is largely a matter of cultural and organizational, not technical, change. eCN

Dr. Frank Lowney is projects coordinator for the Digital Innovation Group at Georgia College & State University.

eCN Symposium

eCampus News announces *Symposium*, discourse from higher education professionals on topics of urgency and controversy, with commentary and response from the field published on our web site, ecampusnews.com. We are actively soliciting submissions and response to topics for the rest of the year:

May: How to Value Open Scholarship
We are seeking responses starting immediately at www.ecampusnews.com/symposium

June: Containing the Costs of a Higher Education Degree — Many higher ed institutions are turning to online to more cheaply deliver certain kinds of courses (large, introductory). Is this, in fact, a good or sustainable model? What role does technology have to reduce the costs of delivering a post-secondary education?
• Responses start: 6/1

August/September: New Models for Funding Technology: Critics say that traditional models for funding technology (capital vs. operational) have handcuffed higher ed leaders into using non-innovative technologies. How can funding models be improved so that they support, rather than thwart, innovation?
Participant query: 5/1 • Submissions deadline: 6/1 • Responses start: 8/17

October/November: Suggestions for our last Symposium topic are being accepted. Deadline: 7/1
For more information on each topic and/or to submit a 100-word submission query, contact Meris Stansbury: **mstansbury@ecampusnews.com**

eSchool Media Inc.

eCampus News covers the intersection of technology and innovation in higher education. We focus on how technology can help colleges deliver instruction more effectively, enhance the student experience, and keep costs down – helping campus leaders in their search for a more sustainable business model as the higher-education landscape evolves.

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Co-Founder Larry Siegelman 1954–2002

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humanities and even some social sciences where the research output has traditionally been a monographic print publication.

Preaching to the choir

Libraries have been vocal proponents of Open Access publishing and have tried to helm the movement of aligning Open Access publishing with promotion criteria into mainstream tenure processes, as well as work with faculty to ensure that Open Access publications get the same credibility as their mature and traditional print counterparts.

Given the rising costs of journal subscriptions and the nightmare of author rights (where most authors sign away their rights to the publishing vendors), libraries have long realized that reforms in scholarly publishing are due. Their support notwithstanding, until those Open Access reforms and alternative models are adopted, instituted, and applied by universities and faculty, these models will stay just that – models, and not policies.

New publishing also means social media

Another consideration for reimagining publishing in this digital age is how social media affects scholarly research. Instagram and Twitter rule the roost in the modes for instant exchange and flow of information and SnapChat is the de facto insta-output channel. The question of how universities and libraries can capture the research and immediate outcomes that our researchers and faculty disseminate is becoming pivotal to the advancement of research goals.

For example, a research lab outcome that was shared between two researchers using Snapchat, Instagram, or Twitter could be crucial to another group of researchers in another part of the world; but without a communal platform to share this Open Access research or these building blocks of scholarship, the moment of collaboration is lost. Also, per traditional norms in academia, scholarship that is not in an H-index journal is not credible scholarship that can be used for furthering research in a meaningful way.

Fortunately, this entrenched mindset about scholarly publishing is increasingly coming under question by younger faculty who see the future of scholarship in a much different way than their academic forebears.

All hope is not lost

A growing number of junior faculty are experimenting with dynamic and more engaging ways to collaborate and distribute their creative scholarship. As Stevan Harnad argues in his 2003 article on the research cycle in Information Services & Use "Researchers do research in order to make an impact – so that their findings will have maximal effect on the present and future course of learned inquiry" [3] Harnad is being joined by more and more like-minded academics to make a decisive case (and rightly so) for universities, scholarly societies and faculty to move towards publishing that is not bound by the shackles of vendors and publishers.

For instance, the California University System actively encourages faculty to publish in Open Access journals [4] to ensure that authors retain the rights to their works, and faculty promotion and tenure portfolios are not put at risk for publishing in Open Access journals.

Indeed, there is an additional case to be made for publishing on non-journal Open Access platforms; for example: academic writing in blogs, on websites, or even in e-laboratory notebooks is on the rise. Libraries are currently making efforts to capture this data as part of e-archives and institutional repositories, but these innovative channels have yet to seep into the promotion and tenure criteria as acceptable forms of scholarship.

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Moving into the future

Needless to say, there are ample questions that surround scholarship produced via these emerging channels. Yet, aren't these the same questions that have plagued traditional print publishing (and still do)? To cite only one example, quite a few high index journals have had to, in recent years, retract articles they published when these articles became marred by controversy thanks to plagiarized data or unreproducible or flawed data [5].

Scholarship can be flawed, no matter if the publishing platform is Open or closed. If anything, when scholarship is published in an Open Access mode, there are more eyes looking at the information and vetting it, thereby allowing for a more thorough analysis and dissection over a blind, three-person, peer-reviewed process.

Promotion and tenure committees and rank committees at universities, which are comprised of peers of the same discipline, should analyze the quality of the content and not just the h.index of the journal that it was published in, and need to be mindful that open access journals (depending on their structure) can have a peer review process which is just as stringent as that of those journals that are behind a paywall. Committees should also be conscious of the considerably higher impact of scholarship disseminated through open publishing, as it lends itself to more exposure over subscription-based journals or pricey hardcover monographs. And this should be a criterion that factors into the promotion and tenure policies.

Beyond the tenure process, each discipline's Academy also needs to consider more than just traditional faculty research and start to look to interactive projects and experiments which could lead to new research projects. Information, when shared openly, spurs unexpected human interaction, which leads to more complex intellectual developments, and Open Access is the driving mechanism. Open Access is just a conduit, but what it opens up is a far more robust dialogue about teaching, frameworks, interactions, and interconnected research. And that is one of the many vital things that academia needs to focus on as it shapes up for the "university of the future." eCN

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How technology can reduce growing costs for high-demand student services

Three critical services can help attract and retain today's students—and raise efficiency and lower costs.

By Meris Stansbury, Editor of eCampus News

As campus IT departments move to **on-demand** models—ecosystems that support fully-customized and personalized options—for student services and campus functions, it's also critical to provide these services at a lower over-time cost.

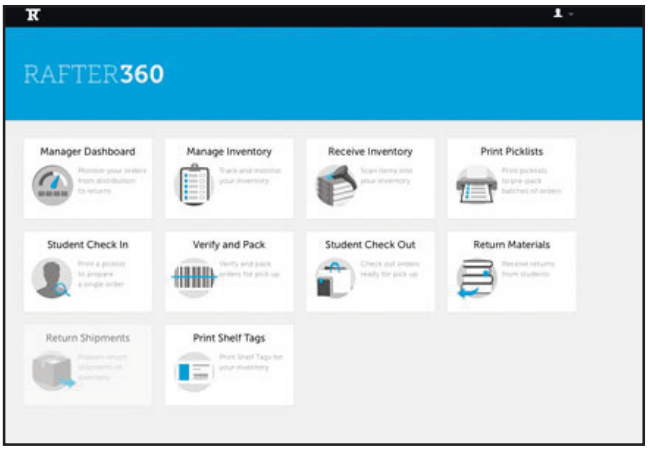
While a full-blown on-demand model may not be feasible for all institutions at the moment, there are technologies available today that can be part of an on-demand approach to students services. Below we describe a few.

Textbook services

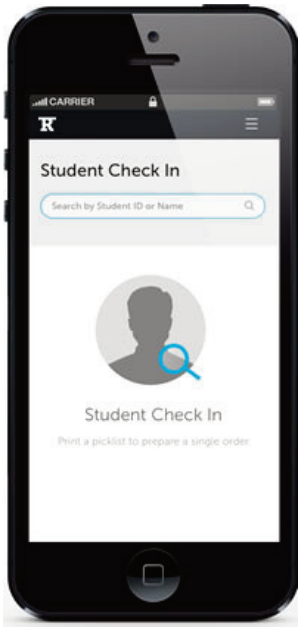
With the spiraling cost of course materials burdening students and institutions, Rafter, a course materials management company [previously known as BookRenter], offers **Rafter360**™ –a tech-based solution that enables a textbooks-in-tuition model for any campus.

After students register for their courses, they are automatically provided 100 percent of their required materials for class,. Two colleges currently using Rafter360, Thomas More College in Kentucky and Schreiner University of Texas, have already reported students saving 55 percent and 54 percent respectively on the costs of textbooks.

For students, Rafter360 offers a flat rate price that has the potential to save them over 50 percent of traditional costs. This reduced fee is factored directly into their tuition, making course materials a predictable and budgeted expense, notes the company. Rafter360's price is individualized per school based on a proprietary algorithm that takes into account each school's unique historical textbook adoption and course enrollment data.



"It was clear there needed to be a better way to take control over the skyrocketing costs of textbooks and make sure that students have the content and materials they need to be successful," said Sara Leoni, CEO of Rafter. "With Rafter360, we changed the game by designing the program to fully automate the course materials process. We looked painstakingly at every angle to make sure our solution would benefit all stakeholders – students, faculty, and campuses – with greatly reduced costs for students, freedom of choice for faculty when choosing course materials, and ease-of-use for administration and staff.



With Rafter360, once a student is registered for their courses, professors assign materials (in print or digital format) and the system then manages the process "seamlessly behind the

scenes,". "All students need to do is pick up their package of materials waiting for them at the campus bookstore or the campus can opt to have the entire order sent to students' homes. Students log in to the system to start using any digital materials. Based on a library model, when the academic session is over, students return the textbooks to the campus store and keep or recycle used workbooks and trade materials."

Rafter360 says that it aims to help colleges differentiate themselves as student advocates and technology innovators, as well as create a path to the future as instructional materials evolve from print textbooks into digital experiences.

According to Bill Muse, VP of Administration and Finance at Schreiner University, "For Schreiner to get on the leading edge like we have by offering a books-in-tuition solution, it was really critical that we were able to partner with a provider like Rafter. We could not have done this on our own. Students love the convenience and the level of service in the bookstore. It's a win-win and we are delighted."

Mobile services

Consider it almost like Amazon, but for staff and student services on campus.

According to the University of Maryland, which has partnered with **rSmart** and **Internet2**, the University will provide access to approximately 130 campus services in one location, from any computer or mobile device.

With search and app-store-like features, the newly launched platform aims to simplify access (while reducing maintenance and personnel costs), to services ranging from class registration to email, and replicates the communication capabilities and online shopping experiences people are accustomed to using.

"The central question of the cloud-based solution is 'What would you like to do?,' and it offers UMD's more than 37,000 students and 9,000 faculty and staff one-stop shopping for Web apps and services, the ability to personalize their view by picking favorites, opportunities to provide service feedback–including the option to rank UMD services with stars–and more," said a University spokesperson in a statement.

The new platform, **One.UMD** replaces the MyUMD portal, with the goal of enhancing access to University services provided by the Office of the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, the Division of Student Affairs, the Division of Information Technology, and others.

"We are partnering throughout the university to give Maryland students, faculty, and staff a central location where they can quickly search and connect with university services ranging from making transcript requests to getting the campus map in an online marketplace format," said University of Maryland Vice President and CIO Eric Denna.

UMD's Division of Information Technology will continue to work with UMD partners to include additional university services on the new platform. rSmart's OneCampus is available to the University of Maryland and to all of Internet2's higher education members as part of Internet2's NET+ initiative.

The decision to create the new platform also came as the University realized smartphone and tablet use continues to rise, and needed an efficient and cost-effective way to organize its Web-based services. UMD says that OneCampus offers the ability to collect "valuable user feedback to help further strengthen university service offerings and the ways those services are delivered."

Maryland was first introduced to the OneCampus solution in its role as a participant in Internet2 NET+. UMD joined technology leaders from Indiana University, the University of Utah, the University of Pittsburgh, Clemson University, the University of Nebraska Omaha, and Brigham Young University-Idaho to collaboratively guide and shape the Internet2 NET+ OneCampus offering for higher education institutions.

"After completing the Internet2 NET+ service validation process, we recognized that

Costs

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OneCampus has the potential to transform how we deliver application services to our stakeholders," said Denna. "The modern platform and search functionality will allow our campus community to quickly find and access a wide range of services and applications from any device."

Career services

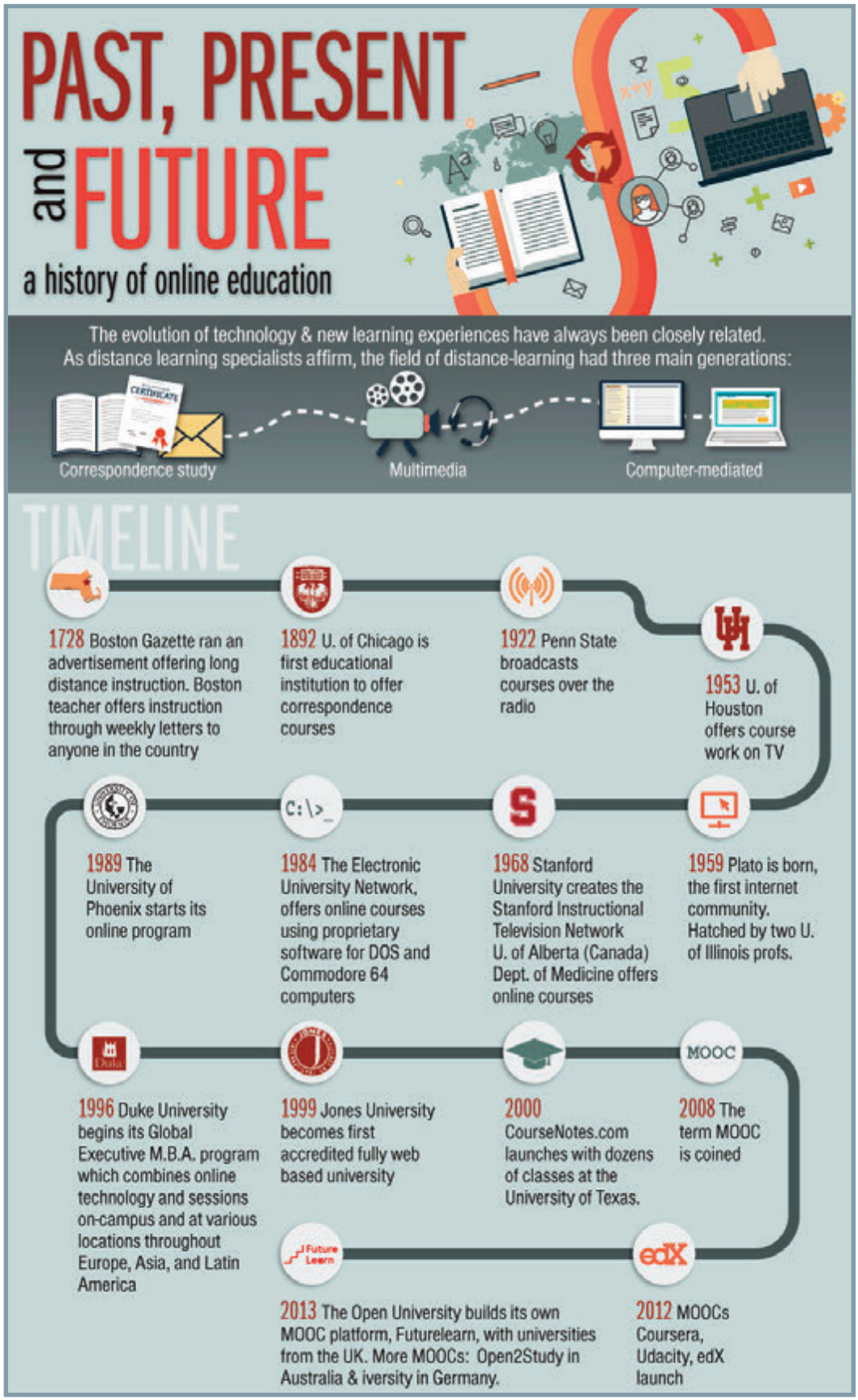
Many colleges and universities are reimagining traditional transcripts in both form and substance—and at a lower cost—from paper sent through mail to electronic images or standardized data exchanged securely online and extended to document a lifetime of learning.

But the first benefits of electronic transcripts for any institution are efficiency and cost. By implementing **Parchment eTranscripts**, Furman University says it was able to decrease processing time from 4 to 6 hours daily to only 30 minutes, a time savings of 87 percent.

Taking transcript requests is now 100 percent automated at Furman, which saves data entry time. Plus, Parchment allows Furman to collect a small $5 processing fee from students.

"Furman has paid nothing out of pocket for our Parchment Send solution," explained Brad Barron, associate dean and registrar at Furman. "From implementation to sending 20,000 transcripts, it hasn't cost us a cent."

According to Barron, the University fully integrated Parchment's solution in less than 4 months. "If you are familiar with how IT integrations work, that's amazing," he emphasized. "Parchment has been a fantastic solution for Furman, including how the solution interfaces effectively with our enterprise-wide administrative system, Ellucian Colleague." eCN



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