Hello!

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Openly Obsessed

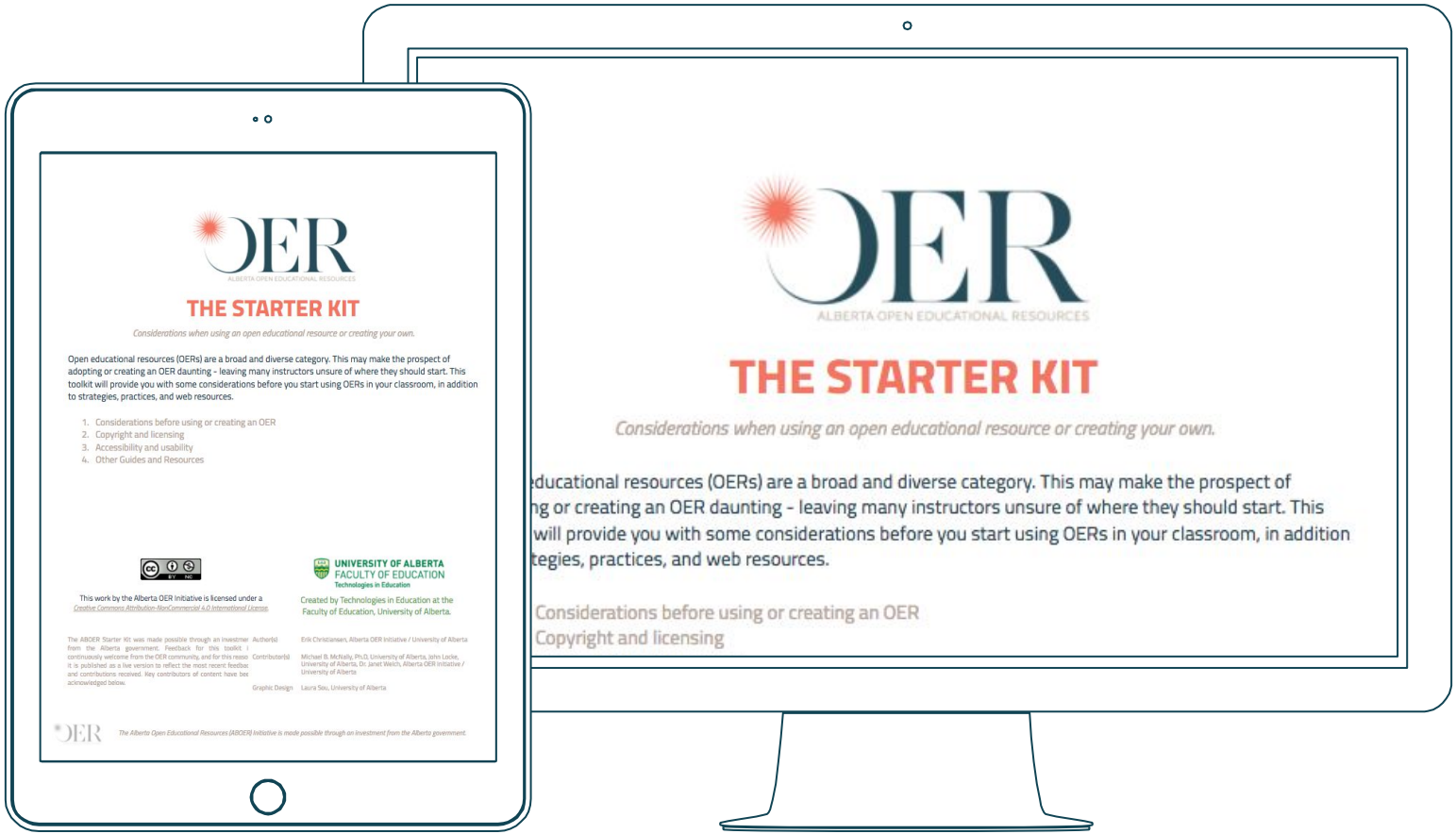
Open Educational Resources Policy in Western Canada & Conceptualizing Openness in Higher Education

Definition of OER

"digitized materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research" (OECD, 2007)

Background

Why did I become so obsessed with open educational resources?



(McNutt & Christiansen, 2016)

1

Open Enough?

Eight Factors to Consider When Transitioning from Closed to Open Courses and Resources: A Conceptual Framework

Research Question

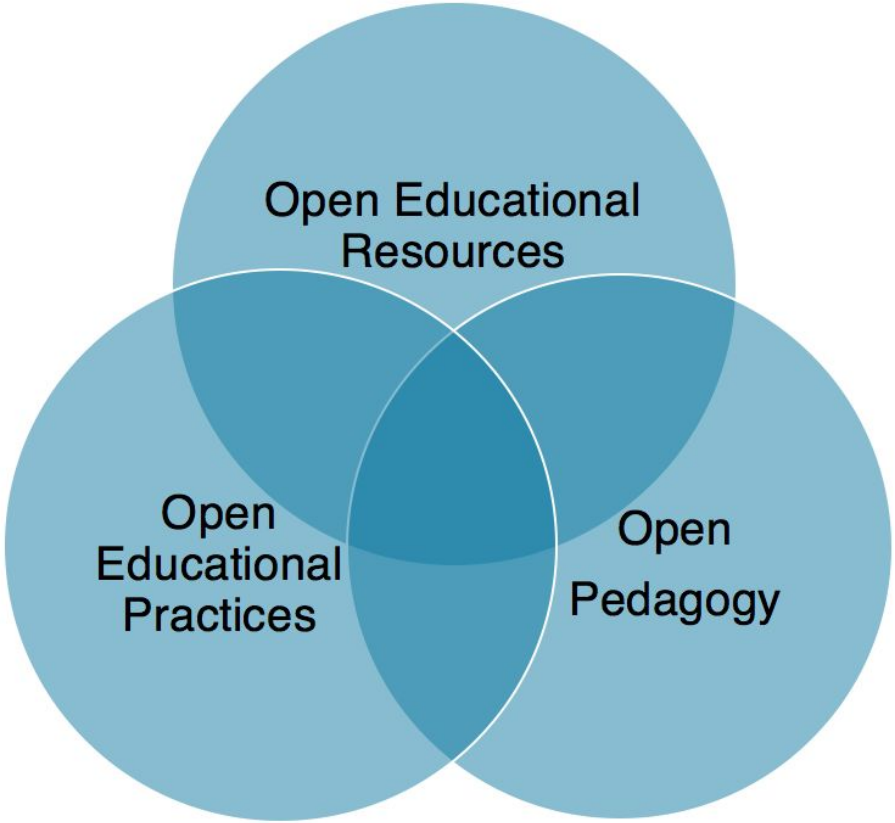
What are the primary factors that educators need to consider when transitioning to OER?

If each of these factors could be placed on a conceptual scale from “most closed” to “most open”, what would be the implications?

Goal

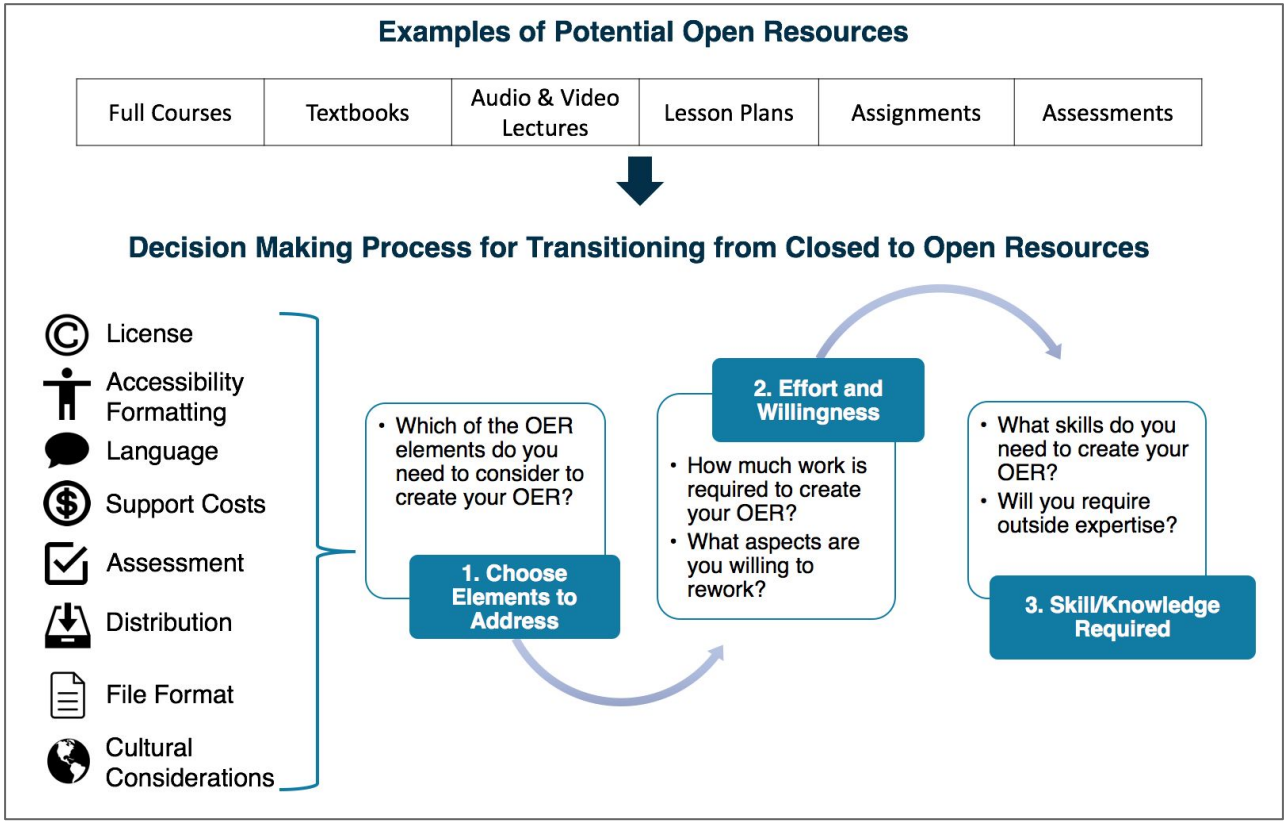
To help educators understand the choices and consequences when moving to OER

Conflated definitions of openness



(Christiansen & McNally, 2017)

Eight Factors to Consider When Transitioning to OER



(Christiansen & McNally, 2017)

Conceptualizing openness: Choose Elements

OER Factors	Most Closed	Mixed	Most Open
Copyright/Open Licensing Frameworks	Copyright/all rights reserved	Less Open CC License Terms (NC/ND and arguably SA)	CC-BY License/ Public Domain
Accessibility Formatting	Not formatted for accessibility	Some accessibility formatting (e.g. closed captioning)	Fully accessibility (e.g. compliance w/ US HHS 508 Compliant)
Language	Single Language (usually English)	Bi-lingual or includes guides/steps for translation	Multi-Lingual or includes guides/steps for translation and is bilingual
Support Costs	Paid resources	Licensed library resources	Openly Licensed Resources
Assessment	No assessment available	Self-assessment, but not meaningful (questions only)	Meaningful self assessment (questions and answers)
Digital Distribution	Closed/availalbe only to insiders (e.g. via LMS)	Open but low discoverability (e.g. institutional repository)	Open and high discoverability (e.g. YouTube or broadly avaialble repository (e.g. Merlot, BCcampus)
File Format	PDF or other non-editable format	Editable format but proprietary software (e.g. Word)	Fully open format (e.g. html)
Cultural Considerations	No consideration for outside cultural users/includes culturally specific materials/content	Some considerations for outside cultural users	Generally devoid of culturally specific material

Some Insights

- Lack of consensus in literature surrounding meaning of “openness” in education
- Copyright *most* important factor
- File formats factor for videos is vague
- “Most open” scenario can have pedagogical downsides
- Maximizing openness not always possible or necessary

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A Mixed Bag

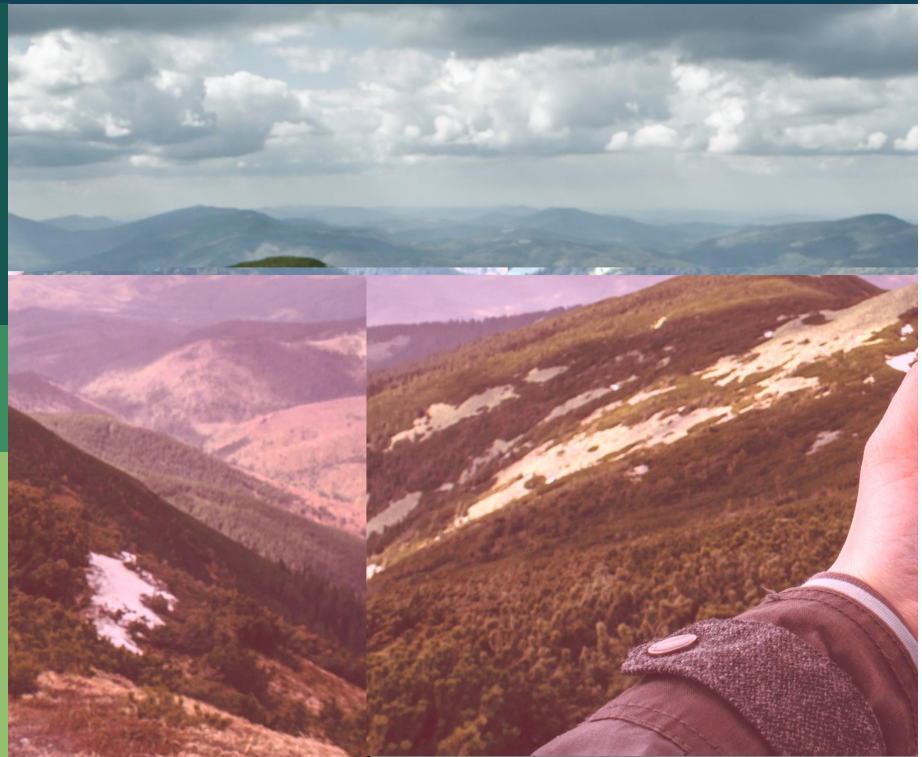
Open Educational Resources Policy Directions in Western Canada

Research Question

What are the overarching OER policy directions, at the university and provincial government level, in Western Canada?

Do the four Western Provinces have substantially different OER priorities?

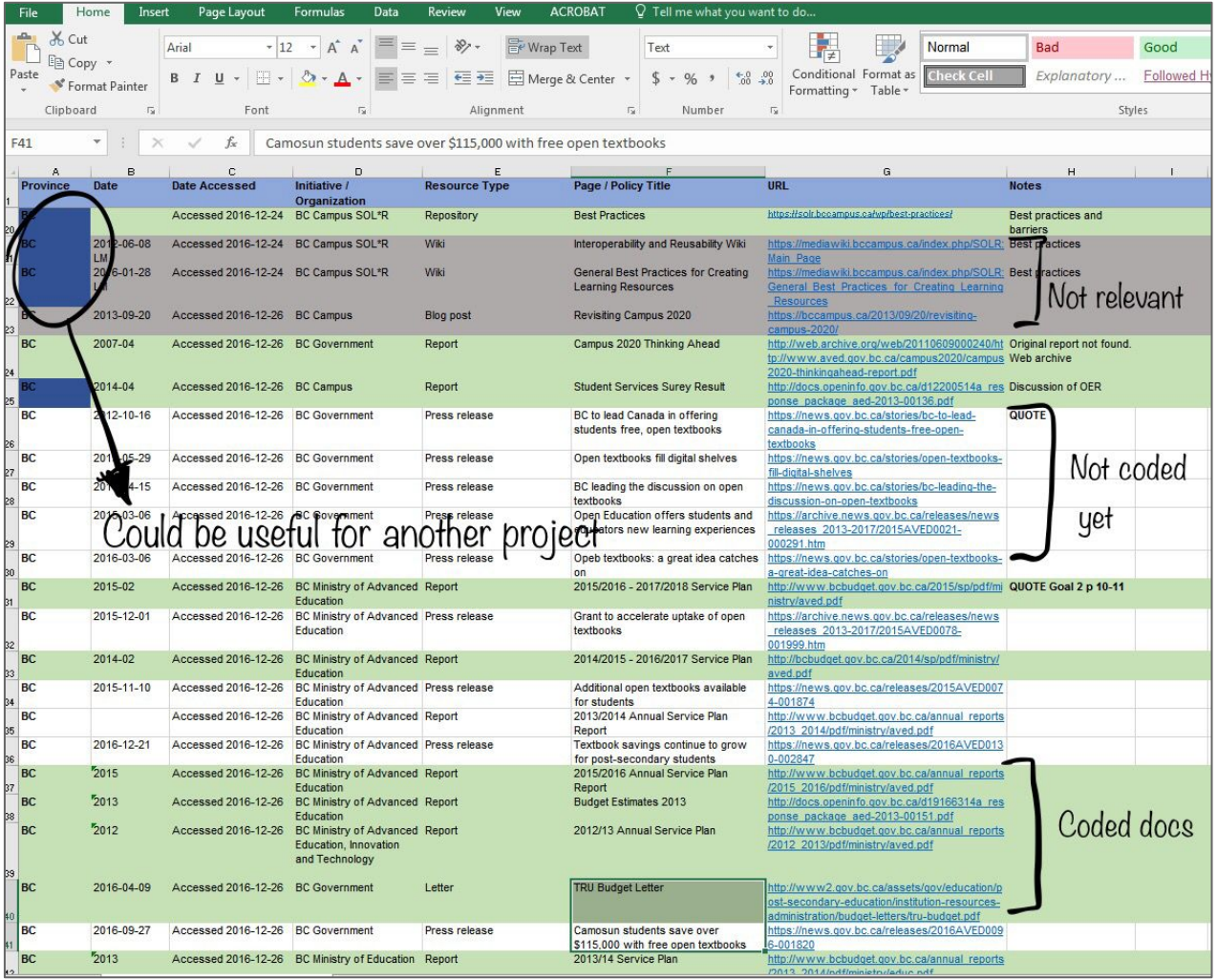
Goal



Provide a more comprehensive understanding of where we're putting our efforts

What are these policy documents you speak of?

- Ministry/university Strategic plans
- Institutional policies
- Funding initiatives
- Provincial OER initiative websites
- Budget letters…



Tedious coding of documents

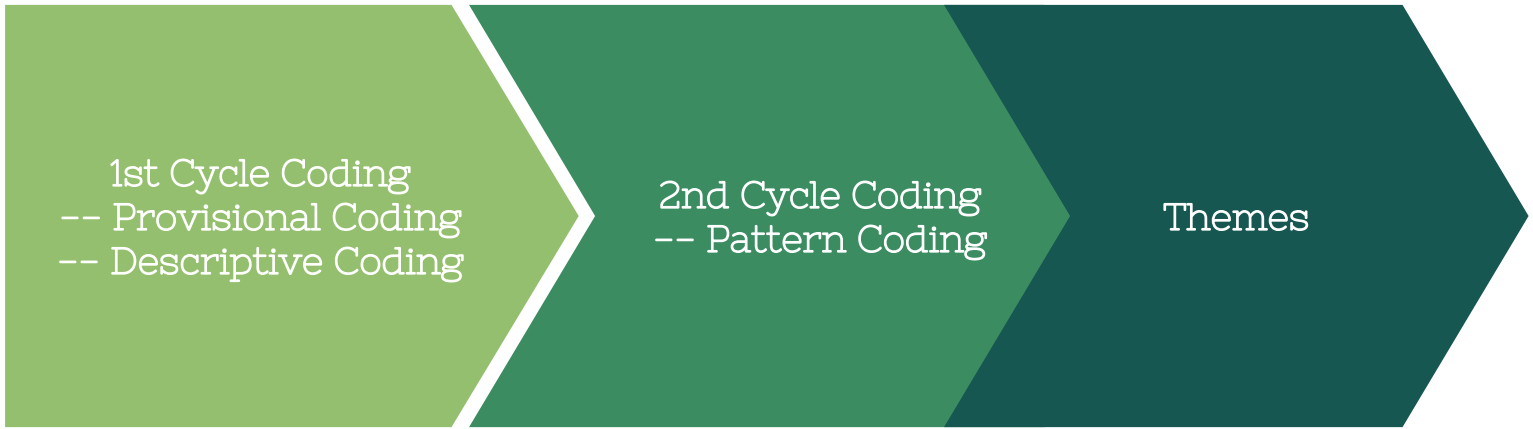
Documents represent thousands of pages

Reviewing specific mentions to OER and open education

Examining text at sentence and paragraph level

(Christiansen, 2017)

Qualitative Policy Analysis



150

Policy documents coded

417

Individual text snippets

18

Code Categories

Nine Major Themes

- Societal benefit
- Benefit to learning
- Development, training, and support
- Quality control
- Reputation and promotion
- Collaboration and leadership
- Copyright and intellectual property
- Cost savings
- Technology, usability, and accessibility

Analysis (in progress)

References

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Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash

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