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00:00:01,320 --> 00:00:10,350

Hi everyone. I'm Steven Dell and I am currently the co social media editor for Photo Libraries in the Academy.

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00:00:10,830 --> 00:00:16,230

And this is another in our series of interviews with portal authors.

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00:00:16,830 --> 00:00:28,350

This one is sort of special because this is an interview with the authors of the best article of 2022.

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00:00:30,180 --> 00:00:39,540

We've been handing out this award for many years now, and I can tell you, having been one of the editors for a number of years,

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00:00:39,540 --> 00:00:45,269

it does not get any easier to select one article to win the award because we

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00:00:45,270 --> 00:00:49,829

have so many great high quality research articles that we publish every year.

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00:00:49,830 --> 00:00:54,959

But I think there was a real consensus around this particular article this year,

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00:00:54,960 --> 00:01:04,650

and I don't think it took us all as much time as it usually does to find our award winner for 2022.

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00:01:05,490 --> 00:01:11,490

So I want to introduce two of the four authors of the articles that are here with us today.

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00:01:11,880 --> 00:01:21,330

First, we have Seana Smith Jagers, who is director of the Student Success Research Lab at the Ohio State University.

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00:01:21,480 --> 00:01:24,030

So welcome, Shauna. Thank you for joining us today.

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00:01:24,510 --> 00:01:35,640

And we also have Katie Prieto, who is the assistant professor of higher education and student affairs at the University of Southern Mississippi.

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00:01:35,880 --> 00:01:44,400

And Katie was obviously previously at the Ohio State University at the time that the research was conducted and the article was written.

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00:01:45,180 --> 00:01:47,910

So again, thank you for joining us as well, Katie.

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00:01:48,060 --> 00:01:57,180

And I also do want to mention that the other coauthors of the article are Marcos de Rivera and Amanda El.

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00:01:57,710 --> 00:02:04,650

So unfortunately they were not able to join us today, but we appreciate their contributions to Portal as well.

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00:02:05,910 --> 00:02:11,970

So as I said, this is the article was titled Using Affordable Course Materials.

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00:02:13,100 --> 00:02:17,420

Instructors motivations, approaches and outcomes.

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00:02:17,540 --> 00:02:25,560

And if you had not had a chance to read the article, you can still find it available on our portal preprint site.

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00:02:25,580 --> 00:02:35,030

If you just go to the website for Portal Journal at John Hopkins University Press, you can access the article freely.

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00:02:35,330 --> 00:02:39,230

It's a preprint that's open to everyone, even if you're not a subscriber to the portal.

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00:02:39,890 --> 00:02:43,070

So again, thanks very much, Seana and Katie, for joining us.

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00:02:43,070 --> 00:02:52,100

And I want to jump in to my first question, which is I actually did a count of the number of articles that we published in 2022,

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00:02:52,100 --> 00:03:00,050

and there are 46 feature articles is quite a few to then go through that and try to figure out which were our top three,

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00:03:00,290 --> 00:03:06,630

which we then discussed and narrowed down to our eventual awardee.

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00:03:07,520 --> 00:03:14,929

And I wanted to ask you what you thought it was about the article that resonated so strongly

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00:03:14,930 --> 00:03:23,090

with the portal editors that we had the strong consensus around it as our best article of 2022.

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00:03:24,780 --> 00:03:30,810

Sure. Well, I think it has started. First, let me just say thank you so much for the honor in answering this question.

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00:03:30,840 --> 00:03:38,850

I want to center humility as well. Right. Because I don't think we were seeking awards when with when we set out to publish this.

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00:03:38,860 --> 00:03:43,680

But I think the article has several strengths that might be relevant to your readers.

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00:03:43,800 --> 00:03:53,280

One, it moves the conversation about open educational resources and other affordable learning materials beyond questions of affordability.

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00:03:53,550 --> 00:03:57,900

I think the research has centered that, and that is an important consideration.

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00:03:58,140 --> 00:04:05,520

But there was so much more here around instructor's pedagogy, and I'm excited that we were able to showcase that.

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00:04:06,030 --> 00:04:09,370

I also think there was a methodological richness to the piece.

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00:04:09,390 --> 00:04:15,840

We had a lot of fantastic qualitative data, and as a qualitative researcher, I love hearing participant voices.

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00:04:16,170 --> 00:04:21,510

But the way that we were able to embed the survey is to add some continuity to the conversations

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00:04:21,510 --> 00:04:26,400

and offer some numbers for folks who might resonate more with some quantitative pieces.

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00:04:26,700 --> 00:04:31,469

I think that was a strike. I also appreciated, and I'm sure we'll talk more about this,

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00:04:31,470 --> 00:04:39,540

that we were able to unpack different project types and demonstrate that we are an affordable learning materials are not a monolith.

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00:04:39,730 --> 00:04:48,059

There's so much nuance and the article got it that in preparing for our conversation today and rereading the article,

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00:04:48,060 --> 00:04:54,080

I was struck by how much data we had in kind of remembering what it looked like to go through all that.

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00:04:54,090 --> 00:05:01,440

It was a big undertaking and I was having some flashbacks to that and how we were able to tease all that nuance out.

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00:05:01,830 --> 00:05:04,200

I hope that people benefit from hearing that.

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00:05:04,920 --> 00:05:12,660

And then finally I'll say, I think that we offer some important implications for practice, and I'm sure we'll get into that as well.

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00:05:13,020 --> 00:05:21,929

But I think now from a faculty perspective, there's so much great literature out there that suggests new ideas for innovative pedagogy,

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00:05:21,930 --> 00:05:27,090

for incorporating different materials and approaches. And the big question is obvious, but how?

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00:05:27,690 --> 00:05:32,549

How do I do it? Where do I find support? What are the options available to me?

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00:05:32,550 --> 00:05:35,880

And I think we were able to spotlight some of that in this piece as well.

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00:05:36,750 --> 00:05:42,120

Yes. The the piece of the article that we did find very unique, I believe,

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00:05:42,120 --> 00:05:55,380

is that you broke things out by were they a creator or the doctor or some other approach to how they integrated OCR into their their teaching and.

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00:05:56,770 --> 00:06:04,420

I just wanted to follow up with a quick question. As you mention, you were getting a flashback of how much time was involved.

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00:06:04,750 --> 00:06:12,250

And I think people don't always sense that when they read these articles in your article, which has so deeply goes into the to the findings.

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00:06:12,910 --> 00:06:20,590

Could you estimate how much time your team spent on start to finish to get that project done?

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00:06:21,930 --> 00:06:30,480

Is it months and months? Well, I think we spent nearly two years writing this article, didn't we, Katie?

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00:06:31,380 --> 00:06:38,100

So and that was, you know, obviously we were working on many other projects at the same time, but I think a lot of it was just sort of the processing,

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00:06:38,100 --> 00:06:44,040  
the thought processing of working through all the data that we had and  
figuring out what is our storyline.

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00:06:44,050 --> 00:06:47,310  
Because we, we knew we had a lot of insights from it,

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00:06:47,310 --> 00:06:53,370  
but we it just took us a while to figure out how to structure it in a way  
that would make those insights clear to a reader.

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00:06:55,100 --> 00:07:00,160  
Yeah. Okay. So it doesn't sound outrageous to say two years.

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00:07:00,170 --> 00:07:06,650  
It's just a very deeply researched and incredibly well-written article  
that is time consuming.

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00:07:06,770 --> 00:07:14,060  
And we appreciate that you've made that effort. So for those who maybe  
didn't get a chance to delve into it as deeply as they should.

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00:07:14,450 --> 00:07:19,700  
Could you briefly summarize the article and some of your key findings?

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00:07:19,700 --> 00:07:26,210  
And if you did want to add it on, what was your original inspiration?

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00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:34,979  
To do this research? Well, our original inspiration was that there was a  
initiative that was happening at the university.

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00:07:34,980 --> 00:07:39,330  
It was a textbook affordability project that was providing faculty with  
grants

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00:07:39,330 --> 00:07:43,650  
to replace traditional textbooks with affordable digital learning  
materials,

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00:07:44,130 --> 00:07:46,530  
and that includes OCR and library materials.

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00:07:47,070 --> 00:07:58,500

And so the people who were running the project just were really excited and interested to get knowledge from it that they could use to to just

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00:07:58,500 --> 00:08:06,130

sort of see how useful the project was to faculty and students and then how they might want to tweak it in future years of the initiative.

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00:08:06,150 --> 00:08:15,060

So we focused on the first two years of the initiative, and then our findings did sort of help inform how the initiative unfolded in later years.

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00:08:16,260 --> 00:08:22,860

And the initiative was about cost savings, but it also wanted to encourage instructors to think about whether they could

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00:08:22,860 --> 00:08:26,430

innovate with new types of materials in a way that would improve student learning.

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00:08:28,230 --> 00:08:29,250

So in this study,

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00:08:29,760 --> 00:08:39,340

our first two years involved 30 instructors who taught 72 class sections across that time period that were across a wide variety of disciplines.

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00:08:39,360 --> 00:08:46,860

So we conducted interviews with 30 instructors to understand why they were motivated to adopt affordable materials,

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00:08:47,160 --> 00:08:51,120

why and how did they select and implement different types of materials?

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00:08:51,390 --> 00:08:55,049

And then did those new materials actually influence teaching and learning?

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00:08:55,050 --> 00:09:02,370

And as we alluded to earlier, what we found is four very different types of projects that instructors engaged in.

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00:09:02,370 --> 00:09:06,479

And for each type, the instructors had really different motivations and approaches.

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00:09:06,480 --> 00:09:10,380

So I'm just going to do a real quick spin through each of the four.

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00:09:10,530 --> 00:09:11,400

Yes, please go ahead.

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00:09:12,810 --> 00:09:21,780

So first was materials that were adopted pretty much wholesale or maybe with minor modifications from an existing open source textbook.

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00:09:21,780 --> 00:09:25,950

And this is what people typically think of when they think of OCR projects.

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00:09:26,520 --> 00:09:32,010

And the results for these weren't that surprising. The faculty were primarily motivated by cost savings.

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00:09:32,370 --> 00:09:37,020

They went with an existing textbook because they found one that was well aligned and no cost,

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00:09:37,470 --> 00:09:41,370

and they didn't really think it required any more time or effort than any other new textbook.

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00:09:41,370 --> 00:09:48,510

Adoption didn't really change their teaching didn't really change their students learning except that more students actually got the book.

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00:09:49,410 --> 00:09:56,130

And so we sort of think of this as a typical OCR story, but this was only four out of our 30 instructors.

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00:09:57,000 --> 00:10:02,040

The more common approach actually was new materials that the instructor created from scratch.

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00:10:02,910 --> 00:10:05,280

So these instructors were interested in cost savings,

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00:10:05,730 --> 00:10:12,030

but they were maybe more motivated by the desire to more closely align their materials to their learning goals.

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00:10:12,030 --> 00:10:16,620

And that included in some cases helping the students engage in deeper learning was one of

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00:10:16,620 --> 00:10:20,849

their goals and they felt like they couldn't find any existing materials that did this.

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00:10:20,850 --> 00:10:25,680

And they felt that the only way they could do this was to create new materials themselves.

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00:10:26,340 --> 00:10:32,760

And so their projects were a lot of work. They often were not fully done by the time they started using the materials in a given semester,

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00:10:32,760 --> 00:10:35,879

but they also found the process really exciting and interesting.

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00:10:35,880 --> 00:10:38,850

And so they were mostly okay with that level of work.

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00:10:38,850 --> 00:10:43,919

And they also thought that they were able to teach and that their students were able to learn more in depth.

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00:10:43,920 --> 00:10:47,160

And that was about a third of our instructors went that route.

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00:10:48,550 --> 00:10:53,020

And then there was a third approach, which was existing materials like library materials,

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00:10:53,020 --> 00:11:00,670

online videos or other sort of free web based content that was curated by the instructor, almost like a digital course packet.

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00:11:01,840 --> 00:11:03,969

And so they were also interested in cost savings,

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00:11:03,970 --> 00:11:10,550

but they really wanted to create more alignment between key learning objectives and their students goals and interests.

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00:11:10,570 --> 00:11:14,110

They wanted to be using more current sort of vibrant materials,

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00:11:14,980 --> 00:11:19,990

and they felt like this was a lot of work and it didn't always pay off as much as they hoped.

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00:11:20,050 --> 00:11:27,820

Sometimes they felt it was hard for the students to shift between the many different types of materials and synthesize their learning across them.

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00:11:28,090 --> 00:11:32,469

And the instructors also had a lot of prep issues that would run into technical issues like online,

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00:11:32,470 --> 00:11:35,260

like breaking and having to be fixed and things like that.

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00:11:36,680 --> 00:11:44,420

So then the final approach, which about nine of our instructors took are almost another third, was what we call more of an amalgam approach.

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00:11:44,450 --> 00:11:49,030

So this was weaving together newly created and curated content.

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00:11:49,040 --> 00:11:53,899

And so often what this meant was like writing some kind of like a backbone narrative

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00:11:53,900 --> 00:11:58,400

or a connective framework that sort of how to pull these disparate materials

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00:11:58,400 --> 00:12:02,810  
into something that felt more coherent to students and provided more context about

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00:12:03,050 --> 00:12:07,400  
why are we looking at this type of writing or this type of article or whatever?

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00:12:08,180 --> 00:12:15,770  
And these were the instructors who reported the greatest positive changes in terms of their teaching and their students depth of learning.

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00:12:15,780 --> 00:12:24,230  
So one of the instructors told us that their students now leave the class more curious about the phenomenon that we studied.

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00:12:24,560 --> 00:12:32,390  
Instead of thinking that we've answered everything like you do when the textbook just seems to be the source of all truth, and there's only one truth.

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00:12:33,830 --> 00:12:37,340  
So. So that's the general. Quick summary.

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00:12:38,540 --> 00:12:44,540  
Good. Thanks for for for putting it together for us in a concise fashion.

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00:12:44,840 --> 00:12:49,000  
And that was a kind of a core message in the article.

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00:12:49,010 --> 00:12:52,700  
You know, you had these different types of projects that faculty are working on,

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00:12:52,700 --> 00:12:58,429  
and that is the motivations that they bring to it or something that we can learn from.

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00:12:58,430 --> 00:13:02,840  
So. My next question is about what's the big takeaway?

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00:13:03,350 --> 00:13:07,610

And you did all the research, you interviewed the faculty, collected the data and analyzed it.

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00:13:08,330 --> 00:13:14,720

And in particular, one of the most important things about the article that I found useful.

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00:13:15,110 --> 00:13:18,890

Okay, so how can I use this in my own institution?

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00:13:20,230 --> 00:13:24,760

To further our advance, our oyo oyo, our initiative.

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00:13:24,780 --> 00:13:28,610

So I mean, can you address that for just a bit? Sure.

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00:13:28,630 --> 00:13:35,650

So I think first, when libraries or initiatives are promoting a we are they should discuss cost,

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00:13:35,650 --> 00:13:40,930

but they shouldn't only discuss costs and helping faculty see the way that they can use these

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00:13:40,930 --> 00:13:45,600

opportunities to enhance their teaching and enhance student learning is going to resonate with folks.

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00:13:45,610 --> 00:13:50,679

I think we learned that and Shawna suggested that these are big undertakings and

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00:13:50,680 --> 00:13:54,639

they didn't always get done and they didn't always get done perfectly first.

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00:13:54,640 --> 00:14:03,250

That's okay. This is an iterative process, but I think the idea of where folks can partner is also a huge implication.

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00:14:03,580 --> 00:14:12,580

We found that being collaborative wasn't only helpful, it was inspiring for folks and a big reason they wanted to engage in this work.

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00:14:13,090 --> 00:14:19,630

Helping people understand that if you're interested or even just curious about open and an affordability,

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00:14:19,810 --> 00:14:22,150

there are people on your campuses who can help you.

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00:14:22,300 --> 00:14:27,850

Your librarians are there to help you navigate copyright, to help you navigate putting the pieces together,

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00:14:27,850 --> 00:14:38,440

locating sources you can partner across your department, even in creative ways that help better align your materials with department wide initiatives.

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00:14:38,920 --> 00:14:44,500

And so that partnership piece, that collaborative piece for me is central to this work,

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00:14:45,160 --> 00:14:51,309

helping people understand that they are not alone if they want to embark on a project of this type and

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00:14:51,310 --> 00:14:58,420

that there's probably funding sources available or other types of material support to get the work done.

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00:14:58,810 --> 00:15:06,610

We also saw and suggest that there are some ways to even involve your students in your course material creation process.

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00:15:06,850 --> 00:15:09,160

That's one of the beautiful things about Open.

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00:15:09,520 --> 00:15:18,550

It is iterative, and so embedding this in course assignments can help you refine and revise and add to your materials as well.

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00:15:20,230 --> 00:15:24,219

Yeah, I would definitely cosign all that, Katie said.

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00:15:24,220 --> 00:15:34,240

And I think that if you're a librarian and a faculty instructor comes to you to express their interest in adapting affordable materials,

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00:15:34,240 --> 00:15:36,400

or you're talking with them at a cocktail party.

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00:15:37,060 --> 00:15:47,170

The first step, the first thing to ask them is to talk through their motivation and their goals, because if their motivation is purely cost savings,

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00:15:47,170 --> 00:15:52,540

then the next step is probably to look for an open textbook and you can sort of work together to think

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00:15:52,540 --> 00:15:57,670

about like what kind of textbook are you looking for and what do you want that textbook to serve?

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00:15:58,450 --> 00:16:04,270

But if their motivation is improving the alignment of their course materials or their students depth of learning,

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00:16:04,540 --> 00:16:08,139

then you can say, Well, there may be an open textbook out there that can do that,

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00:16:08,140 --> 00:16:14,860

but often faculty will find that they might want to look at some other options and sort of walk them through the

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00:16:14,860 --> 00:16:20,050

other three options that we had in the article and the pros and cons of those options that they are more work.

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00:16:21,430 --> 00:16:28,690

And that way the faculty member can really have some time to make an informed decision about whether this is a

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00:16:28,690 --> 00:16:33,670

straight forward textbook adoption or is this a different kind of a project and how are they going to plan that out?

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00:16:35,500 --> 00:16:42,130

That's a really important point that you both shared, that when you do get into the conversations about course materials,

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00:16:42,820 --> 00:16:47,440

I really like that idea of starting with what's your motivation here?

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00:16:47,890 --> 00:16:53,440

As opposed to you could save a lot of money for your students and make their education more affordable.

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00:16:53,440 --> 00:16:56,740

If you did this as opposed to Why do you want to do it?

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00:16:57,340 --> 00:17:04,000

Why is it important to you? And I think that's what we're hearing from and from the advocacy perspective.

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00:17:04,540 --> 00:17:09,549

So as the publishers and producers of textbooks and bookstores are coming up with

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00:17:09,550 --> 00:17:14,900

programs to reduce costs so that they can compete with the narrative of go,

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00:17:14,920 --> 00:17:24,610

we are and we have to find other ways to encourage faculty and motivate them to continue with these kinds of initiatives and projects.

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00:17:25,120 --> 00:17:26,440

So just to wrap up,

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00:17:26,800 --> 00:17:33,850

is there anything you can share about some of your current research interests and where you're where you're headed with some of your projects?

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00:17:34,950 --> 00:17:41,190

Well, I want to first plug that. We do have another report that's freely available online that might interest some of your readers.

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00:17:41,430 --> 00:17:51,450

It's focused on a statewide textbook affordability primary, Ohio, so it involved cross institutional teams of instructors and librarians.

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00:17:51,690 --> 00:17:55,050

So if you want to Google it and Google Scholar, it's called Try It,

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00:17:55,350 --> 00:18:00,900

Make It Better Perfected Implementing a statewide textbook affordability initiative.

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00:18:01,230 --> 00:18:08,400

Okay. And I don't have another OCR project on the horizon at the moment, but I'm still working in the affordability space.

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00:18:08,880 --> 00:18:14,790

Right now, I'm helping to lead a study that's focused on the university's new student debt reduction initiative,

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00:18:15,030 --> 00:18:19,050

the Scarlet and Gray Advantage Initiative. And so we're really excited about that.

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00:18:19,560 --> 00:18:28,130

Now, Katie is is on the tenure track now, and I think it is also broadening out her research.

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00:18:29,120 --> 00:18:37,830

Yeah. So first, I'll also just offer a quick plug and thank you to the Open Education Group who are sponsored by the Hewlett Foundation.

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00:18:38,120 --> 00:18:45,649

Both Dr. Rivera and I were fortunate to be our fellows and they are recruiting for their current cohort.

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00:18:45,650 --> 00:18:48,610

So we have folks are interested in our research.

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00:18:48,620 --> 00:18:55,340

There is support out there for that and I'm just grateful for the opportunity I've had to engage in that work.

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00:18:55,580 --> 00:19:03,680

And while my research agenda is taking a different direction as I've gone out on my own now beyond the Ohio State University,

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00:19:04,640 --> 00:19:14,870

I still very much value we are. So my work largely centers looking at the experiences of LGBTQ plus college students and their identities.

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00:19:15,650 --> 00:19:21,530

But what I will say is that we've done some digging into how OCR can help us diversify our.

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00:19:26,660 --> 00:19:29,360

Well, of course. I think we lost Katie there for a moment.

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00:19:29,960 --> 00:19:37,730

Guess she is referring to we have another article out that is about how we can help you diversify course materials.

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00:19:38,510 --> 00:19:41,600

So, Katie, you got frozen for a moment. All right.

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00:19:42,260 --> 00:19:43,770

I think I'm back. Thank you. Yes.

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00:19:44,000 --> 00:19:55,010

And so anyway, while I don't have a project currently, I'm hoping to dig into how we can spotlight Minoritized identities through open efforts.

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00:19:55,910 --> 00:20:03,739

Great. We will look forward to your future research and please always consider a portal for doesn't mean we're mostly about libraries,

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00:20:03,740 --> 00:20:10,640

but we're also interested in many other topics, particularly in some of our feature pieces that we have.

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00:20:11,000 --> 00:20:13,190

So again, Katie and Shauna,

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00:20:13,190 --> 00:20:23,179

I want to thank you for making yourselves available for this video interview and enlightening our readers on some of the finer points of your article,

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00:20:23,180 --> 00:20:36,829

and I encourage them to delve into it. And again, congratulations to you and your colleagues for winning our best article published in 2022 award,

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00:20:36,830 --> 00:20:44,900

and we'll have all sorts of fanfare later on when we get to the annual ALA conference.

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00:20:44,920 --> 00:20:49,130

So again, thanks and best wishes and good luck in your future endeavors.

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00:20:49,730 --> 00:20:53,300

Thank you so much. All right. Goodbye. We appreciate it.