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Exploring Open Pedagogy Principles: A Qualitative Study of Undergraduate Experiences

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ABSTRACT

Open pedagogy, characterised by students creating or co-creating artefacts that others may use, offers transformative opportunities for students to move beyond passive learning into active content creation. This qualitative study examines the experiences of 25 undergraduate students who engage with open pedagogy principles, including creation-centred learning, collaboration, audience engagement, and the integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Creative Commons (CC) licensing. Using surveys and interviews, we identified three key themes: the importance of real audiences, authentic connections over prescribed collaborations, and rethinking the role of Creative Commons. Findings suggest that open pedagogy enhances student engagement and provides meaningful, real-world applications for academic assignments, but additional emphasis on CC licensing education is needed. Implications for pedagogy and instructional design are discussed..

KEYWORDS

college students, interviews, open pedagogy, undergraduate experiences, student engagement, creative commons

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INTRODUCTION

Open pedagogy is defined as "any pedagogy informed by the practitioners' conscious identification with the open movement, open access, and OER (open educational resources)" (Witt, 2020, p. 68). Open pedagogy builds on open educational practices such as teaching with OER, which are openly licensed teaching and learning materials that students can access without financial barriers (Atkinson, 2022; Wiley & Hilton, 2018). Importantly, open pedagogy challenges traditional instructional models by positioning students as creators and collaborators rather than passive recipients of knowledge. This approach aligns with global efforts to make education more participatory and inclusive, primarily through the integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Creative Commons licensing. Despite the growing interest in open pedagogy, limited research has explored how students experience its principles in higher education. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the perspectives of 25 undergraduate students across the United States, providing insights into how open pedagogy principles are manifested in their learning experiences and identifying areas for further refinement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Open pedagogy, also known as OER-enabled pedagogy, draws from theories of constructivism and participatory learning, emphasising the co-creation of knowledge (DeRosa & Robison, 2017; Freire, 1998; Wiley & Hilton, 2018). Based on research evidence, open pedagogy has the potential to enhance critical thinking, creativity, motivation, care, and student engagement (Clinton-Lisell & Gwozdz, 2023; Griffiths et al., 2022; Lambert, 2018; Maultsaid & Harrison, 2023). Open pedagogy involves using renewable assignments, also known as non-disposable assignments (Wiley & Hilton, 2018). Unlike traditional, disposable assignments, renewable assignments involve students creating products that are usable for future students or the public (Clinton-Lisell & Gwozdz, 2023). Examples of renewable assignments include editing existing Open Educational Resources (OER), creating OER textbooks, recording videos, or developing websites (Clinton-Lisell, 2021). Important issues in open pedagogy include real-world relevance, audience engagement, and the ethical considerations surrounding intellectual property (Hilton et al., 2019; Jenkins, 2009).

Open pedagogy can be organised into four principles of connecting ideas (Rollag Yoon & Gilpin, 2022). These principles are (1) Creation centred on students, (2) Collaborative and collective creation, (3) Engagement with audiences, and (4) Integration of OER and Creative Commons (CC) Licensing. Central to the understanding of open pedagogy is the belief that students, as content creators, should have the autonomy to decide on its public or private nature (DeRosa & Robison, 2017). We explore each of these principles in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Creation Centred on Students

At the heart of open pedagogy lies the shift from viewing students as mere information consumers to recognising them as active creators (Griffiths et al., 2022; Lambert, 2018; Werth & Williams, 2022). This pedagogical approach

transcends the traditional one-directional transmission of knowledge (Freire, 1998; Mirra & Morrell, 2011), emphasising instead the development of assignments through real-world projects that involve students directly (DeRosa & Robison, 2017; Lambert, 2018). Such an approach is crucial to prevent the reduction of learning experiences to transient activities with limited reach, thereby promoting critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative efforts among students (Rollag Yoon & Gilpin, 2022).

Collaborative and Collective Creation

The ethos of open pedagogy emphasises collaboration, fostering connections among various forms of content, in collaborative assignments such as website development or podcast production in groups (Clinton-Lisell & Gwozdz, 2023) and meme sharing on social media platforms (Riser et al., 2020). The digital aspect of these assignments facilitates collaboration beyond geographical and temporal boundaries, enabling students from diverse backgrounds to collectively engage in projects (Hilton et al., 2019; Seiferle-Valencia, 2020). Moreover, integrating OER designed for remixing underscores the collaborative potential across different media, supported by media literacy and an understanding of CC licensing.

Engagement with Audiences

The principles of self-centredness and collaboration in open pedagogy naturally extend to audience engagement. This model encourages students to publicly share their creations, whether within their academic peer group or on broader platforms such as social media and professional websites (DeRosa & Robison, 2017; Wiley & Hilton, 2018). Open pedagogy, with its emphasis on authentic experiences, may be constructive in promoting meaningful interactions in online learning environments (Gilpin et al., 2023).

Creative Commons Licensing

It is important that public sharing of student-generated work through open pedagogy does not compromise their ownership rights. One way to protect students' ownership rights is through Creative Commons Licensing. Creative Commons is a form of licensing that offers varying levels of permission, all of which require attribution to the creator (Creative Commons, n.d.). Instead, students should be trained to use Creative Commons licensing to assert these rights, guard against unsanctioned claims, and encourage enhancement via peer reviews. It is essential for students to grasp concepts such as copyright, plagiarism, and remixing, and to learn the benefits of implementing Creative Commons (CC) licenses (Jenkins, 2009). The aim here is to foster genuine engagement and interaction by creating materials, with CC licensing facilitating this process.

An overview of the four principles of open pedagogy, along with examples, is presented in Table 1. It is essential to note that these principles are often incorporated into pedagogical practices without being labelled as "open pedagogy." For example, Calandra and Lee (2005) studied experiences with students and faculty co-creating public websites before the term open pedagogy was first coined. Therefore, when considering student experiences, it may be valuable to incorporate those that did not specifically involve "open pedagogy" but did incorporate principles of open pedagogy.

Table 1: Open pedagogy principles

Principles of Open Pedagogy	Examples
Open pedagogy begins with a focus on students as creators of information, rather than just consumers.	Students create resources for reading and viewing in the course; students create an infographic and post on LinkedIn.
Creation is collective through collaboration, utilising digital tools to connect across time and space.	Students work in small groups to create content and also receive feedback from other groups; students provide one another with feedback; students post creations on LinkedIn, requesting feedback from professionals in their field.
The digital and collective aspects are connected to an authentic audience who can read and utilise the materials.	Students create resources for reading and viewing in the course; students create an infographic and post on social media.
Open pedagogy is embedded in an environment of OERs, where students learn to use Creative Commons (CC) Licensing.	Instructors or library staff offer one-to-one conferences or workshops to discuss licensing.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Open pedagogy can be distinguished from other pedagogies through its use of open licensing, specifically Creative Commons (Wiley & Hilton, 2018). Other principles of open pedagogy, such as students being creators, peer collaboration, and sharing with an authentic audience, are important but may be found in other pedagogical approaches (Wiley & Hilton, 2018). This study aims to examine students' experiences with the principles of open pedagogy, encompassing experiences that may or may not have been explicitly labelled as such . Furthermore, we sought to examine how social media facilitated these principles, particularly with an authentic audience and digital collaboration.

Methods

Study Design and Researcher Positionality

This interpretive qualitative study (Erickson, 1986) focuses on the experiences of 25 undergraduate students from across the United States. The researchers acknowledge their roles as faculty members and instructors, bringing reflexivity to their reflections on interactions and interpretations of students' work (Pillow, 2003). Reflexivity, as described by Anderson (1989), involves a dialectical process encompassing the researcher's constructs, the informants' commonsense constructs, research data, the researcher's ideological biases, and the structural and historical forces shaping the social construction being studied. Author One and Author Two, faculty members at four-year institutions, provided different perspectives on data analysis (Author Three was not involved

in data analysis). As a result, we were able to offer multiple perspectives and entry points for examining the data. The following sections describe our participants, data sources, and data analysis methods.

Participants & Research Context

To investigate student experiences with social media principles, we employed Prolific (https://www.prolific.com/) an online recruitment platform known for its rigorous recruitment standards and cost-effectiveness. This platform enabled us to access a diverse participant pool, enhancing the representativeness of our sample. Prolific is utilised by researchers across various disciplines, including economics, psychology, and food science, and is lauded for its detailed subject treatment protocols and user-friendly interface (Palan & Schitter, 2018). For our study, Prolific facilitated the recruitment of 25 participants, all of whom were required to be actively enrolled in an undergraduate course at a community college or a four-year university in the United States.

The recruited study cohort comprised 25 undergraduate students from various majors and career paths, providing a broad perspective on the research topic. The demographic composition was diverse: 48% White (n = 12), 16% Asian American/Pacific Islander (n = 4), 16% Black/African American (n = 4), 12% Hispanic or Latino/Latinx (n = 3), and 8% Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic (n = 2). In terms of gender, 48% identified as women (n = 12), 40% as men (n = 10), and 12% as non-binary or preferred not to specify (n = 3). The age range of participants was 19 to 37 years, with a mean age of 23.32. Although geographic data were not systematically collected, subsequent interviews revealed that the participants were distributed across the United States, from coast to coast. This wide geographical spread underscores the study's national relevance. Detailed demographic information can be found below in Table 2.

Table 2: Participants' Self-reported Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Race	Gender	Age	Field of Study & Career Goals
Abigail	Multi-racial/ Multi-ethnic	Woman	22	First semester of a 2-year nursing degree at a local community college.
Raiah	White	Woman	21	Psychology and communications double major with a minor in film , aiming to work in publishing or the film industry.
Charlie	White	Non-binary/ third gender	27	Anthropology major with a minor in History, targeting a career in archaeology.
Alexander	White	Man	19	Computer science major with aspirations to become an IT professional or a Comp Sci professor.

Diane	Black/ African American	Non-binary/ third gender	23	Studying Cinematic Arts/Film with plans to work in the film industry.
Jilliana	White	Woman	19	Dance major and education minor, intending to teach dance and perform professionally.
Panda	Asian American / Pacific Islander	Man	29	Accounting with a concentration in Forensics, considering Data Analysis.
Rae	White	Woman	33	Studying Risk management with a focus on patient safety.
Anastasia	White	Woman	21	Political Communication and Psychology major, planning to attend law school.
Victoria	Black/ African American	Woman	21	Healthcare Administration major with a minor in Speech Language Pathology, aiming to work in health administration.
Max	Asian American / Pacific Islander	Man	21	Double majoring in Software Engineering and Mathematics with a minor in Spanish.
Flower	Black/ African American	Woman	21	Neuroscience major planning to become a medical doctor.
Anne	White	Woman	32	Majoring in women's and gender studies with a minor in philosophy, considering a master's degree.
Stewart	Asian American / Pacific Islander	Man	20	Economics Major with a Co-Major in International Business and a German Minor, aiming for an international business career.
Liam	White	Man	24	Majoring in creative writing with a minor in political science, aspiring to be an author.

Bree	Black/ African American	Woman	22	Studying Environmental Engineering, intending to pursue construction management in the wastewater industry.
John	White	Man	29	Majoring in Technology Management with a focus on Information Security, interested in continuous learning and security competitions.
Alaska	White	Man	37	Studying Software engineering/infosecurity with the goal of developing fraud prevention systems.
Botsi	White	Man	21	Studying Biomedical Sciences, considering a master's degree.
Bloom	Hispanic or Latino/Latinx	Non-binary/ third gender	19	Music education major, interested in pursuing a master's in Performance and a career in professional playing or instruction.
Elizabeth	Hispanic or Latino/Latinx	Woman	20	Economics major and psychology minor, planning to pursue a master's in experimental psychology for a UX research career.
Maggie	Hispanic or Latino/Latinx	Woman	21	Studying French and International Studies, aspiring to be a French professor.
Koala	Multi-racial/ Multi-ethnic	Woman	21	Music Education major aiming to become an elementary general music teacher.
Steve	Asian American / Pacific Islander	Man	20	Majoring in Statistics and Data Science.
CB	White	Man	20	Studio art major, aiming to work in museum installation, restoration, and conservation.

DATA COLLECTION

This study, approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Dakota, comprised two phases. Participants were required to complete both to receive a $60 payment. After finishing phase two, they were given a completion code to facilitate their payment on Prolific.

In Phase One, participants completed a brief online demographic survey, which took approximately 15 minutes and consisted of around 15 questions. Participants had the option to skip any questions. Beyond demographic queries, the survey prompted participants to share narratives about their previous undergraduate coursework, with a primary focus on experiences with open pedagogy-type activities and their interest in such activities. Questions such as "Describe a memorable activity or assignment you completed in your prior coursework" and "If you could change anything about the activities/assignments that are part of your coursework, what would it be?" were included to gather insights into their academic experiences. At the conclusion of the survey, participants were asked to provide their email addresses to facilitate their subsequent involvement in the study. The complete survey is available in Appendix A.

Phase Two consisted of a 45-minute Zoom interview with six questions designed to delve deeper into the nuances of open pedagogy and its impact on students. This interview complements the online survey by triangulating data and enriching the understanding of students' experiences. These semi-structured interviews examined the extent of students' engagement with open pedagogy activities, emphasising student creation, collaborative creation, and a focus on a real audience. The interview protocol is in Appendix B.

Students with experience in open pedagogy described their activities, such as website creation or digital resource development, covering the nature of the task, evaluation methods, collaboration, and the target audience. They discussed their willingness to showcase projects, the advantages and disadvantages of public sharing, and how collaboration influenced their views on public versus private sharing. Those without experience in open pedagogy recounted memorable coursework activities, considering their value, the potential for public sharing, and how working individually or in groups might affect their willingness to share their work publicly.

The interviews aimed to gauge students' comfort levels and preferences concerning the public sharing of coursework. They also identified potential modifications to open pedagogy assignments to increase their willingness to engage in public discussions. Modifications encompassed collective social media sharing, group collaboration, AI partnerships, support for Creative Commons licensing, and structural adjustments. Additionally, we posed questions regarding participants' social media usage to explore potential connections between their social media habits and their comfort with open pedagogy activities. Given the depth and complexity of the responses, this aspect of social media usage and comfort with open pedagogy will be analysed in a separate, dedicated study to do justice to the rich and nuanced data collected.

Immediately after completing an interview, we recorded our reflections and jottings about the themes and connections we were seeing across participant

responses. The recorded Zoom interviews were also transcribed. Following transcription, the video recordings and participant email addresses were deleted to protect participant privacy. Although participants could skip any questions and share screen images of their coursework voluntarily, only one chose to share artefacts. Permission was sought to take screenshots when artefacts were shared. This process aimed to inform the redesign of an open pedagogy assignment, enhancing the understanding of factors influencing students' decisions to share work publicly and integrating these insights into future course design. The comprehensive list of interview questions is available in Appendix B.

DATA ANALYSIS

This study's analysis delves into a data set comprising 25 undergraduate participants, one artefact, 50 narratives, and over 450 pages of interview transcripts. Our analytical approach employed iterative thematic analysis, seeking information relevant to our study and responses that extended our thinking in novel and unique ways.

In the initial phase, we immersed ourselves in the data, annotating narratives and interview transcripts to familiarise ourselves with the content. Through this process, we engaged in category construction, generating an initial coding scheme for themes across the data. We independently reviewed narratives and transcripts during this stage, applying open codes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) as descriptive labels to encapsulate participants' experiences of their most memorable and impactful assignments. This process resulted in the consolidation of codes into broader categories. For instance, individual coding efforts yielded five codes—including less busy work, more feedback, connections to real-life interests, increased interaction within the class, and increased interaction outside the class—that collectively described the course activities students found valuable. Subsequently, through collaborative discussion, we identified the most salient codes. We formed three broad, interrelated themes: the concept of collaboration extending beyond mere peer interaction, the desire for connection, and the pursuit of activities that produce deliverables for engagement with others.

Once we had three broad categories, we returned to the data to identify patterns within individual narratives and corresponding interview transcripts that were also connected to the four principles of open pedagogy (Gilpin et al., 2023). We employed a matrix to trace connections between participant experiences and the tenets, facilitating a focused reanalysis of each narrative and interview. Through this process, we expanded this analysis to highlight intersections of our three themes from coding and connections to tenets of open pedagogy. Annotations within the data matrix were instrumental in developing themes related to real audiences, the distinction between collaboration and connections, and considerations for rethinking Creative Commons licensing.

After multiple rounds of analysing data, we confirmed the three emergent themes by establishing key linkages (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) among narratives, interviews, the student artefact, and our analytical notes. This step involved selecting quotations and other data excerpts to substantiate each theme, along with relevant artefacts. To ensure the study's trustworthiness, we

integrated participant member checking, collaborative analysis, and data triangulation strategies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), enhancing the credibility and reliability of our findings. Our ongoing analysis led us to highlight three themes from the data: 1) Real Audiences, 2) Collaboration vs. Connections, and 3) Rethinking Creative Commons.

RESULTS

Themes

Across interviews and surveys, the most common responses highlighted three themes about how students across subject areas and colleges (schools/universities) experienced their most memorable and impactful assignments in ways that relate to our ongoing definition of open pedagogy: 1) students appreciated assignments that were created for real audiences, 2) students appreciated authentic connections over prescribed collaborations, and 3) almost none of the students identified the Creative Commons process as part of their impactful assignments.

Real Audiences

It is not particularly surprising that students appreciated assignments that had been created for a real audience, aligning to a long history of research that highlights the importance of creating authentic assignments for real-world purposes (Ross, 1998; Sokhanvar et al., 2021; Wargo, 2020). What was noticeable was the rate at which the participants called out the value of having a real audience. In the interviews, the real audience was described by 21 participants, reiterating the ways that these assignments aligned with the component of needing an authentic audience for open pedagogy to exist. It also reiterates the value of these types of assignments.

Collaboration vs Connection

In this examination of open pedagogy assignments, we emphasise the importance of providing students with opportunities for collaboration. Across student interviews and survey responses, we were surprised by the lack of mention of collaboration in the assignments that students described. However, as we examined our data, we expanded our view of collaboration and began to notice the prevalence of the idea of connection. Over and over, students were drawn to assignments where they felt connected to another group through their actions or the responses they received on social media. While we have typically reflected on open pedagogy as assignments that focus on collaboration as a means to create a product, we see this data as an important expansion to focus on how a connection can be both about having an authentic audience and collaborating in the world beyond the classroom.

Rethinking Creative Commons

We also noted that none of the participants explicitly discussed Creative Commons in their interviews or surveys. This could indicate a lack of explicit instruction on Creative Commons; subsequently, students were unaware of this licensing. Alternatively, students may not have been concerned with their rights to their work and how CC licensing could protect them. Creative Commons was

mentioned in the interview protocol as the definition of open pedagogy was explained to them. However, we did not directly ask them about their thoughts on CC licensing beyond whether they think instruction would be helpful; therefore, the students' thoughts are unclear. Future studies could build on this work by explicitly asking more questions about licensing.

DISCUSSION

Open pedagogy offers opportunities for authentic engagement as students shift from passively receiving knowledge to actively creating knowledge. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine students' experiences with the principles of open pedagogy. In pursuing this purpose, we included learning experiences that may not have been explicitly labeled open pedagogy, but encompassed the principles of open pedagogy. These principles include focus on students as creators, collaboration creation, an authentic audience, and Creative Commons licensing of student creations. We conducted this qualitative study by interviewing 25 undergraduate students across the United States.Our findings highlight three crucial themes: the profound impact of real audiences, the students' preference for authentic connections over prescribed collaborations, and the need to rethink the current approach to Creative Commons education.

This study highlights the transformative potential of open pedagogy while identifying areas for improvement. Real audience engagement and authentic connections emerged as pivotal elements of impactful assignments. These findings align with Lambert (2018) and DeRosa and Robison (2017), who emphasise the role of real-world applications in enhancing learning experiences. Additionally, the observed preference for connection over traditional collaboration resonates with work in the review conducted by Clinton-Lisell (2021), suggesting that fostering authentic engagement may be particularly impactful.

The consistent emphasis by students on the value of creating for real audiences underscores the importance of authentic assignments in enhancing engagement and providing meaningful, real-world applications for academic work. This aligns with existing research on authentic learning experiences by emphasising the value of authentic audiences (DeRosa & Robison, 2017; Lambert, 2018). We also noted that while collaboration is a considered a principle of open pedagogy, students in our study gravitated towards assignments that fostered genuine connections, whether with peers or broader communities through social media. In other words, simply requiring collaboration with peers would likely be insufficient to promote engagement. This suggests that we should consider expanding the concept of "collaboration" within open pedagogy, moving towards "connection" as a means to achieve both authentic audience engagement and broader collaboration beyond the classroom.

The most significant area for improvement identified in this study is the limited understanding and discussion of Creative Commons licensing among participants. Although Creative Commons licensing is key to open education (both resources and pedagogy; Clinton-Lisell, 2021; DeRosa & Robison, 2017), Creative Commons licensing was rarely mentioned by students. This limited mention of Creative Commons licensing presents an opportunity for targeted

pedagogical interventions to close this critical gap. Students would likely benefit from more explicit instruction on intellectual property and the benefits of Creative Commons licensing. Jenkins (2009) underscores the importance of intellectual property literacy, a concept that should be integrated into open pedagogy curricula to bridge this gap. Furthermore, recruiting participants via Prolific highlights the platform's utility in accessing diverse samples for educational research (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Future studies could explore how social media habits influence students' willingness to engage with open pedagogy and their understanding of licensing frameworks. By addressing these areas, educators can further harness the transformative potential of open pedagogy to foster more engaging, relevant, and empowering learning experiences for students.

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APPENDIX A

Survey Items

Describe your field of study to include major/minor and future education or career goals:

Describe a memorable activity or assignment you completed in your prior coursework. Reflect on why it was memorable:

What would it be if you could change anything about the activities/assignments that are part of your coursework? Please describe.

What is your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary/third gender
- Prefer not to say

What is your age in years?

Which of the following best describes you?

- Asian American/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American
- Hispanic or Latino/Latinx
- Native American/Indigenous/First Nations
- White
- Multi-racial/multi-ethnic
- Prefer not to say

What is the highest educational degree you have completed?

- High school diploma
- Associates degree
- Bachelors degree
- Masters degree
- Doctoral degree
- Other:_____

What educational degree are you pursuing at this time;

- High school diploma
- Associates degree
- Bachelors degree
- Masters degree
- Doctoral degree
- Other:_____

How many credits are required for the degree you are pursuing, and how many credits have you completed?

What type of institution are you currently enrolled in courses?

- Community or technical college
- Public four year institution
- Private four year institution
- Other:

What type of delivery format do you prefer for your coursework?

- On-campus
- Online
- Hybrid (courses that meet on campus and online)

Explain the reasons for your preference for the course delivery format you indicated in the previous question:

—

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol

Open pedagogy: Exploring the impact of undergraduates' social media experiences on public sharing of course activities

Before starting, ask if they consent to participate in this part of the study and if they have any questions. The consent was shared with them as part of the calendar invite.

Also, ask if they have a preference for a pseudonym. If so, record it on the google doc. If not, let them know that's okay, and they'll randomly be assigned one.

Tell me about yourself - share as little or as much as you like.
Remind me of your academic program of study/major.

Social Media
Tell me about how you use social media.
Which platforms do you use?
How often do you use them (e.g., times during the week, daily, etc.)?
When did you start using them (e.g., grade/age)?
How do you create posts for your social media accounts? Share your process.
How do you feel about social media?
Share a memorable experience you've had on social media.
Is there anything else you'd like me to know about how you use social media?

Open Pedagogy

Have you participated in Open Pedagogy type activities in your prior coursework? I will share a brief definition and examples.

The definition of open pedagogy includes four key components: 1) emphasizing students as creators, 2) providing opportunities for collaborative creation, 3) focusing on real audiences and use beyond the course (public sharing), and 4) utilizing Creative Commons licenses (digital copywriting). You might not have done all of these.

Examples include creating websites, developing digital resources, producing unit overview videos, creating discussion questions, revising course materials for use by current and future students, blogging, curating podcasts, generating memes, and sharing them on social media.
If YES, proceed to a-e. If NO, proceed to f-k.

YES

Describe the open pedagogy activities (e.g., description of the task, how graded, working independently or with a group, who shared with).
Would you be willing to share your screen and show me your curation?
Can I take a screenshot?

What was the value of sharing your work publicly?
How was sharing your work publicly useful for you, now or in the future?
What were the downsides of sharing your work publicly?
Did you work with a partner/small group or on your own?
What impact, if any, did this have on your feelings about sharing privately vs. publicly? Please explain.

NO

Describe a memorable activity you completed in your prior coursework (e.g., description of the task, how graded, working independently or with a group, who shared with).
What was the value of this activity?
How was it worthwhile for you now or in the future?
What were the downsides?
How would you feel about sharing your work on this activity publicly?
What impact, if any, would working with a group or alone have on your feelings about sharing this work publicly?

How might instructors make you/your peers feel more at ease about publicly sharing your coursework/activities? Please explain.

I am in the process of redesigning an open pedagogy assignment for a course I teach. In the past, students created an infographic for a topic of their choice individually, and only a few elected to share it publicly.
If you were a student in my class, which of the following modifications, if any, would impact your willingness to share publicly? Please explain.
Share via a collective/course social media account (e.g., Threads, Facebook Groups)
Option to work with a small group of peers
Use AI as a "thinking partner"?
Provide support for Creative Commons (CC) Licensing - digital copywriting.
More examples
More structure
Less structure
Regardless of the support, perhaps you still wouldn't want to share publicly.
Other?

Now, consider your future coursework. Would you prefer to have assignments that are publicly or privately shared? Please explain.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

—

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Authors Biography

Staci Gilpin (she/her) grew up in rural Northwest Iowa, experiencing firsthand the challenges and strengths of small communities. Her origins sparked a passion for underserved areas and inspired her academic journey. After earning her PhD from the University of North Dakota, she co-founded Rural Pathways LLC—a social enterprise offering program evaluation, applied research, and technical assistance to nonprofits across the Midwest and beyond. Her commitment to rural communities guides her work and volunteer efforts.

Stephanie Rollag Yoon (PhD) is an assistant professor of English at Minnesota State University, Mankato, where she teaches preservice and practising English Language Arts teachers. Her teaching aligns with her research interests around digital literacies, critical writing pedagogy, and climate literacy. Drawing on her experiences as a middle and high school English teacher, Dr. Rollag Yoon sees students as brilliant readers and multimodal composers. Across her teaching, professional development, and mentorship, her practices are grounded in feminist pedagogies that centre stories of hope.

Virginia Clinton-Lisell is an Associate Professor in Educational Foundations and Research and a Rose Isabella Kelly Fischer Professor at the University of North Dakota. Dr. Clinton-Lisell's research focuses on digital reading comprehension and open education. Her teaching interests include child development and educational psychology.

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