Trans Inclusion in OER

# Front Matter

## Introduction

One of the greatest areas of potential for open educational resources (OER) is the opportunity for improved representation and coverage of identities that often go erased or poorly addressed in educational materials. Information about, by, and for trans and gender diverse people is one such topic. With knowledge and intention, those involved in the creation, adaptation, and use of OER can find and incorporate materials that center trans and gender diverse people. Doing this is essential for supporting trans and gender diverse students and educating everyone about these identities.

### What is this resource?

This resource is a guide on how to make OER more inclusive and representative of trans and gender diverse people. It is intended to be easily incorporated into a scholarly communications course, while also being valuable to faculty and others interested in learning about the topic and how to make changes to their own course materials.

**Part 1:** An annotated list of readings and other materials on the following topics:

* Introductory information about OER.
* Introductory information about trans and gender diverse people.
* Advancing social justice, trans inclusion, and queer inclusion through OER.
* Practical reference materials to help make OER more trans inclusive.

**Part 2:** A flexible instructor’s guide for a class session on trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER, to be adapted for inclusion in a scholarly communications course. The instructor’s guide incorporates the readings in the previous section and includes the following elements:

* Discussion questions and brief activities designed to help students learn how revising OER and making content more trans inclusive can work in practice.
* An assessment that instructors can use as a homework assignment or class project, in which students are directed to find an existing OER and write a description of how they would make it more trans inclusive using the tools covered in the readings and ideas from the discussion.

### Who is this for?

We hope that this resource will be valuable to any number of people. Perhaps you regularly use OER but hadn’t thought about incorporating trans and gender diverse content; perhaps you’re very invested in gender inclusion but aren’t sure how OER can help. Perhaps you’re new to all of this, or already aware of both angles and looking for ways to combine them in your work. Use this resource in whatever way you like: read everything from start to finish, use one section but not others, or hop around and pick up bits and pieces.

## Learning Objectives

After going through the contents and activities in this resource, users will be able to do the following:

1. Describe the importance of trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.
2. Evaluate existing OER for its trans and gender diverse inclusivity.
3. Identify steps to take to increase trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.

# Part 1: Resources

## Introduction to Part 1

Part 1 provides recommended materials for learning about open educational resources, trans and gender diverse identities, social justice and trans inclusion in the context of OER, and practical applications of these concepts.

## OER 101

Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others.

(UNESCO, n.d.)

These resources will introduce you to OER: what they are, how to use them, and where to find them.

### Resources

* [What is OER?](https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/What_is_OER%3F) A page on the Creative Commons Wiki providing definitions of OER from a variety of organizations.
* [How to use Open Educational Resources](http://www.openwa.org/module-1/): A self-paced workshop covering various introductory aspects of using OER.
* [OER, Open Textbooks, and Open Courses](https://certificates.creativecommons.org/cccertedu/chapter/6-1-oer-open-textbooks-open-courses/): A chapter on OER from the Creative Commons Certificate Course, with content geared towards librarians and educators.
* [OER Commons](https://www.oercommons.org/): A searchable public collection of OER covering all different subject areas, formats, and education levels.
* [Open Textbook Library](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/): Over 1,000 open textbooks on many different topics, with reviews by subject experts.

### References

Creative Commons. (n.d.-a). *5.1 OER, Open Textbooks, and Open Courses*. Creative Commons Certificate for Educators, Academic Librarians and GLAM. Retrieved April 21, 2022, from <https://certificates.creativecommons.org/cccertedu/chapter/6-1-oer-open-textbooks-open-courses/>

Creative Commons. (n.d.-b). *What is OER?* Retrieved April 21, 2022, from <https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/What_is_OER%3F>

*OER Commons*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://www.oercommons.org/>

Open Education Network. (n.d.). *Open Textbook Library*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks>

Open Washington. (2019). *How to use Open Educational Resources*. <http://www.openwa.org/module-1/>

UNESCO. (n.d.). *Open Educational Resources*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/communication-information/open-solutions/open-educational-resources>

## Trans 101

These resources will provide you with basic information about gender identity. Be aware that these are extremely introductory materials; there is a great deal more depth and complexity of information about gender than is represented here.

Note that while the materials in this section are all free to access online, they are not openly licensed and thus are not OER. If you want to incorporate the contents into OER of your own, you can quote and cite or link out to them as you would any materials protected by copyright, but you cannot do the sort of remixing and adapting permitted by some Creative Commons licenses.

### Resources

* [About Transgender People](https://transequality.org/about-transgender): Resources from the National Center for Transgender Equality including sections on basic information, FAQs, nonbinary people, allyship, and more.
* [Transgender FAQ](https://www.glaad.org/transgender/transfaq): Basic questions and answers on gender identity from GLAAD.
* [Transgender Identities](https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/gender-identity/transgender): Information from Planned Parenthood with a focus on transition and health care.
* [Supporting Trans and GNC Students](https://www.glsen.org/supporting-trans-and-gnc-students): Resources from GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network) for how to support transgender and gender nonconforming students, including activities and materials created by trans students.
* [The Trans Language Primer](https://translanguageprimer.com/): An extensive guide to terms and acronyms related to trans and gender diverse people.

### References

GLAAD. (n.d.). *Transgender FAQ*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://www.glaad.org/transgender/transfaq>

GLSEN. (n.d.). *Supporting Trans and GNC Students*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://www.glsen.org/supporting-trans-and-gnc-students>

National Center for Transgender Equality. (n.d.). *About Transgender People*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://transequality.org/about-transgender>

Planned Parenthood. (n.d.). *Transgender Identities*. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/gender-identity/transgender>

Simon, G. (n.d.). *The Trans Language Primer*. The Trans Language Primer. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from <https://www.translanguageprimer.com>

## Social Justice and OER

As with any marginalized group, it is essential to seek out information pertaining specifically to the identities you are interested in. That said, there is plenty of content on equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice that is valuable when learning about trans and gender diverse inclusion. The resources on this page are of that type, as well as some that center queer identities in particular.

Note that one reason for this section is that essentially no content currently exists that is specifically centered on trans and gender diverse inclusion and OER, which means that the materials below are the most relevant content available at the time of writing (though we hope this changes in future).

### Resources

* [Changing our (Dis)Course: A Distinctive Social Justice Aligned Definition of Open Education](https://jl4d.org/index.php/ejl4d/article/view/290): An essential article about framing open education within the principles of redistributive, recognitive, and representational justice.
* [Using OER to Build More Inclusive Materials](https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/dlstaffpubs/30/): A webinar on using the customizability of OER to increase information about and content by underrepresented groups.
* [Open at the Margins: Critical Perspectives on Open Education](https://press.rebus.community/openatthemargins/): An open book consisting of articles, blog posts, and presentations on various aspects of social justice and open education.
* [Queering Open Pedagogy](https://press.rebus.community/openatthemargins/chapter/queering-open-pedagogy/): A keynote talk on the necessity of recognizing and supporting queerness in open education.
* [Designing a Queer-Inclusive Human Sexuality Course Using OER](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbyhcBbb5tI): A presentation on assessing and improving inclusion in course materials.
* [OER as a Tool to Decenter Whiteness: A Queer Psychology Case Study](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3e11vGa9zRs): A presentation demonstrating how to design course content to center queer and trans people of color.
* [How to Bring Equity and Inclusion to the Classroom](https://www.newamerica.org/weekly/how-bring-equity-and-inclusion-classroom/): An essay on the potential of OER to address queer erasure in educational materials.

### References

Adam, T., Allen, N., Amiel, T., Asino, T. I., Atenas, J., Bali, M., Barnes, N., Bourg, C., Bouterse, S., Caines, A., Campbell, L. M., Cangialosi, K., Collier, A. M., Cronin, C., Czerniewicz, L., DeRosa, R., Ensor, S., Friedrich, C., Gilliard, C., … Watters, A. (2020). *Open at the Margins*. Rebus Community. <https://press.rebus.community/openatthemargins/>

Klement, K. (2020, November 11). *Designing a Queer-Inclusive Human Sexuality Course Using OER*. Open Education Conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbyhcBbb5tI>

Klement, K. (2021, October 20). *OER as a Tool to Decenter Whiteness: A Queer Psychology Case Study*. Open Education Conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3e11vGa9zRs>

Krueger, S., & Roberts, J. (2020, November 6). *Using OER to Build More Inclusive Materials*. UNC System OER Collections Webinar Series. <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/dlstaffpubs/30>

Lambert, S. R. (2018). Changing our (Dis)Course: A Distinctive Social Justice Aligned Definition of Open Education. *Journal of Learning for Development*, *5*(3), Article 3. <https://jl4d.org/index.php/ejl4d/article/view/290>

Prescott, S., Muñiz, J., & Ishmael, K. (2018, October 20). How to Bring Equity and Inclusion to the Classroom. *New America*. <http://newamerica.org/weekly/how-bring-equity-and-inclusion-classroom/>

Stommel, J. (2017, July 30). *Queering Open Pedagogy*. Digital Pedagogy Lab Vancouver. Rebus Community. <https://press.rebus.community/openatthemargins/chapter/queering-open-pedagogy/>

## Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion and OER

Since there are essentially no existing resources on the relationship between trans and gender diverse inclusion and OER, we’re going to use this section to explain the importance of connecting these ideas.

The typical reasons for creating and adopting OER are that commercial textbooks are expensive, become outdated quickly, are not representative of all identities, and are not legally dynamic and customizable. All of these can be viewed through a lens of trans inclusion.

* **Expense:** 29% of respondents to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey were living in poverty, over twice the rate of the broader U.S. Population (James et al., 2016, p. 5). Regardless of the content of textbooks, their high cost impacts trans and gender diverse students. Among other things, these impacts include what courses and majors students can afford to pursue (Krueger & Ward, 2020). Using OER in general helps counter the disparate impacts of high textbook costs on students' lives and futures.
* **Currency​:** Language, laws, health care options, and understanding of identity all change rapidly for trans and gender diverse topics. The slow pace of publishing means that a lot of educational materials are outdated by the time they are used, and this is especially harmful when the information is about real people's identities. OER can be modified with updates without having to wait for a full new edition to be published.
* **Representation:** Trans erasure is a pervasive issue across disciplines. While there is not much in the way of research on this topic that is specific to educational materials, there is some on other areas. Absent or limited representation in media is harmful to trans and gender diverse people (Mocarski et al., 2019); positive, nuanced representation can improve awareness and understanding among cisgender audiences (Gillig et al., 2018). It is not unreasonable to extend these conclusions to educational resources, and it is also clear that more research is needed in this realm. OER with valuable content but limited trans and gender diverse representation can be easily modified to address that lack.
* **Customizability:** Many trans and gender diverse identities are unique to a region and/or culture. As with the currency issue, OER allow for easy revisions and additions to content so that teachers can include examples that are relevant to their courses and students. General information can be supplemented with localized or topical examples.

### References

Gillig, T. K., Rosenthal, E. L., Murphy, S. T., & Folb, K. L. (2018). More than a Media Moment: The Influence of Televised Storylines on Viewers’ Attitudes toward Transgender People and Policies. *Sex Roles*, *78*(7–8), 515–527. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-017-0816-1>

James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. National Center for Transgender Equality.

Krueger, S. G., & Ward, L. (2020). Assessing Textbook Costs at a Small College. *Virginia Libraries*, *64*(1). <https://doi.org/10.21061/valib.v64i1.598>

Mocarski, R., King, R., Butler, S., Holt, N. R., Huit, T. Z., Hope, D. A., Meyer, H. M., & Woodruff, N. (2019). The Rise of Transgender and Gender Diverse Representation in the Media: Impacts on the Population. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, *12*(3), 416–433. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcz031>

## Practical Resources

In general, how to create or adapt OER that are inclusive of trans and gender diverse people depends on the specifics of your content. The resources below may help with some practical aspects of that work.

### Resources

* [Modifying an Open Textbook: What You Need to Know](https://oen.pressbooks.pub/oenmodify/): An open book containing practical guidance on how to make changes to existing OER.
* [Authoring Open Textbooks](https://oen.pressbooks.pub/authoropen/): Another practical guide, this one about creating an open textbook from scratch.
* [Gender Spectrum Collection](https://genderphotos.vice.com/): A stock photo collection specifically intended to represent gender diversity. These images can be used in new OER or incorporated into existing ones as long as you follow the license terms ([CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)). In addition, read the [collection guidelines](https://genderphotos.vice.com/guidelines) to ensure that you are using the materials respectfully.
* [MyPronouns.org](https://www.mypronouns.org/) and [Pronoun Island](https://pronoun.is/): These resources provide information that will help you correctly include a variety of pronouns in your materials. The first has general information about personal pronouns; the second has examples of a wide variety of them in sentences.
* [Gender (APA guide)](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/gender): Part of the APA style guidelines on bias-free language. Examples and explanations on language around gender to use and avoid in different situations.
* [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/): A good place to find public domain or CC-licensed images of pride flags that can be added to your OER. Most genders have at least one associated flag, so you can search for specific ones like "agender flag" or "nonbinary flag." There is often no context for these images, so it is a good idea to check elsewhere if you aren't sure if a given flag is generally recognized.

### References

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Gender*. <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/gender>

Astra, R. (n.d.). *Pronoun Island*. <https://pronoun.is/>

Cuillier, C., Hofer, A., Johnson, A., Labadorf, K., Potter, P., Saunders, R., & Walz, A. (2016). *Modifying an Open Textbook: What You Need to Know*. Open Education Network. <https://oen.pressbooks.pub/oenmodify/>

Falldin, M., & Lauritsen, K. (2017). *Authoring Open Textbooks*. Open Education Network. <https://oen.pressbooks.pub/authoropen/>

*MyPronouns.org: Resources on Personal Pronouns*. (n.d.). <https://www.mypronouns.org/>

Vice Media LLC. (2020). *The Gender Spectrum Collection*. <https://genderphotos.vice.com/>

*Wikimedia Commons*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page>

# Part 2: Instructor's Class Session Guide

## Introduction to Part 2

Part 2 contains a lesson plan and activities for applying the information shared in Part 1.

These instructor materials are meant to be ideas from which you can pull as it fits your class. Depending on your course structure, you can cover this content over one or more class sessions, or you could incorporate some of the assessment suggestions into a larger project. We encourage you to use the materials or resources in whatever way best helps you and your students.

## Lesson Plan

*Below are suggestions for how you can incorporate the materials and assignments from this resource into an existing course, but feel encouraged to chart your own path, too.*

### Prior to class period

* Introduce the concepts of OER and open education so that students are familiar with them.
* Check out the Trans 101 materials to have a basic understanding of the resources.

### During class period

* If you don’t feel comfortable presenting on gender identity topics, consider bringing in a guest lecturer to cover this content.
  + Alternatively, you could find existing video content, such as on Youtube, to stand in for this.
* Introduce the issue of trans inclusion in OER by highlighting ways that OER reinforces and reifies existing gender categories and norms.
* Discuss some reasons why trans inclusion is important in OER and what the benefits are.
* Use the discussion questions and activities to help students understand the concepts and come up with ideas of their own.
* You could also use an example OER material to walk through the OER Evaluation Assignment steps.
* Depending on class time and desire, either complete one or both the suggested assignments in class or assign for a later due date.

### After class period

* Provide feedback for any assignments.
* Check in with students about their takeaways from the class period.

### Modifications for asynchronous online delivery

* The discussion questions and activities can be done in small groups or on a full class discussion board.
* You could create a short video talking through the scenarios or walking through an example OER for the OER Evaluation Assignment.

## Discussion Questions

These discussion questions can be used once the content about trans inclusion in OER has been presented.

1. What are the advantages to creating and using trans-inclusive OER?
2. What are the disadvantages to using trans-exclusive OER?
3. What are some obstacles to creating trans-inclusive OER?
4. What are some examples of ways to make OER trans-inclusive?
5. What would you say to a colleague who told you they didn’t see the point of making OER trans-inclusive?
6. What is one challenge you think you’d encounter in your program or library to advocate for trans-inclusive OER? How do you think you would overcome that challenge?

These discussion questions can help students reflect on what they learned after completing one or more of the assignments.

1. Discuss at least one thing you learned about trans-inclusion in OER.
2. What is at least one thing you will change about how you engage with OER to make it more trans-inclusive?

## Visual Collection Creation Activity

*This activity is meant to provide students with the experience of creating a collection of CC-licensed stock images. This aligns with the following learning objective(s):*

*Identify steps to take to increase trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

**Step 1**: Choose a topic or discipline to focus on.

**Step 2**: Use stock image databases such as Unsplash or Pexels ([here is a list of several websites that host CC licensed stock images](https://www.maketecheasier.com/7-places-to-find-creative-commons-images-online/)) to search for trans-inclusive stock images you or someone else could use in presentations or other content on your chosen topic.

**Step 3**: Curate a collection of at least 15 images.

## Scenario Activity

*This activity is meant to help students walk through situations they might encounter with different stakeholders in a university library setting. This aligns with the following learning objective(s):*

*Describe the importance of trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

*Evaluate existing OER for its trans and gender diverse inclusivity.*

*Identify steps to take to increase trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

**Step 1**: In small groups or individually, read through the following scenarios and consider how you would respond as a resource librarian.

1. A student comes to the library for help with a class project using open pedagogy. They need help finding materials for the assignment and aren't sure how Creative Commons licenses work.
   1. What resources might you direct the student to investigate?
2. A tenured faculty member is interested in incorporating OER into their course on gender in STEM. They plan to solely focus on the experiences of (cis) women in STEM.
   1. What could you say to the faculty member to encourage them to broaden their scope from only cis women?
   2. What places would you suggest the faculty member check out to find OER for their course?
3. An instructional designer is interested in building an LMS shell full of resources to encourage faculty to adopt OER. They want input from librarians about what to include in the shell.
   1. What resources might you provide?

**Step 2**: Discuss responses and ideas as a class.

## Distinguishing Creative Commons Licenses Activity

*This activity is designed to help reinforce the types and uses of the different Creative Commons licenses. This aligns with the following learning objective(s):*

*Evaluate existing OER for its trans and gender diverse inclusivity.*

**Step 1**: Review the Creative Commons website for information on the different types of licenses (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>).

**Step 2**: Find an OER that you could remix to be more trans-inclusive.

**Step 3**: Determine the type of license the OER has now and what type of license you would use for your remix. (You can refer to the [License Chooser](https://creativecommons.org/choose/) if you need help.)

## Infographic Assignment

*This assignment is designed to help students demonstrate what they've learned about trans inclusion in OER. This aligns with the following learning objective(s):*

*Identify steps to take to increase trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

**Step 1**: Choose a topic related to transgender issues (such as different transgender identities, pronouns, coming out).

**Step 2**: Find at least 2 scholarly sources for your topic.

**Step 3**: Create an infographic explaining your topic. Consider your audience to be people who don’t know anything about your topic. Choose a Creative Commons license for your infographic.

## OER Evaluation Assignment

*This assignment is designed to help students critically analyze an existing OER to help them with evaluating how trans-inclusive it is. This aligns with the following learning objective(s):*

*Describe the importance of trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

*Evaluate existing OER for its trans and gender diverse inclusivity.*

*Identify steps to take to increase trans and gender diverse inclusion in OER.*

**Step 1**: Select an OER (can be a full textbook or an excerpt from one, an article, a photo collection).

**Step 2**: Critically analyze the resource by asking the following questions.

* Who is the audience? Is this intended for cisgender readers/consumers?
* Who is included in the content? Is it only cisgender and gender-conforming individuals?
* How are transgender individuals discussed? Are they compared to cisgender individuals using a deficit model (that is, compared to cisgender folks who are presented as “normal”)?
* Who is represented (or not) in the resource? Consider racial/ethnic groups, religion, class, disability, and sexual orientation, among other social categories.

**Step 3**: Consider what changes could be made to make the resource more trans-inclusive. Choose one change you came up with and create a workflow for how you could implement the change.

# Back Matter

## About the Authors

**Stephen G. Krueger** (he/him/his) is the Scholarly Publishing Librarian at Dartmouth College, where he supports the use and creation of open educational resources. He is the author of [*Supporting Trans People in Libraries*](https://www.abc-clio.com/products/A5898P/) (2019, Libraries Unlimited), co-editor of [*Trans and Gender Diverse Voices in Libraries*](https://litwinbooks.com/books/trans-and-gender-diverse-voices-in-lis/) (forthcoming, Library Juice Press), and co-author of [The Trans Advice Column](https://transadvicecolumn.wixsite.com/home). Stephen holds a B.A. in English from Warren Wilson College and an M.S.L.S. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and he is working on an M.A. in Arctic and Northern Studies from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Learn more at [www.stephengkrueger.com](http://www.stephengkrueger.com).

**Kat R. Klement** (they/them/theirs) is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bemidji State University, teaching courses primarily related to sexuality and gender. They received their Ph.D. in Psychology from Northern Illinois University and their M.A. in Psychology and B.A. in Psychology and Political Science from Concordia University Chicago. Their major lines of research examine attributions of sexual assault blame, how transphobia relates to other systems of oppression, and transgender patients’ healthcare experiences. They are co-founder and co-director of the [Northwoods Queer Outreach](https://www.bemidjistate.edu/community/northwoods-queer-outreach/), which provides training and resources for organizational staff, educators, and healthcare providers to better serve 2SLGBTQ+ people. Learn more at [www.kathryn-klement.com](http://www.kathryn-klement.com/home).