

## **FY 2010-2011 OpenCourseWare Consortium Strategic Plan**

Final, Adopted April 2009

Presented to the OCWC Board of Directors by Stephen Carson, President  
April 2009

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## **Executive Summary**

### **1) Purpose of this Document**

This document provides the strategic vision and plan for the OpenCourseWare Consortium as developed by the membership and Board of Directors, and identifies the staffing and resources required for the Consortium to achieve its aims. This is the primary high-level planning document of the Consortium.

### **2) About the OpenCourseWare Consortium**

The OpenCourseWare Consortium is a community of over 250 universities and associated organizations worldwide committed to advancing OpenCourseWare sharing and its impact on global educational opportunity. An OpenCourseWare is a free and open digital publication of high quality university-level educational materials – often including syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, and exams – organized as courses.

### **3) Vision of the Consortium**

We envision a world in which the desire to learn is fully met by the opportunity to do so anywhere in the world, where everyone, everywhere is able to access affordable, educationally and culturally appropriate opportunities to gain whatever knowledge or training they desire. The Consortium acts to realize this vision by addressing one issue—that of access to high-quality educational materials—and by partnering with organizations addressing related problems that must also be solved to make this vision a reality.

### **4) Mission and Goals of the Consortium**

The mission of the OpenCourseWare Consortium is to advance formal and informal learning through the worldwide sharing and use of free, open, high-quality education materials organized as courses.

In pursuit of this mission, the Consortium's primary goals are to:

1. Increase the number of members in the OCWC, and the number and diversity of OpenCourseWare courses they make available;
2. Enhance the value of OCW courses to all types of users around the world; and to
3. Build and nurture a vibrant, culturally diverse global OpenCourseWare community that is connected to the broader OER movement.

The Consortium has a fourth internal goal in support of the above three, which is to:

4. Build the consortium's organizational infrastructure.

### **5) Values of the Consortium**

At the OpenCourseWare Consortium, these values guide the decision-making and behavior of our staff and volunteers:

**The Right to Learn:** We view the acquisition of knowledge as a fundamental right and the key to unlocking the potential of individuals, communities and cultures worldwide.

**Inclusivity:** We welcome, respect and celebrate all cultures and perspectives. We are committed to building a dynamic body of courses that represents our collective global, cultural and intellectual heritage. We will address the needs of under-resourced regions and institutions to ensure that the production and use of OpenCourseWare is truly global.

**Openness:** We support a collaborative community invested in the improvement of OpenCourseWare. We openly share intellectual content and best practices. We champion open processes and welcome members, partnerships and ideas that further the consortium's goals.

**Accountability:** We are stewards of the Consortium's resources, accountable to its members and funders. We measure the impact of our work and value transparency, reporting regularly on the OCWC's finances and program outcomes. We demand excellence.

**Responsiveness:** We are responsive to our membership. We earn the continued investment of time, talent and resources by both our members and our funders.

## 6) Strategic Initiatives Summary

The OCWC's Board of Directors has articulated the following Strategic Initiatives in pursuit of the organization's primary goals.

### **Goal One: Increase the number of education institution members in the OCWC, and the number and diversity of OpenCourseWare courses they make available.**

Initiatives:

- Aggregate and make available knowledge online for producers of OCW (e.g. best practices, tools, techniques, etc). [Higher]
- Foster a broad selection of, and growing quantity of, courses and curricula. This is intended to explicitly include a diversity of courses with regard to language, culture, perspective (or potential bias) and educational level (e.g. vocational training, community college, university, etc.). [Higher]
- Promote open courseware through both mass media (e.g. public relations) and through advocacy. [Higher]
- Foster and develop OCW tools and technologies. [Medium]
- Provide technical support and infrastructure to members. [Medium]
- Support the rational management of course-related intellectual property at member institutions. [Lower]
- Build institutional member OCW sites sustainability, including helping them attract funding for OCW-related projects. [Lower]

### **Goal Two: To increase the value of OCW courses to all types of users around the world.**

Initiatives:

- Articulate and understand user demand of all types of users (e.g. professors, students, re-purposers of courseware, learning or social networks, self-learners engaged in formal education, self-learners) [Higher]
- Make OCW offerings efficiently and effectively discoverable across the web, including the support of appropriate taxonomies, metadata, etc. [Higher]

- Foster, disseminate and encourage sharing of best practices, tools and mechanisms targeted at the “less connected”, the multitudes who access the internet via wireless, small screens and low bandwidth. [Medium]
- Organize the OCWC portal as an effective hub for online access to courseware by users – for production, for self-learners, for university communities, and for individual, and networks of, independent learners. [Medium]
- Support the development of tools for the creation or identification of suitability of courses for a given task, or comparison of courses. (E.g. the ranking/vetting of courses in a given content area; user evaluations and other usability data; peer review; the mixing and matching of elements; etc). [Medium]
- Create mechanisms to foster quality in OCW courses offered through OCWC institutions. [Medium]

**Goal Three: Build and nurture a vibrant, culturally diverse global OpenCourseWare community that is connected to the broader OER movement.**

Initiatives:

- Help under-resourced countries and institutions fully participate in OCWC (e.g. as producers, as users, as adapters and re-purposers, etc). [Higher]
- Organize and support rich, direct communications with the OCW community, by creating a forum that fosters and helps weave together a distributed OCW movement. [Higher]
- Aggregate and make available online knowledge about OCW for researchers and change agents interested in the field. [Lower]

**Goal Four (Internal):To build the consortium’s organizational infrastructure.**

Initiatives:

- Diversify funding of the consortium, including building a strong, financially contributing base of institutional and member support. [Higher]
- Create sustainable organizational mechanisms (e.g. administrative, governance and/or technological). [Medium]

**7) Organizational and financial requirements**

In order to effectively execute the strategic initiatives identified above, the Consortium requires an appropriately-sized core staff and must manage existing funding wisely.

The Board authorizes the following resources in support of the above strategic initiatives:

- Total Consortium core full time staff of 3-4, including an Executive Director, a Director of Community Outreach, and a Technology Director; as well as continued additional contracted support on an as needed basis. As the Consortium develops, additional staff may be required to meet the organization’s goals.
- FY 10 and 11 annual budget of \$1,000,000.

## Strategic Plan

### 1) Environmental Scan

The OpenCourseWare Consortium operates in a complicated and rapidly changing global educational environment and is deeply involved in a dynamic open educational movement. The Consortium is also one facet of a larger OpenCourseWare community. This rich environment presents both risks and opportunities for the Consortium which impact strategic planning.

#### ***Global Education***

Any attempt to capture the complexity of and challenges faced by educational systems globally in a brief summary will be necessarily incomplete, but a selected number of issues are important to the context in which the Consortium operates.

*Global educational systems are unable to meet current needs.* Systems of primary, secondary and higher education around the world are struggling to find the resources and trained educators required to meet the demands for education and certification. The current global economic crisis exacerbates these problems through the creation of a displaced labor force in need of retraining at a time when resources supporting educational systems are further diminished.

*Technology is an increasingly disruptive force on educational systems, both positively and negatively.* Digital technology has allowed for the disaggregation of what historically had been a tightly integrated residential package of educational materials, learning experience and certifications. Both from the perspective of educational providers and consumers, this presents new opportunities to mix and match educational content and services, and increased dangers of disruptive innovations.

#### ***Open Educational Resources***

The Open Educational Resources (OER) movement, of which OpenCourseWare is one part, is a trend toward the creation of openly-licensed resources including open references such as Wikipedia, open access journals, open educational technologies, open text books, open data sets, open learning object repositories, shared resources such as iLabs and many others. The movement has been nurtured by the Hewlett Foundation.

*Open educational resources are proliferating in type and number.* There is a rapidly increasing number of open educational resource attracting ever-higher levels of use. As of yet, few synergies have emerged between these related but separate undertakings, and as a whole the movement often provides a confusingly kaleidoscopic array of resources and opportunities. The progress and promise of OER, however, both remain substantial.

*Open educational resource creation and use is becoming a widespread global best practice.* The spread of OpenCourseWare publication, open access publication, as well as the use and integration of OER into new materials, is increasing. Forums such as the UNESCO-OER mailing list are bringing together a global OER community.

#### ***OpenCourseWare Community***

The OCW Consortium does not encompass the entire OCW movement. Projects exist that fit the definition of OpenCourseWare as developed by Consortium members, but either due to a lack of recognition (by either the Consortium or the projects) or lack of a compelling value proposition for

involvement, these projects are not involved in the Consortium. These projects are part of the larger OCW community and occasionally participate informally in Consortium activities, but are not formal members of the organization.

*Some projects are seeking to establish independent identities, which works against involvement in Consortium activities.* Numerous projects publishing content that meets Consortium criteria for OpenCourseWare have yet to see value in Consortium membership that outweighs their desire to remain independent.

*License variations complicate inclusion of some projects in the Consortium.* The political difficulties of meeting the Consortium membership open license requirements complicate the inclusion of some projects in the formal organization.

### **OpenCourseWare Consortium**

The OpenCourseWare Consortium is undergoing a period of rapid growth and organizational development. Participating institutions, live OCW sites, and total available courses are all increasing rapidly. The Consortium is straining to develop the organizational structures needed to accommodate this growth.

*The OpenCourseWare Consortium is just developing as an organization.* The OpenCourseWare Consortium faces the dual challenges of developing initiatives to support Consortium goals and developing the systems and infrastructures needed to operate the organization.

*The value proposition of the OpenCourseWare Consortium for members is unclear.* The benefits of membership in the Consortium are uneven for and unclear to the Consortium's members.

*Subconsortia are emerging in increasing numbers around the world.* Regional groupings of OpenCourseWare projects are emerging around the globe, bringing large groups of universities into the OpenCourseWare Consortium.

### **Opportunities and Risks**

#### *Opportunities*

##### Global education

- Global needs present many opportunities to generate benefit
- Disaggregation of educational experience presents many ways for OCW to engage with educational systems
- Web 2.0 tools provide new opportunities to connect OpenCourseWare content with learner
- Global financial crisis may provide opportunities for the OCWC and OCW projects

##### Open educational resources

- Creation of exponentially greater benefit through synergies between projects
- OER and OCW can be mutually reinforcing brands

##### OpenCourseWare community

- Probably a significant amount of OCW material not self-identified as such

##### OpenCourseWare Consortium

- Regional subconsortia model provides opportunity for tremendous momentum in building membership
- Recent momentum provides PR opportunities



## *Risks*

### Global education

- Disruptive influences of technology present a rapidly changing environment
- Global financial crisis will make it more difficult to sustain OCW projects

### Open educational resources

- Wide array of projects may create brand confusion

### OpenCourseWare community

- OpenCourseWare publication may not yet generate sufficient/clear enough ROI to encourage more OCW projects to emerge
- Consortium may not present clear value proposition to prospective members
- Varying projects may generate brand confusion
- Lack of clear articulation of what OCW is may put off some who don't see their efforts as fitting within the community

### OpenCourseWare Consortium

- The Consortium must transition to a sustainable funding model on current grant funding ramp
- Volunteer-based organization does not yet generate sufficient board or member involvement
- Growth of the Consortium may outstrip available staff and resources.
- Handling the rapid membership growth and integrating of subconsortia is logistically difficult

## **2) Vision of the Consortium**

We envision a world in which the desire to learn is fully met by the opportunity to do so anywhere in the world, where everyone, everywhere is able to access affordable, educationally and culturally appropriate opportunities to gain whatever knowledge or training they desire. The Consortium acts to realize this vision by addressing one issue—that of access to high-quality educational materials—and by partnering with organizations addressing related problems that must also be solved to make this vision a reality.

## **3) Mission and Goals of the Consortium**

The definition of OpenCourseWare and the mission and goals of the Consortium were developed by the membership during meetings of the Consortium from 2005 through 2007, and refined through an organizational effectiveness process undertaken by the Consortium Board of Directors in late 2008 and early 2009.

### ***The Definition of OpenCourseWare***

An OpenCourseWare is a free and open digital publication of high quality university-level educational materials – often including syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, and exams – organized as courses. While OpenCourseWare (OCW) initiatives typically do not provide a degree, credit, or certification, or access to instructors, the materials are made available under open licenses for use and adaptation by educators and learners around the world.

### ***OpenCourseWare Site Criteria***

An OCW Site:

- Publishes course materials created by faculty (and sometimes other colleagues or students) to support teaching and learning from at least 10 courses from a duly accredited institution
- Is IP-cleared, meaning that the OpenCourseWare publisher has the rights to make the materials available under open terms and that nothing in the materials knowingly infringes the copyrights of others
- Offers the materials free of charge under a license that at a minimum allows for non-commercial use, but may also permit commercial use. The license also permits use, reuse, adaptation (derivative works), translation, and redistribution of the materials by others
- Is universally accessible via the Web

The definition of OpenCourseWare and the OpenCourseWare Site Criteria above represent community norms, but the Consortium welcomes projects that produce high quality courseware that might thoughtfully vary from these norms in some respects.

### ***The Mission of the OpenCourseWare Consortium***

The mission of the OpenCourseWare Consortium is to advance formal and informal learning through the worldwide sharing and use of free, open, high-quality education materials organized as courses.

### ***The Goals of the OpenCourseWare Consortium***

In pursuit of this mission, the consortium's primary goals are to:

1. Increase the number of members in the OCWC, and the number and diversity of OpenCourseWare courses they make available;
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The Consortium has a fourth internal goal in support of the above three, which is to:

4. Build the consortium's organizational infrastructure.

## **4) Values of the Consortium**

At the OpenCourseWare Consortium, we expect these values to guide the decision-making and behavior of our staff and volunteers.

**The Right to Learn:** We view the acquisition of knowledge as a fundamental right and the key to unlocking the potential of individuals, communities and cultures worldwide.

**Inclusivity:** We welcome, respect and celebrate all cultures and perspectives. We are committed to building a dynamic body of courses that represents our collective global, cultural and intellectual heritage. We will address the needs of under-resourced regions and institutions to ensure that the production and use of OpenCourseWare is truly global.

**Openness:** We support a collaborative community invested in the improvement of OpenCourseWare. We openly share intellectual content and best practices. We champion open processes and welcome members, partnerships and ideas that further the consortium's goals.

**Accountability:** We are stewards of the Consortium's resources, accountable to its members and funders. We measure the impact of our work and value transparency, reporting regularly on the OCWC's finances and program outcomes. We demand excellence.

**Responsiveness:** We are responsive to our membership. We earn the continued investment of time, talent and resources by both our members and our funders.

## 5) Strategic Initiatives

The OCWC's Board of Directors has articulated the following draft Strategic Initiatives in pursuit of the organization's primary goals.

Please note:

- While each initiative is set beneath a single goal that it most directly addresses, many initiatives address two or all of the goals.
- These are priority strategic initiatives of the OCWC; each is to receive focused time, energy and funding from board and staff leadership. The Consortium intends to drive or otherwise ensure progress on these.
- Each initiative is labeled as being relatively higher, medium or lower priority.
- This list does not include participant-driven initiatives. It is the Consortium's intention to support and provide modest resources toward initiatives, as long as there is a critical mass of participants (and external resources, where necessary) to drive it forward.

**Goal One: Increase the number of education institution members in the OCWC, and the number and diversity of OpenCourseWare courses they make available.**

Initiatives:

- Aggregate and make available knowledge online for producers of OCW (e.g. best practices, tools, techniques, etc). [Higher]
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- Foster and develop OCW tools and technologies. [Medium]
- Provide technical support and infrastructure to members. [Medium]
- Support the rational management of course-related intellectual property at member institutions. [Lower]
- Build institutional member OCW sites sustainability, including helping them attract funding for OCW-related projects. [Lower]

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Initiatives:

- Articulate and understand user demand of all types of users (e.g. professors, students, re-purposers of courseware, learning or social networks, self-learners engaged in formal education, self-learners without access to formal education, etc.). [Higher]
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- Organize the OCWC portal as an effective hub for online access to courseware by users – for production, for self-learners, for university communities, and for individual, and networks of, independent learners. [Medium]
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**Goal Three: Build and nurture a vibrant, culturally diverse global OpenCourseWare community that is connected to the broader OER movement.**

Initiatives:

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- Organize and support rich, direct communications with the OCW community, by creating a forum that fosters and helps weave together a distributed OCW movement. [Higher]
- Aggregate and make available online knowledge about OCW for researchers and change agents interested in the field. [Lower]

**Goal Four (Internal): To build the consortium's organizational infrastructure.**

Initiatives:

- Diversify funding of the consortium, including building a strong, financially contributing base of institutional and member support. [Higher]
- Create sustainable organizational mechanisms (e.g. administrative, governance and/or technological). [Medium]

**6) Value Proposition to Members**

The Board recognizes that in order to succeed as a membership organization in the long term, the Consortium must provide clear and compelling value to our members. To this end, we have sought to clarify and sharpen the value proposition to participating institutions. Going forward, the Board, committees and staff must deliver on, enhance and expand these identified benefits.

The OCW Consortium currently offers educational institutions the following benefits:

OCWC membership...

- Provides an opportunity to fully participate in an international movement to increase access to education and knowledge, and to attract potential students to member institutions.
- Helps OCW proponents at member institutions in making a case for OpenCourseWare investment to university decision makers, funders and faculty
- Brings down the cost of creating and maintaining an OCW site
- Helps people all over the world learn about and find member institutions' OCW websites courses
- Provides an opportunity to fully participate in the development of, and gain early knowledge of, toolkit innovations
- Provides the ability to participate in, and gain economies of scale in, the collaborative development of OCW Software
- Provides favorable publicity about member institutions' role in the OCW movement and in the OCWC
- Provides a facilitated opportunity to learn best practices from other member institutions

- Provides first access to strategic alliances and collaborations with other member institutions
- Reduces the cost of participation in OCWC conferences for members

OCWC membership could...

- Support the generation of research funding at member institutions
- Support the rational management of course-related intellectual property at member institutions
- Attract funding for Open Courseware-related projects at member institutions with OCW sites
- Provide OCW-related technical infrastructure and support to member institutions

## 7) **Key roles and staffing**

The following outline the key roles and anticipated staffing requirements for the Consortium. The members of the board, the standing and ad hoc committees and the core staff all play important roles in achieving the goals of the Consortium

### ***Board of Directors and Officers***

The Consortium's Board of Directors includes eight representatives of institutional members and two representatives of affiliate members, all elected to staggered two-year terms. Board members are elected by the membership at large. One member of the Board serves as president. The Executive Director serves as Clerk, and the Board has appointed a Treasurer who is not currently a member of the board. For more information on membership, the board of directors and elections, please see the Consortium By Laws

### ***Committees***

#### **Standing Committees**

**Budget.** The Budget Committee shall monitor the financial affairs of the Corporation, review and recommend for approval the budgets and all matters relating to general expenditures resource-related issues of the Corporation and make recommendations thereon to the Board of Directors. The Budget Committee shall make such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the prompt collection of all monies due to the Corporation, and the proper disbursement of such monies in payment of the obligations of the Corporation. The Treasurer shall be the Chairperson of the Budget Committee.

**Conference.** The Conference Committee shall make a basic-guideline for decision process of Bi-annual meeting. And the committee shall report the draft and issues discussed to the board meeting for effective and successful operation of the meeting.

**Legal affairs.** The Legal Affairs Committee shall monitor the legal affairs of the Corporation, review and recommend for approval the contracts, agreements and legal affairs related to all aspects of the Corporation and make recommendations thereon to the Board of Directors.

**Membership.** The Membership Committee shall review and assess the membership of the Corporation, including reviewing applications for membership, OpenCourseWare Courses of the members and the form of Memoranda of Association, making recommendations where appropriate, shall report to the board of directors when and as necessary, and, in any event, annually prior to the Fall Annual Meeting. The Membership Committee shall also confirm the membership of the Corporation not less than annually.

**Nominating.** The Nominating Committee is responsible for encouraging and soliciting members for the board of directors, proposing procedures for nomination of officers and directors of the Corporation to ensure all nominees are subject to the same process, procedures and rules which are fair, open and transparent, establishing guidelines for the nature and type of communication allowed by nominees with the membership, interviewing candidates, and presenting their credentials to the board of directors for consideration and voting by the board of directors and membership. The Nominating Committee shall endeavor to present an array of candidates for the board of directors that represents a balanced slate taking into consideration aspects such as geography, size and type of institution from which the candidate derives.

**Sustainability.** The Sustainability Committee shall regularly report to the board of directors and annually to the membership at the Fall Annual Meeting on issues affecting the sustainability of the Corporation.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

**Strategic technology.** The ICT Strategic Planning Committee is an ad hoc committee whose goal is to make a strategic plan of the Information and Communication Technologies that serve the Consortium's goals. The ICT Strategic Planning Committee will make recommendation on the development or adoption of tools, software, portals, technical standards and other ICT related activities. These recommendations will be delivered by April 2009 to both the board of directors of the Consortium as well as to the members of the consortium to be taken into consideration.

### **Core Staff**

The following summarizes the core staff required for meeting the goals of the Consortium. As the Consortium develops, additional staff may be required to meet the organization's goals.

#### **Executive Director (1 FTE)**

Principal responsibilities include:

- Drive the development of the vision and strategic direction of the Consortium
- Oversee and manage Consortium activities and initiatives, and drive new member recruitment
- Raise funds sufficient to operate the Consortium on an ongoing basis
- Supervise all staff engaged in Consortium projects
- Develop the structure, organization and budget of the Consortium
- Create, maintain and enforce operating policies and procedures for the OCWC
- Writing of OCWC grants, and in the establishment of strategic partnerships
- Support the OCWC board president in the planning and managing of all OCWC board meetings and outcomes

#### **Director of Community Outreach (1 FTE)**

Principal responsibilities include:

- Direct the external marketing, communications and public relations efforts of the Consortium
- Manage internal OCWC outreach and communications
- Primary responsibility for all aspects of Consortium meetings
- Primary responsibility of responding to general OCWC inquiries, and representing the OCWC at conferences, on-site visits, special events, etc.

- Responsible for annual OCWC assessment and evaluation
- Prime role in the writing of OCWC grants, and in the establishment of strategic partnerships

### **Technology Director (1 FTE)**

Principal responsibilities include:

- Achieve Technology Self-Sufficiency for the OCWC
- Continually monitor and prioritize the technological needs of the OCWC and its members
- Maintain secure, reliable and functional technical infrastructure for the OCWC
- Architect and implement technology applications for the OCW Consortium
- Coordinate OCWC technical standards and implement solutions to increase discoverability and usage of OCW courses
- Continually evaluate emerging technologies for potential OCW and OCWC use

### **Administrative Officer (.25 FTE)**

Principal responsibilities include:

- Ensure smooth, efficient, and fiscally responsible operations for the OCWC
  - Implement and enforce organizational policies
  - Oversees OCWC accounting and budget, including OCWC office-related expenses
  - Manages all OCWC membership tracking and invoicing for dues

### ***Contracted Services***

#### **Legal Assistance**

As a young organization involved in a novel area of international intellectual property law, the Consortium can expect to have a significant ongoing need for legal advice.

#### **Financial Management**

The Consortium requires a flexible and scalable infrastructure for financial management sufficient to secure the Consortium's reputation as a responsible and trusted steward of resources.

#### **Logistical Support and Project Management**

As an organization with a small core staff, the Consortium will require contracted support on a flexible basis to address acute needs and manage participant-driven activities. Where such needs do not align directly with strategic initiatives above but nonetheless serve Consortium goals, external funding should be found to support such contracted assistance.

### **8) Financial Resources**

In order to fulfill the mission and meet the goals of the organization, the Board authorizes an annual budget of \$1,000,000 USD for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. The Board charges the Executive Director with producing annual business plans detailing the discharge of that budget for activities in support of the above strategic initiatives, to be submitted at the board meeting prior to the start of the respective fiscal year.

