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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH

# OPEN PEDAGOGY BENEFITS TO COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT: FROM SAGE ON THE STAGE TO GUY IN THE AUDIENCE

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### ABSTRACT

This paper describes the application of Open Pedagogy practices to an undergraduate organizational behavior course in a healthcare management program. Open Pedagogy is defined as the use and creation of Open Educational Resources combined with a high level of student autonomy and self-direction. The paper explores how the application of Open Pedagogy enhances soft-skill competency development. The course structure, assignments, and outcomes are discussed. Open Pedagogy may not be appropriate for all courses, but it is a technique worth considering for its potent experiential learning value.

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*"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." - Lao Tzu*

## INTRODUCTION

As a good learner, you arrive a few minutes early for class. The class is small, so you say hello to a few of your fellow learners and take your seat in the audience. The instructors are already there setting up the computer and projector and getting their notes together. You smile at them and ask, "All set?" They're busy but assure you they are ready. One of your fellow learners takes attendance on a shared Google Doc. The time to start arrives and, as usual, the instructors welcome everyone. They announce the topic for the day and launch into an exercise built around the pre-work assigned prior to class. The class is engaging – the instructors use a combination of lecture, video, discussion, and group exercises. You participate with your fellow learners, answering questions and joining in with the group exercises. At the end, everyone claps to show their support. Then, because you are a fellow learner and also the professor, you stand up and facilitate a brief after-action review, starting with inviting the rest of your fellow learners in the audience to offer a brief critique before following up with your own brief critique. You have gone from being the *sage on the stage*, to the *guide on the side*, to the *guy in the audience*. You are doing Open Pedagogy.

## OPEN PEDAGOGY AND COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

The future of work includes flatter organizations populated with workers who have more autonomy (Malone, 2007). This process of decentralization has been enabled by the decreasing cost of communications over electronic networks. It is more important than ever that our thinking about teaching should move up Bloom's taxonomy from remembering facts toward the creation of new knowledge (Bloom et al., 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). This need is reflected in a general movement by professional programs towards competency-based models (Calhoun et al., 2008; Kazley et al., 2016). To earn accreditation from the Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME), programs in healthcare administration must adopt a competency-based model to direct and organize program development.

Competency models for the teaching of leadership in healthcare, such as the model put forth by the National Center for Healthcare Leadership (NHCL), call for addressing abstract competencies such as analytical thinking, accountability, communication skills, project management, interpersonal understanding, self-confidence, and self-development (NHCL, n.d.). The

Open Pedagogy approach combines self-direction with the use and creation of open educational resources (OER). As the data demonstrates, as a teaching philosophy, Open Pedagogy appears well suited to preparing future healthcare leaders for their career, and exercises many of competencies within the NHCL model. In particular, the self-directing and exploratory nature of the approach appears to be effective for exercising the softer competencies, such as achievement orientation, information seeking, team leadership, and organizational awareness. Previous research has indicated that these softer skills, in particular those related to emotional intelligence, can be taught, but only through experiential learning (Boyatzis, Stubbs, & Taylor, 2002). Problem Based Learning (PBL) has been shown to be effective for learning these skills (Brownell & Jameson, 2004). A course taught using the Open Pedagogy approach is by its nature a PBL course because students are presented with the real problem of organizing their learning and producing products for the real world.

This article is broken into the following parts: a brief exploration of the evolving concept of Open Pedagogy; an explanation of how I used Open Pedagogy to design an organizational behavior course in a healthcare administration program and the outcomes, including the results of a student survey; and finally a discussion of the results from both the professor and student perspective.

## WHAT IS OPEN PEDAGOGY?

Open Pedagogy is an evolving concept. At its core, it is the application of open-source principles to teaching. Open source refers to user-generated and freely-shared content and products. An example would be the Linux operating system, which is free to use, can be freely modified, and is maintained by a community of volunteer programmers. Another example closer to education is the Creative Commons movement. Creators of intellectual property can license their work for various levels of public use, including the ability to “remix, tweak, and build upon” (About The Licenses, 2017).

Applying open source to teaching allows for several levels of openness in the classroom. Perhaps the most basic level is using Open Educational Resources (OER) in the classroom, or OER-using. A common definition of OER is “digitized materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning, and research” (Huyen, 2007). For example, an instructor might replace a commercial textbook that students would normally purchase with a textbook that is available for free under a Creative Commons license. The fact that a textbook is OER does not necessarily impact the instructor’s delivery of the course. A course could use

OER and still be delivered in a traditional manner, with the professor lecturing from the podium, acting as the proverbial “sage on the stage” while using OER materials. Most of us who teach create some of the materials we use in class, however these materials are not OER unless we make them freely available to others. The essence of the open-source movement includes sharing as an imperative.

The degree to which a resource is OER is determined by what have come to be known as the five Rs. The five Rs describe progressive and inclusive permissions associated with the resource and include: Retain, Reuse, Redistribute, Revise, and Remix (Iii, Wiley, Stein, & Johnson, 2010; Wiley, n.d.). Retain rights allow a user to make a copy and retain it indefinitely. Reuse and redistribute rights allow you to share the resource – unmodified – and use it in the classroom. The “right to revise” means you are allowed to modify the work and then share it. Remix means you are allowed to mix the original work with another remixable work and create a derivative product. The five Rs correspond with the different levels of Creative Commons licenses. A distinct advantage of OER is that it gives instructors the ability to modify materials to fit their needs, but using OER does not mean you are doing Open Pedagogy.

The next step from employing OER toward openness is the Open Pedagogy assignment. The Open Pedagogy assignment requires students to create OER resources themselves. Wiley (2013) points out that an Open Pedagogy assignment is only possible with the four R permissions. If it can be completed without relying on the five Rs, it is not really an Open Pedagogy assignment. An example of an Open Pedagogy assignment is Murray’s assignment for his Latin American literature course (Murray, 2017). Murray required his students to create an entry in Wikipedia on a topic related to Latin American literature. This forced the students to create a piece of public scholarship that exposed them to the crowd-sourced review process inherent in the Wikipedia platform, and conforms with the five Rs because anything on Wikipedia is available for reuse, redistribution, revision, and remixing. Wiley (2017) has opted for the term OER-Enabled Pedagogy to refer to teaching that makes the use of OER materials and open pedagogy assignments central to the course.

Although the definition of Open Pedagogy is a topic of some debate, I am opting to use the term Open Pedagogy to refer to a course that employs OER-Enabled Pedagogy, which I see as inclusive of OER-Using Pedagogy, but also opens the management of the course to the students themselves. Ehlers (2011) conceives of a learning architecture as having a high level of openness if the objectives of learning and the methods used for learning are highly determined by the learners. When a learning architecture with a high level of openness is combined with a high level of OER-Enabled Pedagogy, we ar-

rive at Open Pedagogy. An example of Open Pedagogy is the Crowd-Sourced Syllabus (DeRosa & Robison, 2017). DeRosa allowed students to develop the objectives, assignments, and rubrics for her composition course, and then had the students do their work on websites. The course combined a high degree of student self-direction with OER-Enabled Pedagogy, changing the role of the student from simply recipient to contributor, making it a good example of Open Pedagogy.

### RESTRUCTURING THE CLASS

The class I restructured using Open Pedagogy principles was the second course in the department's management sequence, Management II. The preceding Management I course is focused on the structure and functions of an effective healthcare organization, while Management II focuses on organizational behavior and leadership. In the precursor Management I course I had taught, I had begun to use OER, developing a semester-long case based on a fictional hospital (under preparation for public release, CC-BY). I also relied heavily on the health careers podcast, the *Health Leader Forge*, for supplemental content (available CC-BY). Once I had worked with OER, I had the bug and wanted to go further.

In preparing for Management II, I knew I wanted to cover core theoretical knowledge of organizational behavior, and that I also wanted the students to engage in experiential learning that forced them to actually experience the problems of organizational behavior. Softer skills can be taught in healthcare management programs, but they need to be practiced in order to be mastered (Boyatzis et al., 2002). My initial plan was to build Management II, an organizational behavior course, entirely around OER. I conceived of a course built in three parts: One, Two, and Many – a play on the (possibly apocryphal) idea that some primitive cultures generalized a group of three or more as “they” or “many” (Dyer, 2010; Blake, 1991). My concept was that during part One, we would study the organizational behavior literature around the personal/individual, which would include topics such as personality and identity. During part Two, we would study the literature around the interpersonal and topics might include performance evaluation, mentorship, and listening. Finally, during Many, we would study topics at the organizational level and talk about leadership, culture, group dynamics, etc.

When I discovered I would have an abnormally small class of 14, I decided this would be the ideal opportunity to try the next level of an open-source concept course: Open Pedagogy. Given this course was focused on organizational behavior, turning over control of much of the course to the students

seemed to offer the opportunity to integrate learning about organizational behavior in the processes of the class itself, a sort of meta-learning alongside the domain learning.

### COURSE DESIGN AND ASSIGNMENTS

The programmed course assignments consisted of presentations, a portfolio, and writing a primer. In concept, the presentations, portfolio, and primer were envisioned as an interlocking set of assignments meant to reinforce each other and provide opportunities for individual, small-team, and large-group work.

On the first day of class, the students were given a schedule of classes with dates at which the course would transition from parts One, Two, and Many. I explained one of the requirements would be that each student had to present during each of the three parts, and that it was up to them to decide what and how they would teach within the boundaries of each part. I provided them with some suggested topics, but explained to them that it was up to them as a class to establish the schedule and ensure that their individual classes were not redundant.

The requirement for the portfolio was that it would show regular contributions connected to the coursework and course themes, and that it would be done on a publicly available platform (e.g., blog, podcast, or video series).

The students' last assignment for the course was to write a primer on organizational behavior directed at early careerists. I suggested that the primer should follow the same structure as the class, with sections on the personal, interpersonal, and organizational, but allowed them to change the format if they had a better concept. In the spirit of Open Pedagogy, the students were to write the primer on a public Google Doc or another publicly visible platform. The primer was a group project and the students were informed they would all receive the same grade.

Finally, the students conducted peer evaluations at the end of each section within the course, followed by an individual meeting with the instructor to discuss their course performance.

I coached the students through the process of developing grading rubrics for each of the deliverables, as well as what percentage of their final grade each of the deliverables would be. Ultimately, they decided the portfolio and presentation assignments would represent half of the course grade, with the primer representing the other half. They chose not to have the peer evaluations count toward the grade.

## RESULTS

The class met twice weekly for 80 minutes. We spent several class periods negotiating the rubrics and the schedule. Getting the students comfortable with taking charge took more time than I had expected. Most of the students expressed trepidation when initially presented with the Open Pedagogy approach. Some of the delay in comfort was a result of their uncertainty; some of the delay was a result of my own uncertainty about how to help them approach the tasks. One student dropped the course. Another student stated, "As a type-A, the lack of structure and uncertain aspects of this course made me nervous and got me feeling deflated." Eventually the students began to embrace the approach as demonstrated by the following student blog post.

I have always loved being a part of a team. There is always something to look forward to, or something to work on. As of yesterday, our class, HMP 722, officially became a new team in my life. It is going to take a lot of hard work to really get to know each other and be able to rely heavily on one another. (Fucci, 2017)

### *Evaluation of the effectiveness of the presentations*

The students decided prior to the start of the presentations that each presentation would be turned into a corresponding chapter in the primer, with the presentation team responsible for drafting the chapter and for managing the entire 80-minute class. Before each class meeting, the students responsible for teaching would assign pre-work that the rest of the students were expected to do in order to prepare for class. Prior to this course, most of the students had had limited public speaking experience. This pre-work often consisted of a short article or video that related to the upcoming topic, along with a series of discussion questions the presenting students developed to enhance learning.

The class typically started with a review and discussion of the pre-work. Following the discussion, they typically engaged in active learning experiences such as games, puzzles, and role-plays, followed by more discussions. To encourage engagement, videos were used frequently in the class as were virtual polling systems (e.g., [www.polleverywhere.com](http://www.polleverywhere.com)). At the end of each class presentation, I facilitated a brief feedback session and offered a few constructive comments myself. The students observed each other closely and each iteration demonstrated that they were learning from each other. By the end of the course, the class had developed a presentation style based on what they had discerned was effective. Overall, the classes were highly engaging to both the students and professor, and triggered cognitive, affective, and

psychomotor engagement, hitting all of Bloom's taxonomy (Weigel & Bonica, 2014). The students universally indicated in the end-of-course survey this method was much more effective at teaching presentation skills than typical university classes (see Appendix 1 for survey results).

Once the students took over the teaching, my role as the professor was largely relegated to participant, with the exception of facilitating the post-presentation review at the end of class. I typically completed the pre-work assignments and posted the results to my own blog as well as to a Google Group shared by the class in an effort to model support and provide a standard. I participated in class, joining in small-group discussions, games, and role-plays as a regular participant. I would share theoretical extensions of the material if the students appeared to have missed a particular point, and, since I had extensive experience as a manager before coming to academia, I would share some of my personal experiences when relevant. I would occasionally ask probing questions of the presenters or of other students in the class to help direct the discussion if it needed prompting, but largely I tried to maintain the role of engaged participant.

One concern I had was that the pre-work was not always as academic as I might have hoped. I gave the students the freedom to find materials they thought would be engaging, and they most often chose articles from the popular press or videos. However, I observed the students' active engagement with the material before and during class, which was reassuring.

#### *Evaluation of the effectiveness of the portfolios*

Blogs were unanimously elected by the students as their primary portfolio participation. Students developed a rubric for grading the blogs. Two weekly posts were required, each at least 200 words and related to the topic of organizational behavior. They also required themselves to comment on at least one other student's blog each week.

All of the blogs far exceeded the required word count, which was a minimum of 4,800 words in total. The median word count on the blogs (including all words from all posts) was 8,876 words for the semester, with a range between 7,924 and 20,586 words. Each student's blog was individual, with different approaches to the posts. Some students reflected at length about the course material specifically, others used the blog as if they were writing an advice column for other early careerists; many were some blend of the two.

As a teaching tool, the blogs provided students an opportunity to explore topics they valued while expressing their individuality and creating a professional online presence. As Bernard (2017) blogged: "The absolute most

rewarding aspect of this course is this here blog. For me, the actual posts are second to the sustained reflection and contemplation this exercise led to.” Another student, Pierce, reflected further in the blog.

I liked how we could reflect on the class in a less formal way and jot down whatever thoughts come to mind. We were allowed to write about anything that we wanted which gave us a sense of freedom. Also, this was a creative way to enhance our writing skills and have something to show future bosses potentially. (Pierce, 2017)

Through student posts, I was able to gauge their engagement with the course materials and use the blogs as a feedback mechanism. I attempted to comment on every blog post they wrote (which was time-consuming and would be difficult with a larger class). Bernard and Pierce’s posts reflect the high level of intrinsic motivation the students developed as they engaged with the course, and in particular their blogs.

#### *Evaluating the primer*

The final draft of the primer was 179 pages or 36,213 words (representing 2,785 words per student). The primer can be seen at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1htA3wCSMs4Q0aruXykFhKEoNsb7IWDizC49jvH6YFNM/edit?usp=sharing>.

The primer was well organized, following the structure of the class. Each chapter reflected a topic chosen and taught by the students. They invested a significant amount of time standardizing the content and format to make the final product look as professional as possible.

#### *Mid-course instructor evaluation and peer evaluations*

The students completed peer evaluations and mid-course evaluations. They also participated in a one-on-one meeting with me. During the mid-semester meetings with me, I tried to emulate a mid-point counseling as if the students were my employees. We discussed the peer evaluations they had received, reviewed their portfolios, discussed the presentations they had made to that point, and then discussed how they would go forward for the remainder of the semester. I also invited course feedback at that point.

The students expressed mixed responses to the peer evaluation policy – specifically having multiple rounds of evaluations. Some students did not feel the second round of peer evaluations was useful. However, most students felt the mid-semester peer evaluations were useful and noted that their colleagues responded to the criticism they had received. In particular, some

students who received feedback that they were too quiet in class clearly made an effort to speak more during the second half of the course. For the future, a mid-semester evaluation was certainly useful; whether an end-of-semester evaluation was also useful is unclear.

### *Student survey results*

I received IRB permission (IRB #: 6687) to survey the students using the survey in Appendix 1. Students scored the course highly with respect to other courses they had taken at the university. Qualitative responses indicated students' appreciation for the "freedom to explore" as well as "the teamwork and the presentation skills gained." They recognized the value of "having to know the topics well enough to teach others," and found the post-presentation feedback to be valuable. One student summarized: "I am a better presenter, writer, and team player because of this course. I learned to lead through teaching others, and learned from my teammates."

Areas for improvement focused on having the professor "more active in creating the rules for the amount of work he expects," and offering a "little more guidance in the very beginning." While these are essential to the self-directed part of the course, it is clear I was not as effective at introducing this concept to them as I could have been.

## DISCUSSION

Using the Open Pedagogy approach enabled a high level of student engagement. While there was a sacrifice of domain knowledge in this approach, students expressed the belief that they would retain the knowledge they learned in this course as a result of the format:

Not only does writing a primer, keeping a portfolio, and researching/presenting a topic help us learn and remember in a new way, but the self-direction and forced accountability helps us 'take-off' professionally. As I've mentioned in a far past class, I go home and talk about what I learned that day, I apply it to my current relationships and projects, and I vividly remember lessons and activities that I found valuable. I cannot say that for most other classes. (Katszeff, 2017)

Although some of the survey results indicated they were not completely comfortable with self-direction, it was clear they valued the autonomy. While the students are in their zone of proximal development they are in an ideal learning environment; the goal is to push the students out of their comfort zone, but not so far out of their comfort learning zone as to cause them to shut

down. In her final post, Judge (2017) blogged about comfort zones specifically: “In traditional classes, I feel like I get stuck sitting in the background and absorbing what goes on around me, but Management II forced me out of my comfort zone.” Given that the future of work includes high levels of autonomy, even for low-level positions, plunging students into roles that require autonomy strengthens several competencies.

Consistent with the Open Pedagogy assignment, the idea that they were creating something that they could take with them to show potential employers motivated many of the students. Murphy blogged:

In both Management II and Research I, I will have tangible, concrete pieces of my own work to show to the world... [W]e have discussed how we now can show potential employers a blog (portfolio) and a primer... This is the first semester I have ever had tangible products like these and it's great to come out with not just one but three great pieces of work. (Murphy, 2017)

The students understood that they were producing something that, if done well, could be used to show the quality of their work. This recognition triggered a high level of intrinsic motivation. They were no longer just working for a grade. Rather, they were working to create something that had clear value beyond the limits of the course.

Consistent with the engagement measures from the survey, many of the students blogged about the connections they made with the material and with each other as a result of the course's built-in autonomy and self-directed nature. Representative was Bernard's final post: “I have never felt so connected to an academic subject before... Even the other coursework for my major has not had as drastic an impact on my life as Management II.”

From the instructor perspective, the students demonstrated the softer NHCL competencies of information seeking, achievement orientation, team leadership, and organizational awareness consistently throughout the course. In selecting, researching, and preparing their classes with very little assistance from the instructor, the student teams exercised information seeking. They worked as a team to develop and deliver the information, and there was a feeling of friendly competitiveness as the teams tried to come up with clever and applicable exercises for the class to participate in. The work on the primer required inter-group coordination and negotiation, as well as further information seeking. The amount of effort and pride put into the primer was for me a clear manifestation of achievement orientation. The consistent commentary from the students demonstrating their understanding of creating something that would live beyond the confines of the course showed how the non-disposable assignment was intrinsically motivating.

**STUDENT DISCUSSION (STUDENT AUTHORED)**

Management II was very different from courses that my peers and I had taken in our years in college. Most of our classes followed the typical format of getting material, memorizing, and taking tests. When I started with this course, I was slightly unsure about the effectiveness of the format. I know I was not alone in these thoughts. We had never been exposed to a set-up where we had control over our learning. As we muddled our way through the first awkward weeks of learning to step up and take control, we slowly became more comfortable with our classmates, our leadership styles, and ourselves. As future health leaders, the skills we learned from this class using Open Pedagogy were indispensable. This course aligned well with the competencies outlined by the NCHL.

In terms of Transformation, the two major themes that this course addressed were Achievement Orientation and Innovative Thinking. As for Achievement Orientation, with the format of Open Pedagogy, we were held accountable for setting our own goals. There was not a lot outlined for us. We eventually learned to schedule what needed to be done, and then evaluated the work through peer evaluations, which helped us to improve as the course went on. Innovative Thinking was very important in this class. Structuring a very unconventional course and choosing topics that were both relevant and interesting often required thinking out of the box.

Two of the competencies under Execution that most lined up with this course were Collaboration and Communication Skills. As a group, we had to make decisions about course structure and expectations daily. We were a room full of different personalities and opinions, and this was sometimes a challenge. Over time, we gained confidence in our communication skills, making day-to-day tasks such as presenting easier. These two skills together were an integral part in the success of our group in this format.

Lastly, the People skills from this list of competencies were ones that we used every day. More specifically, Professionalism, Self-Confidence, Self-Development, and Team Leadership were skills that were evident in all parts of this course. We learned to be cooperative and professional through teamwork and respecting the ideas of others. As for Self-Confidence and Self-Development, it was very apparent that we broke away from shyness and insecurity. Through presentations and exercises relating to identity and personality, we realized who we are and how that played an important role to the group. Team Leadership was very important with this format. If no one stepped up to be the leader, nothing would get done and the group as a whole would suffer. We learned to not be afraid to take the initiative to get work done and guide the team.

In no other class format would we have gained skills such as the ones discussed above. We learned to manage each other and ourselves. You cannot read about leadership in a textbook and become a leader. Management II gave us an environment that allowed us to lead and have roles as managers. We had space to practice scenarios that are likely to arise in our careers as health leaders, focused on topics that were pertinent to our interests in management. And we had fun along the way. We are walking out of this course with a tangible piece of work and a skillset to match.

#### WEAKNESSES OF THE OPEN PEDAGOGY APPROACH IN GENERAL

First and foremost, in this approach the instructor gives up control of the domain knowledge in order to generate the experience of self-management. With a traditional delivery style, the quantity and quality of material presented to the students is regulated by the instructor. With the instructor organizing content and using a traditional delivery method, the instructor can ensure greater depth and breadth of material covered. Requiring the students to develop classes about material they have never covered before inevitably leads to mixed results, and some of the key literature is also inevitably missed. When important literature or concepts are missed, it is up to the instructor to ensure the topics are introduced somewhere, whether by bringing them up during the class and explaining how they relate to the topic at hand, or encouraging a follow-on group to present the missed material. In this course, I did both.

With the sacrifice of control, there is the risk that students will not put forth the effort expected in a college course. The instructor needs to collaborate with the students to help them develop clear and achievable standards, and be able to motivate the students to work towards those standards and hold each other accountable for those standards. An example from this course was the fact that students tended to want to stay away from academic literature and stick with popular press, blogs, and websites. I had to apply repeated reminders about quality expectations to get them to engage with more formal, professional, and academic literature. Furthermore, one or a few truly uncooperative students could significantly damage the delivery of the course.

Probably not all course subjects lend themselves to the level of self-direction I turned over to the students in this course. Some courses do not lend themselves to the creation of non-disposable assignments created in public spaces. For me, an organizational behavior course was an optimal course on which to test this approach.

Privacy could also be a concern for some students since a requirement of the course was to produce products for publication on the internet. To address this, I gave all the students the option of using a pseudonym for their

public work. None of the students in this iteration of the class chose to use a pseudonym as they saw the benefit of being able to show these products to potential employers. An instructor would need to be prepared to deal with legitimate privacy concerns for students with specific needs or concerns.

### WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH SPECIFIC TO THIS ITERATION

A clear weakness of this particular iteration was the small number of students who participated. A class size of 13 is not representative in my own program and is not typical of most of other universities. Self-regulating groups face different challenges as they expand in size. Coordinating the activities of the group would likely require a more formal structure.

Students noted that, because the primer was a large assignment without formal deadlines, as a group they procrastinated on much of the work until close to the end. They suggested hard deadlines might have been helpful in preventing that procrastination. However, when I asked if I should have imposed those deadlines, as a group they concluded that it was an important learning point.

Another improvement might have been forcing the students to develop a formal contract with each other. Having the students develop the rubrics for the assignments was very effective because they had developed the grading system. Having them develop a formal contract defining how they would work together may have helped them with problems such as procrastination on the primer.

A final weakness of this iteration was my own lack of experience in facilitating this kind of open-ended learning experience. At the end of many classes, I realized I had dominated the conversation – not because the students were lost or did not have a good grasp of the material, but because I was used to dominating the conversation in my classroom. I kept wanting to revert to being the *sage on the stage*. I regularly chastised myself afterward to remember it was now *our* classroom, and that I should only intervene when necessary or when called on (which the students took pleasure in doing, in a reversal of roles).

### CONCLUSION

Open Pedagogy is defined by a high level of student self-direction and the creation of OER. A high level of student self-direction and non-disposable assignments is a powerful course design, as has been addressed. Self-direction has its challenges, and learning to conduct class from a seat in the classroom (i.e., being a guy in the audience, rather than the sage on the stage) is not easy for either the instructor or the students. The idea that assignments should not

be disposable is a powerful learning point that I hope to integrate elsewhere in my teaching, and one I would recommend other instructors give careful consideration to try. The non-disposable assignment gives students a source of intrinsic motivation; they are now doing the assignment not to simply meet the short-term goal of completing the course requirements, but creating something lasting that could help them later on. In a world where students carry supercomputers in their pockets connected to most of the world's knowledge, it seems helping them learn to be self-directed and creative is the most appropriate use of our interactions with them as teachers.

As programs in health management continue to refine competency-based models of program evaluation, the Open Pedagogy approach seems worth exploring for some coursework. Many of the softer competencies described by the NCHL's model happen naturally as part of the class process with Open Pedagogy, especially those requiring a high level of self-direction to develop. The Open Pedagogy approach creates a problem-based learning environment where students are creating real products for the real world, together. This problem-based learning environment more accurately represents the kind of work our students will do when they launch into the real work of healthcare management, and gives them exposure to the real problems of management in a way a traditional hierarchical class cannot.

Open Pedagogy is not for the faint of heart – not faint-hearted teachers or faint-hearted students. To some degree, it is like sewing your parachute after you have jumped from the plane. As a professor, you have to put your fate in your students' hands. In order to empower them, you have to trust them and make yourself vulnerable. Open Pedagogy only works if you are all falling through space and all sewing the parachute together, while the ground zooms up toward you. But what an amazing feeling when the parachute snaps open and you see the world like you never have before.

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# APPENDIX

Post-course student survey - N=12 (of 13)

1 = much more effective 5 = much less effective

Question:

With respect to courses you have previously taken at the University of New Hampshire:

	Avg.	SD
How effective was the open method for creating an appropriately challenging learning environment?	1.58	0.76
How effective was the open method for creating an appropriately supportive learning environment?	1.33	0.62
How effective was the open method for engaging you with the learning process?	1.42	0.64
How effective was the open method for engaging you with the course work?	1.25	0.43
How effective was this course for further developing your written communication?	1.58	0.64
How effective was this course for further developing your presentation skills?	1.00	-
How effective was this course for further developing your research skills?	1.67	0.62
How effective was this course for further developing your team work skills?	1.58	0.76
How effective was this course for further developing your leadership skills?	1.33	0.62

Post-course student survey, *cont.*

Question	Avg.	SD
This course was intended to be a blend of domain learning (i.e., theory and practice around organizational behavior and leadership) as well as meta-learning (i.e., actually practicing the skills of organizational behavior and leadership).	1.33	0.47
The domain learning met my expectations for this level of course.	1.33	0.47
The meta-learning met my expectations for this level of course.	1.25	0.43
The sacrifice of domain learning for meta-learning was appropriate and met my expectations for a management course.	1.17	0.37
Organizational behavior and leadership is an appropriate subject for an open pedagogy approach.	1.25	0.66
I would take a course structured around open pedagogy again.		

1= strongly agree 5 = strongly disagree