

Educational Technology Users Group
“Extend” Your Digital Fluency Toolkit with Ontario Extend
November 4, 2022, Session 3
Presenters: Alissa Bigelow, Siri Gauthier

JAMIE DROZDA:

So welcome back. I’m Jamie Drozda, and I would like to introduce our next session, Extend your Digital Fluency Toolkit with Ontario Extend with Alissa Bigelow and Siri Gauthier. Alissa is a Digital Learning Associate at eCampus Ontario and Siri is Coordinator of Programs and Services at eCampus Ontario. So welcome.

ALISSA BIGELOW:

Thank you, Jamie. I just wanted to do a quick check that you can see my screen when the recording started, I think it flipped a little bit.

JAMIE:

I can see your screen.

ALISSA:

Okay, perfect. Great. Okay. So we can get going. As Jamie mentioned, my name is Alissa Bigelow and I am a Digital Learning Associate with eCampusOntario. It is beautiful weather here today, I don’t know about in British Columbia, but it is absolutely wonderful, spectacular weather, so I hope you’re enjoying that too. We also, my co-host here is Siri Gauthier, and I’ll let Siri come on and introduce herself.

SIRI GAUTHIER:

Hi, my name is Siri. I’m the Coordinator for Programs and Services, more particularly the Open Library at eCampusOntario. And I’m joining from Toronto where the weather is also okay here.

ALISSA:

Great. Thanks, Siri. I see a hand up. Is there a question? At this time? No. Okay. Perfect. We will keep going then. Okay. So we like to start off our sessions with quick land acknowledgment. We’re here to proudly acknowledge and deeply appreciate that the offices of eCampusOntario are on the lands of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat Peoples and is home to many other Inuit, Métis individuals. We welcome you to also share your land acknowledgment in the chat, if you would care to do so. We’ll be keeping an eye on that as well. So just a quick agenda for the next little bit. We’re going to take you through an introduction of our Ontario Extend Program. What it is, how you can engage, and where we’re going next. We’ll also take a quick look at the different technologies that we use to facilitate our sessions and the content. And Siri will take us through a couple of quick activities so that you can get a taste for the modules. And then we will just continue on with how you can get started and answer any questions if anybody has any at that point. Alright. So many things. Okay, there we go.

So I'll begin with an introduction about what eCampusOntario is. We're a provincially funded non-profit organization that leads a consortium of the province's, publicly funded colleges, universities, and Indigenous institutes to develop and test online learning tools that advance the use of educational technology and digital learning environments. We support the development and delivery of quality online learning experiences across the province of Ontario. We lead in research development and sharing of exemplary practices in online and other forms of technology-enabled learning. We support our member institutions in fostering innovation, collaboration, and excellence on behalf of Ontario students and faculty. And we contribute to the evolution of teaching and learning by responding to emerging technologies and the development of state-of-the-art online courses and programs.

Alright. So our Ontario Extend Program. I will put a, we can put a link in the chat here for you if you'd like to have a look. while the presentation is happening. Our Ontario Extend Program is being facilitated currently as an asynchronous experience or we are offering online guided sessions. So we'll take you through a quick rundown. [SOUND IS BRIEFLY MUTED] And can be done, again, facilitated or asynchronously. Each module has the opportunity to earn a digital badge. And each of the modules, each of the modules can stack to deliver a micro-credential called the Empowered Educator. The modules themselves are self-directed. They were designed to be self-directed and self-paced, but collaborative as well. So we have opportunity for discussions. And we also this fall, are offering guided synchronous facilitated sessions. We provide a guided schedule to complete the program. And folks can join us in a variety of different synchronous Zoom sessions to have discussion about the topics that are happening in the modules at that time. The content for this program is Creative Commons. It's openly licensed. So other institutions are able to deliver this through your learning management systems. There's a question about non-Ontario folks. Yes, you can take these courses. They are open and we'll provide the registration link at the end. Actually, it's on our website as well. If you wanted to check that out. The content we have available in English and in French. So we do engage with their Francophone communities as well. We have a very diverse group of participants. So we have everyone from faculty. Doesn't matter what your tenure status is. We have instructional designers, librarians, anybody that's involved in creating learning experiences in post-secondary education is more than welcome to participate. With this program, we have had over 1,200 participants. We've issued 950 digital badges. And we're growing our number of micro-credentials by, we're over 80 of them. So that's 80 folks who have completed all six modules and earned that micro-credential. Our modules are each based off of the framework, the Anatomy of an Empowered Educator. It is described through Simon Bates's work as the description of the 21st century educator. And each of these modules focuses on a different skill set of digital fluency competencies. So our teacher for learning module gives you a foundational reflective experience around how you teach, how students learn, and you re-examine how you do things. The curator module is all about open educational resources. And we're actually going to take you through one of those activities a little bit later. From the curator module. The technologists module is all about evaluating different technologies in order to solve learning challenges. So this one is a great module to work through if you're new to technologies and you're not sure which ones will work for which purposes. This module will help you determine that. The collaborator module is all about building professional learning networks. This one

focuses on the core learning theories around connectivism. It also deals with some of the digital tools that we use to connect and make connections across the globe, really. The experimenter module is all about trying new technologies. This one people really enjoy, because you can take an existing activity or an existing, anything that you have in your course and try it in a new way and using a technology that maybe you've never tried before. In this module week, you can get into infographics, designing infographics, creating animated gifs as a way of breaking the ice with students and getting into virtual tours and polling and surveying as well. And the scholar module is all about the scholarship of teaching and learning, about how we share what it is we're doing, best practices and all of that stuff. The scholar module also, the activities in that module are focused around helping you develop a research plan. So you try and figure out what is something that you want to learn about your students or about your classroom. And you develop a plan around how to attack that.

We also have been in the process of creating transferable pathways. We have partnered with five institutions across the province who have provided us with endorsement statements that are tied to each one of the digital badges that we issue. When a digital badge is issued, you can share it out through your LinkedIn profile, through Twitter, through websites. And you can use web links on a resume if you want to. The digital badge contains information that is viewable to anyone who clicks on the link. So the endorsements are tied to that digital badge and can be seen when you review someone's digital badge. We have a unique partnership right now with Conestoga College. And they are offering credit towards one of their certificates in post-secondary teaching and learning. We have had, I found this out today. We've had six folks take us up on the credit transfer. So those who have earned their empowered educator micro-credential, can apply and take the certificate and post-secondary teaching. And that micro-credential counts towards six courses in that certificate that is offered, and that certificate is open to anyone. It's through their Continuing Studies Department. And anyone is welcome to apply their empowered educator, micro-credential to towards some of those courses.

Our program is right now, it is being held and hosted within the Brightspace learning management system. The content itself is open and can be reused and adapted by anyone. But we are a government-funded organization and have to report on metrics. So we do have to have our content in a system that we can, that will enable us to do that. So right now, all of our content are in courses in our Brightspace, learning management system. Folks can register for access to the system. And then you can just go through the modules as you would any other course. Inside each of the modules, we have a schedule, a suggested schedule for completion, where we've broken down each one of the modules and the content into manageable chunks. So every other day, there's activities or suggestions for what you could do if you're wanting to stay on the schedule that we work through throughout the semester. We also have what's referred to as our activity bank. The activity bank is a giant repository. At this point, there's thousands of entries of the different activities that folks have completed as they go through each of the modules. The content contained within each one of these courses. You go through that content and as you get, you'll come across some links to complete activities. And those activities are your accountability tasks, if you will. You can complete those activities. And then

at the end of the module when you finish, you use the links from those completions or the submissions to apply for a digital badge.

So this is just an example of one of the modules. I've chosen the curator because that's what we're looking at doing today and in our activity. So each module has an overarching outcome and then several key objectives.

And I mentioned before, there are some activities to complete. So you can, each module has different activities, different number of activities that you can complete. But as you go through each one of them, you will be asked to do a reflection at the end of each one.

Just to respond to a question that's come up in the chat. The content is CC. Can we import into our Brightspace course, into our learning management system? Because our content is in Brightspace, it can be packaged into an exportable format. We've had, we have had folks adopt the program and not through a cartridge per se, but they've redeveloped the information into a learning management system. So it can be imported into Brightspace and it also can be recreated into any other LMS as well. It does, yes, it goes into the common cartridge packages as well. Okay, so I'm going to turn it over to Siri, who's going to take you through the next little bit of our presentation.

SIRI:

Thank you. As mentioned previously, I'm the Coordinator for the Open Library. So just a little bit of context as to what that is. eCampusOntario's Open Library provides educators and learners with access to open educational resources, tools, and practices that are free of legal, financial, and technical barriers. And they can be used, shared, and adapted in the digital environment. So the Open Library currently has over 1,200 OERs in our repository. And they can be accessed anywhere in the globe. And a subset of this collection is what we call the VLS collection. The VLS, or the virtual learning strategy, was a historic investment by the Government of Ontario into virtual learning. So it created over 600 OERs, which is why our collection expanded. So it is available both through the Open Library proper to that first link there. And also specifically if you are curious about looking through just what outputs were created in VLS, you can also just search through the VLS Library specifically. So that's just a little bit of information there. And the links are in the chat. Thank you, Alissa.

So one of the things that comes up in the curator module is search strategies. So one of the lovely things about having such a large collection, a lot of things to find. But unfortunately it can be a little bit difficult to find exactly what it is you're looking for without the requisite search strategy. So there are different search strategies and sites that are described in the curator module, so I won't spoil those for you. But one thing we do want to touch on is Boolean operators. So this might come as a bit of a review, but if it isn't just a quick little introduction. So Boolean searches are operators rely on these three terms, so and, or, or, not. They can be combined together to create interesting searches and to specify what it is particularly that you're looking for. So if we take colleges and universities, for example as our two search terms, using and would have results that had both colleges and universities. Quotation marks which

are not technically a Boolean operator but are used in conjunction, would have both colleges and universities together. It's another way of combining them. Finally, we've got, not finally. Next we've got colleges or universities. So we're not necessarily looking for something that has both words college and university in them. But you're going to get all three as shown in the little Venn diagram that's there. And then finally not. So we would exclude either colleges or universities depending on obviously which one came after the not. So colleges, not universities would mean you get colleges, universities and vice versa. It's relatively evident, but it is something that is worth practicing with. And particularly as you are engaging with hopefully the activity that we're about to do, then this might be something worth practising.

So one of the activities in the curator module is Consider This. So basically the gist of it is that you search for an openly licensed item that is going to support learners in your course by using the search strategies and sites from the curator. In this case, given that we just did a quick little overview of Boolean search operators, that might be what you're looking for. If you'd like to sign up for cure for Ontario Extend or adapt it, you're obviously welcome to explore the different search strategies and sites that are listed. So Alissa has put all the links in the chat. So that's the activity bank for Consider This. There's also the search system and finally the Jamboard on the slides. So if you would like to participate, we'll give it a couple of minutes while I walk you through what the activity is. But if you do want to share, that would be the place to do it. So basically the gist of the activity is it boils down to three steps. The first is really describing your selection and how it would support your learners' understanding of an element or concept for a course. If you're not currently teaching a course or you're not teaching a course in the near future, you're also welcome to just put yourself in the shoes of someone who is or whatever your current interest is. Maybe you plan to talk to a friend about it and teach them about whatever your latest hobby is, totally valid, whatever you'd like. From there, we would also ask that you would summarize your search strategy. So whatever your keywords were, whatever operators you used. And then finally, you can also submit your ideas to the Consider This activity. There is someone at my door, I'm so sorry. Let me go get that. The joys of doing things online. Alright. So just while Siri tends to that situation, I've just re-entered those links in the chat for the Open Library and the VLS collection. And what we'd like to do is just give you a couple of minutes to explore those libraries with trying out those search strategies if you haven't used those before. So if you'd like to take a few moments, we'll just, we'll take about maybe five minutes or so and let you have a look around and see what you find. It totally is usually a cat.

And I'm just going to pull up. Why is that not coming up? Let's pull up the curator modules. I'll go to directly to that module and we're looking at Consider This. Let's have a look here. This is the activity in the bank. So as you go through the curator module, you'll be able to go through some of these different resources and complete the tasks. The tasks have been broken into a general description, some helpful links. And then there's a to-do list so that you know exactly what you're supposed to do for this, for this one. I will investigate the savvy search system link and I'll hand it back over to Siri.

SIRI:

Sorry, can you repeat that? I'm realizing that if my cat is up, I have to bring her up on screen, but she's not here yet. So just keep an eye out for her.

ALISSA:

Andrew just mentioned in the chat when you had to pop out, that it's usually a cat that derails the presentation. And yes, so we'll just keep going there. And yeah, if your cat shows up, you've got to put her or put them in.

SIRI:

Any pet is by Zoom rules at this point, any online meeting a pet has to be shown. So maybe it will show up, but we'll see.

So we went through the activity. I don't know if anyone is participating. I'm going to pull up the Jamboard now, but obviously you're welcome to take a few moments to do so. It has been shared in the chat. And you're also welcome to peruse this at your leisure. One of the joys of Ontario Extend is that it is asynchronous. So if you are currently considering what your search strategy might be, or maybe you'll come back to it after. You are more than welcome to just do so at any point. This Jamboard will obviously exist I guess relatively indefinitely. The Internet things don't really go away. So the link will be there for whenever you are interested. But we'll give it a few moments, I suppose just in case. There's a few slides.

ALISSA:

I've just pulled up that we use several different Jamboards within some of the sessions that we run. So this Jamboard is on number three. If you do visit that. It didn't go directly to number three this time because none of my links things seem to be working today. However, if you do click on the Jamboard link, just navigate to slide number three at the top there. And then you're welcome to use the tools on the left-hand side, they're sticky notes, images. Again, if you want to put a pet up, you can put an image of your pet up, but it's not technically an OER, but that never hurts, right?

SIRI:

It's also possible to find a license of a licensed item of a picture of both cat or dog, or cat and dog, or cat not dog or vice versa. These are all also options

ALISSA:

And they are mental health support. So, you know, you could put a picture of a pet up and still have it aligned with the activity.

SIRI:

And I'll also share the links to in the chat of the source, the sources that are typically shared. The sites where you can actually go through and find images that are free to use and have licenses that allow you to reuse them for whatever capacity that you desire. So there's search.creativecommons.org, commons.wikipedia.org, flicker, It's pretty great. Pixabay and then Unsplash. So those are all in the chat. And I will give you a few moments just to explore.

And if you have any questions as well, feel free to put them in the chat and we will answer them as necessary, but we'll give a few moments for that.

So we'll give it just another minute. If on the off chance you are wrapping up your searches, trying to find the perfect cat picture. You are welcome to keep on doing that. And again, these resources are available asynchronously, perpetually, assuming everything with Jamboard continues on, going away it has been and running. Knock on wood. But we'll give you a few more minutes or a few more seconds rather. Then we'll move on to explaining the ways of getting involved more particularly. But I see a few people are starting to share something about a physics class, which is great. And something from its WordPress, I believe so thank you for sharing. Whoever I don't know if that's a raccoon, whatever animal, anonymous animal you are, thank you. So the Jamboard is available through the link. I will reshare it right now. So it's just been reshared in the chat there. And it is a raccoon. Okay. Thank you very much for confirming which animal you were.

ALISSA:

Yeah, sorry about that. I put all three links into the chat and they just kind of all jumbled in together looking like one link. So I apologize for that.

SIRI:

I do want to address one of the comments that's being posted on the Jamboard is just using different websites to search depending on what we're looking for. So Unsplash for thematic atmospheric settings, live versus Wikimedia for historic. And that's an excellent point. So each of these websites and any site and repository that you're looking for is going to have a slightly different focus, let's say. And, you know, things that are being hosted on that repository are obviously going to be a little bit different. So one of the things that is recommended that if you choose to do the curator module or any of Ontario Extends that obviously. Or if you choose to adapt, it is just being willing to experiment. That's one of the cornerstones, right? Is just checking things out and seeing what works best for whatever function that it needs to serve. So being able to specify whether or not you're looking for something thematic versus something very specific on Wikimedia is good knowledge to have. So thank you for that Post-it note to whoever posted it. There's a question. If Jamboard content is perceivable to text-to-speech technologies? I do not know offhand. Alissa, do you have an answer to that?

ALISSA:

I don't have an answer to that. That is a very, very good point to bring up. So we will definitely look into that.

SIRI:

But with all that said, I will pass it back to you, Alissa, for the following slides, unless there's any pressing questions. Also, if anyone would like to just ask them, or if you'd like to, you know, really share your search strategy, that's also an option. That's it from me for now. So thank you.

ALISSA:

Okay. So yeah, the lovely part about the Open Library is that there's just so much different content in there. And those search strategies really can help you hone in on what it is you're looking for. So using those Boolean operators when you have a chance to, you can really narrow it down so that you don't waste too much time. I refer to the curator module as the rabbit hole, because you do tend to lose track of everything when you get searching for OERs. What we'll do at this point is. I'm just getting my link page back here. I apologize for that.

So the next steps, if you'd like to engage with Ontario Extend and any of the modules that we offer, the registration link is there in the chat. And that will get you to our registration system. It does take sometimes 24ish or so hours to get the account issued, but you'll receive an email to whatever account that you register with information about how to login and access the content. Which reminds me the reason that the link that I put in the chat that didn't take you to the search system webpage is because that content is now in the learning management system and I put the wrong link in my notes. So once you get into the Brightspace environment, that savvy search system topic is within the curator module. The other thing, once you get registered and you get into Brightspace, you can choose any module that you want. So you can start with. You can start wherever and go wherever. We do offer our facilitated sessions in a pattern. So we typically start with the learning. And we do the guided sessions over a two-week period for each module. And that takes up pretty much the entire semester. So if you were wanting to complete all six modules in one semester, you could follow those guided schedules and join the synchronous sessions and stay on track to complete all six modules within one semester. So we go through those activities in the synchronous sessions, build some community around it as well. So the following step, after you get in and you start going through the content, you'll need to get an activity bank account. Now the reason that the two are linked or that the activities aren't in Brightspace is because the submissions are open we don't have to report metrics on those submissions. And the platform that the discussion board or sorry, the activity bank is built on, contains thousands of entries. So in order to preserve all of that work and all of those submissions, we've kept the activity bank as a separate entity from Brightspace. So it is a really incredible resource. It is also an OER so you can peruse the activity bank and have a look at some of the different responses that other folks have contributed. And you can get amazing ideas from some of those submissions. Some of them are incredibly creative and innovative. And a lot of the ideas aren't really content specific or topic specific. They're more focused on teaching practice. So you could take an idea and reuse it. No matter what your subject matter may cover. Once you get an activity bank account, you'll be able to start submitting your activities. Then we also have some discussion, questions, and prompts as you go through the modules so you can join in those discussions. Or the facilitated sessions are available as well. We do have a calendar set up on our website and in the Brightspace environment for when those are happening. The links to the sessions are in Brightspace. So you'll need to login to get the links to those sessions. We encourage you to have a look, poke around, and if you're interested, everybody's welcome.

The schedule I just spoke to is right there on the right hand side of the screen. So that is our fall schedule. Our winter will be coming shortly. So our two-week schedule that we follow for each of the modules, we have synchronous sessions on Mondays and every other Friday. So we do a

check-in meeting at the beginning of every module, or sorry, a kickoff meeting at the beginning of every module. The following week we do a check-in, and then on the Friday of that second week we do a debrief. So we do follow a flow of that schedule. And the discussion topics are focused around what's going on in the modules at each one of those times. We also offer Lunch and Learns on the Thursday of the first week in a module. So you can come to a Lunch and Learn, I guess for you folks that would be from 09:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. versus noon. You could have a breakfast and learn if you'd like. Each one of those is focused on hands-on activities. So we actually will dig into some of those activities within that session, within those sessions, and they're all scheduled there. And we also are offering some of the sessions in French if you would like to engage in French. Andrea, or other Digital Learning Associate who is focused on our Francophone institutions as running a few of those this semester as well.

A Brunch and Learn, yes. Yeah, that's very good point, Kelly. We're going to have all different types of learns throughout the country, so that's wonderful. So I've got some links here in eCampusOntario is an extraordinarily busy organization. And I'm just going to paste these as is so that you can decipher between them. So I apologize, The formatting is kind of ugly, but this way they don't look like one gigantic link. Current initiatives at eCampusOntario. Our Open Library team, a kind of branch of Siri's team is working on integrating OER and establishing a peer review program of the OERs. Siri, did you want to speak to that a little bit?

SIRI:

Sure. So the integrating OER program is a continuation of the VLS, the virtual learning strategy. So it seeks to bring peer review, which is a massive part of the academic community, into OER as well. So eligible applicants are able to be remunerated for their efforts in reviewing, adopting, and then also potentially editing OERs. So you're welcome to check out the website there. It's a pretty cool program, if I do say so myself. But all the information and any details that you would like to go into are available at the link that has been shared.

ALISSA:

Thank you so much. We also offer services around adaptive learning. Adaptive learning is a relatively emerging teaching, teaching and learning strategy. I mean, people have been, have been creating personalized learning experiences for a long time. But now, we're looking at integrating different technologies and how we can do that effectively. We also have a Digital Learning Associate named Don, who is running a series of webinars and workshops this semester around adaptive learning. I believe there was just one yesterday actually, where he's invited folks from universities and colleges who have dabbled with different adaptive learning platforms. And they share their experiences throughout. It's basically like a lunch and learn hour as well. So that work is exciting and happening. We also have our micro-credential team that has launched the Micro-credential Toolkit. That was a super exciting initiative that I am proud to say I was part of. And I believe your area is doing some work with that toolkit as well. And our micro-credential portal has undergone some enhancements. So one of the initiatives through our government is to increase the availability of micro-credentials. eCampusOntario has developed a portal that houses those micro-credentials. So students can go to one place and they can look up a specific micro-credential and get in touch with the institutions that offer

those. And finally, our CAPFO program, Andrea, our French Digital Learning Associate, this is her baby. This is a work-integrated learning experiences for Francophone students. So she is working very diligently with our Francophone institutions in the province and creating work-integrated learning opportunities so those students have opportunities in their native language or their preferred language. So that's a really exciting initiative too. Thank you, Emily, about the eCampusOntario H5P studio. It is sweet. I love it. Yes. And the toolkit? Yes. The toolkit is coming for B.C. I saw that the other day and it was super exciting. So that pretty much wraps it up for us. Our contact information is here on the screen for you. We've got the Extend and the Open Library email addresses, as well as our Twitter handles. And you're welcome to follow us or to send us any messages. And we're excited to share all of these different things with you and hopefully you'll be able to use them and leverage them in your teaching practice. So, thank you so much for having us to be able to present and to share this information with you. And I hope you have a really great rest of your day. It looks like an amazing conference.

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