



Master of Education in Open, Digital, and Distance Education (MDDE) 622

Openness in Education (Revision 1)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the **course listing** [↗](#) for the current revision **✖**

Delivery mode:

Grouped study [↗](#)

Credits:

3

Area of study:

Distance Education

Prerequisites:

None

Precluded:

None

Faculty:

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences [↗](#)

Notes:

MEd program students must complete MDDE601 & MDDE602 prior to all other courses.

Early access to the Moodle Learning Management System begins a few days before the official start date of your course. At that time you will have limited course access.

Availability: Normally, Fall Term Only

Overview

Openness in content, data, government, and access is influencing organizations of all types. Education is being influenced heavily. Open educational resources and open teaching hold potential to disrupt the full spectrum of education policy, learning development, delivery, and accreditation.

MDDE 622: Openness in Education provides a detailed overview of the history of openness in education, current trends and legal and technological developments, as well as future directions. Educators and administrators in the primary, secondary, and higher education sectors, will benefit from becoming well informed of trends and the organizational impact of open education.

Outline

The course is composed of seven units.

Unit 1 – Defining openness

- History of openness in higher education
- Types of openness: content, teaching, scholarship

Unit 2 – Licenses and content protection

- History of copyright
- Alternative licensing systems
- Open source/Linux models
- Creative Commons
- Current copyright/content protection initiatives (ACTA)

Unit 3 –Models for developing open resources

- Crowdsourcing? Or Expert?
- Economics and impact of open source

Unit 4 – Searching for resources

- Semi-open resources (Wikipedia, iTunes, YouTube, Academic Earth)
- OER databases
- Search engines

Unit 5 – Scholarship

- Open access journals
- Informal peer review
- Open press and textbook publishing

Unit 6 – Openness and systemic change

- How does openness influence learning design?
- Do OERs save university money?
- Does the university's role in society change when content is freely available?

Unit 7 – Future trends

- Open Teaching
- Open accreditation

Learning outcomes

Through review of literature, participation in group discussions, online lectures, and related open education resources, students will be able to achieve the following course goals:

1. Define openness in an educational context and describe its various applications in different educational sectors
2. Identify the potential of openness to contribute to systemic change in higher education and policy
3. Plan, search, deploy, and integrate open educational resources (OERs) from

the design to delivery phases of learning

4. Analyze current research views on how openness influences higher education enrolment, course design costs, and the distinctions between peer-developed resources (“crowd sourcing”) and centrally curated resources (expert).
5. Describe the history of openness in education, (including early literature on open universities in the 1960s) and discuss the impact of technological developments on openness
6. Evaluate prominent intellectual property and copyright systems, including the influence of each on scholarship.

Evaluation

Students will be graded on the bases of four assignments. Course requirements are as follows:

Activity	Weight
Remix Collaborative Assignment: Collaborate using openly licensed materials to understand remix.	20%
Open Educational Resource Module/Mini-Unit Creation: Create a module comprised entirely of open educational resources.	25%
Briefing Report Detailing Openness: Author a briefing report to increase the understanding and awareness of the selected area of openness.	30%
Self-reflection and Self-assessment Artifacts Paper: Select artifacts to create a self-reflective, self-assessment written/oral response.	25%
Total	100%

Materials

Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

`${resourceReference}`

All learning resources are provided online.

Important links

› [Course schedule](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Updated June 12, 2025
