

November 18, 2013

For Immediate Release

Contact North | Contact Nord Partners with the Open Educational Resource University International Network (OERu)

(THUNDER BAY, ON) - Contact North | Contact Nord, Ontario's Distance Education & Training network has partnered with the Open Educational Resource Foundation, a New Zealand advocate for open education access, to help launch the Open Educational Resource university network (OERu). The Open Educational Resource university network (OERu) is a worldwide partnership of over 30 post-secondary institutions and networks, such as eCampusAlberta and BCCampus, dedicated to the effective use of open educational resources (OER) in developing quality online courses and programs.

The use of open educational resources (OER) in the design and development of college and university courses and programs is a fast growing trend in Canada and around the world.

Contact North | Contact Nord will use its membership in this world-wide body to share best practices, research, resources and experiences in the use of open educational resources from educational providers around the world with Ontario's 24 public colleges and 22 public universities.

The Open Education Resource Foundation launched the new online education network that will offer free online university courses for students around the world, developed using open educational resources. The implementation of the OERu is a designated project of the UNESCO-Commonwealth of Learning OER Chair network.

"We welcome the opportunity to participate in this exciting and innovative partnership of colleges and universities around the world," said Maxim Jean-Louis, President - Chief Executive Officer, Contact North | Contact Nord. "As international educational institutions embrace the use of open educational resources, we are pleased to have the opportunity to share their experiences with Ontario's 24 colleges and 22 universities through our Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty and Instructors."

The OERu is based on reusing and re-purposing the global inventory of free materials and open access publications available on the web. Learners may decide to transfer to credentialed institutions or be assessed for a fee by participating institutions and obtain their credential.

“The OERu is about sharing knowledge and the sustainability of education. Through Contact North | Contact Nord’s membership, colleges and universities in Ontario will have access to the vast knowledge and expertise of 30 educational pioneers in the use of open educational resources,” says Open Education Resource Foundation Director, Dr. Wayne Mackintosh.

Through the Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty & Instructors, Contact North | Contact Nord makes information resources and available on OER including:

- [*How really relevant and practical are Open Educational Resources? A case for a little humility about the potential*](#) in the Trends & Directions section.
- Examples of the effective use of OER by Ontario’s public colleges and universities in the [Pockets of Innovation Series](#).

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About Contact North | Contact Nord – Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network

Contact North | Contact Nord is Ontario's distance education and training network serving more than 600 small, rural, remote, Aboriginal and Francophone communities across the province through its 112 local online learning centres.

Contact North | Contact Nord partners with Ontario's 24 public colleges, 22 public universities, over 250 public literacy and essential skills and training providers and the Government of Ontario to provide local access to education and training opportunities.

Its three portals provide an online learning virtual hub to Ontario students, prospective students, faculty and instructors averaging close to 450,000 unique visits a year: Ontario Online Learning Portal for Students (studyonline.ca), Ontario Online Learning Portal for Faculty & Instructors (contactnorth.ca/home), and e-Channel (e-channel.ca).

Since it was established in 1986, Contact North | Contact Nord has generated and supported more than 315,000 registrations.

Contact North | Contact Nord is a not-for-profit corporation with its head office in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and is funded by the Government of Ontario.

www.contactnorth.ca

About the Open Educational Resource university (OERu)

The OERu is a consortium of more than 30 universities, polytechnics and community colleges from five continents committed to widening access to educational opportunity.

The OER university (OERu) makes higher education accessible to everyone. Coordinated by the OER Foundation, an independent, not-for-profit organization, the OERu network offers free online university courses for students worldwide. The OERu partners also provide affordable ways for learners to gain academic credit towards qualifications from recognized institutions.

www.oeruniversity.org

Contact North | Contact Nord

Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network
Le réseau d'éducation et de formation à distance de l'Ontario
