



Launching Your Career: Author Interview

Transcript

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Narrator: Launching Your Career, Author Interview. Introduction.

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Jamie: Hello. My name is Jamie Noakes, and I am the Chair for Career and Experiential Learning, and I'm also the editor of Launching Your Career, which is an Open Education Resource that's available for all TRU students.

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Narrator: How did the idea for this Open Educational Resource come about?

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Jamie: Well, in 2019, TRU Research hosted a writing retreat with Scott White, who's an editor for a newspaper in Canada.

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Jamie: So he was actually on site, and it was a two-day retreat. And so, while I attended that retreat, he was talking about starting a writing project.

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Jamie: And at the time, I had been thinking about developing new and better resources that were free for students. And so, I really got the inspiration from the writing retreat.

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Jamie: And then I brought the project back to my team to see if people would be interested in writing a chapter in a career textbook. And everyone said, yes.

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Jamie: So, we ended up with a lot of authors, all championing different chapters within the textbook. And so that's really how it all started.

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Narrator: What sources or inspirations shaped your work on this OER?

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Jamie: So, I think, really, I look back, and it was throughout my entire career, I've had different touch points at different institutions that have created sort of the vision for this.

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Jamie: When I was working at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, we created at that point, which it was a textbook, it was all printed. And so, we went to a print shop, and we created this manual and printed it for all of the students.

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Jamie: And I thought at the time, I wanted a textbook that could be updated very easily, something that was adaptable that other institutions would be able to use. And so, the use of an OER resource was really the best way to sort of mobilize knowledge for students and also to bring down the cost for students.

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Jamie: So those are sort of my main values that influenced the project and what I was aiming for.

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Narrator: How has working with the TRU Open Press supported or shaped this project?

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Jamie: So, I can honestly say without TRU Press, this project wouldn't have happened because first, TRU Press was responsible for multiple funding opportunities that supported both versions of our textbook. And I guess too, both versions wouldn't have crossed the finish line without all of the editors and the support that TRU Press provided.

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Jamie: Also, the constant encouragement, the checking in, ensuring that we were on time, we wouldn't have been able to finish the project, both projects without TRU Press.

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Narrator: What was it like collaborating with your research assistants or students on this project?

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Jamie: Yeah, so we had a number of different research assistants throughout this project, both in Version one and Version two. Again, we wouldn't have been able to finish the project without our research assistants.

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Jamie: They were able to take the time to connect with all of our authors to ensure that any of the editing or critiquing within their chapters was accomplished. And so, the research assistants really were pivotal in, again, working with TRU Open Press to be able to get this through the finish line.

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Narrator: What impact do you hope this OER will have on learners or educators?

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Jamie: So my hope is that this textbook will be utilized by every student at TRU.

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Jamie: I'm hoping that if students don't have time to come into our department for an

appointment or can't find trustworthy resources online, that they can use this as a starting point to start at any point in their career in their job search, in their interviews. I hope that this will help their application documents and also that transition when students are graduating and starting their first professional role, I'm hoping that this resource is going to be helpful in whatever point any student is looking for help.

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Narrator: What challenges did you face during the development process, and how did you overcome them?

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Jamie: So, we had a lot of challenges because we had a lot of authors.

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Jamie: And so, I think the biggest challenge was being able to have all our authors submit at the right timelines with the deadlines that we had. We had some pretty quick writing retreats and then turnaround times for our authors, and I have to give credit to all of our authors for being able to do that.

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Jamie: It was definitely a challenge for many of them trying to fit this into a very, very, very busy job. And so that, I think, our biggest challenge was just being able to bring that many authors together.

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Jamie: I've learned a lot, and I've presented a couple of times on herding cats because it felt like that at times. But honestly, I think everybody has the same passion for the project that I had, and so we realized that we're really all coming together trying to support our students.

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Jamie: And so, it was a challenge, but it just kept working. We kept overcoming it, so it was good.

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Narrator: Was there a moment during this project that really stood out to you? Something you'll always remember?

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Jamie: Um, yes. So, in the very first version, we had a number of new editing criteria that had come out of BCcampus with accessibility for the textbook, and it was new and different from when we had started the project a few years before.

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Jamie: So, it was sort of a last-minute pivot that we needed to make. And I remember connecting with Dani Collins, and she said, don't worry, we're going to be able to figure this out.

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Jamie: And we have extra people working on this, and it was around the same time that we had um a funding opportunity arise that we could hire some more TAs. And I think that was the pivotal point in that first textbook because I felt like we maybe weren't going to be able to accomplish it on time, but then everyone came together and we were able to accomplish it.

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Jamie: And so, I think being able to finally launch that first version was huge for us.

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Narrator: How do you see the role of open education evolving in the next few years?

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Jamie: So, I'm seeing it quite a bit now at conferences where open education is starting to expand in the field of research, and more people are being open to the concept of open research. So, I see that as a major opportunity moving forward, and I think it's going to be pivotal in developing and expanding research opportunities amongst researchers across institutions.

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Jamie: So, I think that's going to be a big change on the horizon. But I also see the uptake and adaptation of Open Education Resources occurring more often and more frequently, and students are aware now what they are, and more instructors are using them in their classes.

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Jamie: So, I think the expansion and use of open education resources is something that's definitely starting to climb now.

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Narrator: If someone is thinking about creating an OER, what advice would you give them?

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Jamie: I think it's really important to have a project plan, a very detailed project plan, and I think it's important to connect with TRU Open Press before you start, find out what challenges others have had so that you can plan for those challenges and fit the project into your schedule and your timeline. I think that many people start thinking, oh, this is really easy to do, and it is, but it's a lot of work.

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Jamie: And so having a really, really well thought out plan, I think, is super important for success. Yeah, so another tip that I have is that I think it's really important to think of who your key resources are going to be on campus.

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Jamie: And so, we found working with the library was super helpful when it came to understanding our creative commons license and how to source appropriate content into each of the chapters. Every chapter had unique needs, and so being able to reach out and connect with our librarian was super important.

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Jamie: Brenda Smith was pivotal to our project. She also supported our writing retreats.

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Jamie: And so, we hosted writing retreats, again, we brought in all of those key personnel to support the development of the writing process with all of our authors because it can be, again, a very complex process to navigate and to be able to ensure all your authors stay on track and

align with the deadlines. It was helpful to have all of these additional people supporting the project.

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Jamie: So, it wasn't something you can just do on your own. You definitely need TRU Open Press and everyone working within that portfolio to support you.

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Narrator: Thank you for the interview Jamie