

This week's readings really shed light on the history of distributed and open learning, and they also really helped me clarify some of the central ideas of open learning. After this week, I have a much better understanding of what open education really represents, and how it takes shape in a traditional education setting. A key point in the 2017 piece by Jordan & Weller for me was the introduction of open practices as a concept, and the recognition that the provision of educational tools and resources is not always sufficient to higher education. I began to ask myself why the provision of resources does not participate as directly to higher learning as one would believe, and the next reading by C. H. Hopkins helped explain the difference in online, blended, and in-person learning environments. One of the key differences that I found was timing, especially in that students are able to have their questions answered in an instantaneous fashion, which I think makes a very big difference to ones learning. Further, this was visualized by the learning pathways in figure 4.1 on page 86 of the Hopkins reading. The learning pathways made me realize that in-person course naturally take a more decentralized or distributed learning pathway by having students interacting in a classroom. On that note, online learning environments present much more of a challenge as I feel as though they naturally take a centralized learning pathway as student communication is limited.