

OER Steering Committee (2019-2020)

Definition

Open educational resources (OER) are teaching, learning, and research materials in any medium—digital or otherwise—that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation, and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions (Hewlett Foundation, 2018).

Introduction

The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates that textbook costs have increased four times the rate of inflation in the past decade.¹ Students in the U.S. spend \$14 billion yearly on college textbooks and Federal student aid accounts for \$3 billion of that spending². Though textbooks are not the most significant college cost, they are the largest out-of-pocket expense aside from tuition that students encounter each year.³ To manage college costs many students do not purchase or rent course materials which results in less learning and/or enrollment in fewer classes, slowing progress to degree completion.⁴ The growing body of research shows that 93% of students who use OER do as well or better than students using traditional publisher materials.⁵

In fiscal year 2017, College of DuPage students spent over 5.5 million dollars on textbooks in our college bookstore. The average full time student taking a general education transfer curriculum at COD could spend between \$463.00-\$900.00 on required textbooks per semester, if they purchase or rent the material at all. The U.S. Student PIRGs found that by switching just 10 introductory general education courses to OER could save students in the U.S. more than 1.5 billion dollars per year. COD students could also benefit from these savings through our own OER program. The use of free and low-cost course materials could be an effective strategy to alleviate financial burdens on students, increase access to education, improve student success, and would incentivize enrollment. A committee of knowledgeable employees should explore the potential benefits of OER and respond to College leadership with recommendations for moving the College forward in the important task of making college more affordable for students in District 502.

¹ Creative Commons. (2018). State policy legislative guide. Retrieved from <https://creativecommonsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/OER-State-Legislative-Guide.pdf>

² Vitez, K. (2018) Open 101: An action plan for affordable textbooks. The Student PIRGS. Retrieved from: <https://uspirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/OPEN%20101%20final%20%5BKV.01.25.18%5D.pdf>

³ Senack, E. (2014). Affordable textbooks: A policy guide. Washington, DC: U.S. PIRG Education Fund and the Student PIRGs. Retrieved from [http://www.studentpirgs.org/sites/student/files/reports/POLICY GUIDE - Affordable Textbooks.pdf](http://www.studentpirgs.org/sites/student/files/reports/POLICY%20GUIDE%20-%20Affordable%20Textbooks.pdf)

⁴ Fischer, L., Hilton, J. I. I., Robinson, T. J., & Wiley, D. A. (2015). A multi-institutional study of the impact of open textbook adoption on the learning outcomes of post-secondary students. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 27(3), 159–172.

⁵Hilton, J., et al (2018) The review project. Open Education Group. Retrieved from <http://openedgroup.org/review>

Relationship to the Strategic Plan

This initiative aligns with the College's Strategic Goals, particularly in the areas of Value-Added Education, Student Centeredness, Equality and Inclusiveness, Innovativeness, and Financial Stewardship.

Charge

Through research and outreach, the OER Steering Committee will evaluate the College's readiness to start an OER textbook initiative and make specific recommendations to College leadership on the feasibility of large scale OER adoption at COD.

Membership

This committee will be composed of constituency groups from across the college. Leadership of this committee will be shared by faculty and administration. Since classroom faculty members will be our central source of information and are major influencers in this effort, those selected for service on this committee will be experienced adopters of Creative Commons-licensed OER textbooks at the College of DuPage.

Standing Members

Provost's Office (1)

Academic Administrator (1)

Library Administrator: Ms. Jennifer McIntosh, Associate Dean.

Library Faculty: Dr. Denise Cote, Professor, Reference Librarian.

Classroom Faculty (4) [Selected by the Committee on Committees process]

Student Affairs: Pathways Steering Committee Representative (1-2)

Learning Technologies: Ms. Susan Landers, Manager

Student Life: Dr. Chuck Steele, Director.

Bookstore Representative: (1)

Student Government: TBA

Ad hoc & At Large Members

Financial Affairs (1)

Research & Planning (1)

Classroom Faculty (2) [COC]

Scope

In the first year of its work, the OER Steering committee will:

- Research the impact of textbook costs on College of DuPage students.
- Evaluate OER programming at peer institutions for potential replications at COD.
- Develop training and other types of outreach to educate the college community about OER.
- Explore grant opportunities such as the Open Stax Institutional Partners program.
- Research an OER incentive plan for COD faculty.

- Assist students in their understanding of open educational resources and college affordability.
- Develop potential research designs and data gathering plans to study the effectiveness/efficacy of OER at COD.
- Explore the feasibility of incorporating OER into the guided pathways initiative via a ZTC (zero text cost) degree pathway.

Meetings

The committee will meet in person once monthly and meet as needed weekly online.

Reporting

The committee will keep detailed minutes of meetings and provide monthly summary reports to be shared with the Provost's office and the college community via the Portal.

The committee's research findings will be compiled in a report with specific recommendations to be submitted to the Provost & College President.

At the direction of the Provost, committee members will present to the BOT Academic Committee and/or the Committee of the Whole.