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# Open Educational Resources @ Butler University: Gateway to Access and Advocacy in Open Education

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## Open Educational Resources @ Butler University

Our job as academic librarians at a teaching university inherently involves providing access to resources that will benefit the educational experience of our students. Open Educational Resources provide an opportunity for Library Faculty and Staff to use our skills in resource discovery and curation to significantly augment the materials faculty and students engage with in the classroom.

### Background

- **What are OERs?**

"**Open Educational Resources** are teaching, learning, and research resources released under an open license that permits their free use and repurposing by others. OER can be full courses, course materials, lesson plans, open textbooks, learning objects, videos, games, tests, software, or any other tool, material, or technique that supports access to knowledge."

-SPARC Definition of Open Educational Resources

- **Why OERs?**

In the end it always comes back to money. In the last 45 years, the cost of textbooks has increased at 15 times the rate of inflation.

According to a U.S. PIRG (the federation of state Public Interest Research Groups) Report, Costs of textbooks have increased 82% in the last decade.

A significant number of students are even opting out of buying the textbooks, even if they have concerns that it will negatively affect their performance in the course.

Open Educational Resources have the potential, in many contexts and across multiple curricula, to be a viable, long-term alternative to traditionally published resources.

No one likes to recreate the wheel. With the emergence of OER materials available online, in addition to text books faculty can take advantage of pre-existing lesson plans, learning objects, tests, and videos. More time teaching, less time messing with tools.

- **What Makes OERs Open- The 5R's**

- **Retain** – i.e. no digital rights management restrictions (DRM), the content is yours to keep, whether you're the author, instructor or student. This is the exact opposite of the e-books you would purchase for your collection.
- **Reuse** – you are free to use materials in a wide variety of ways without expressly asking permission of the copyright holder. Most OERs are released under a Creative Commons License which makes this possible.
  - You can copy it, link to it, share it, host it
- **Revise** – as an educator, you can adapt, adjust, or modify the content to suit specific purposes and make the materials more relevant to your students. This means making it available in a number of different formats and including source files, where possible.
- **Remix** – you or your students can pull together a number of different resources to create something new.

# OER

- Revise and Remix are probably the most powerful advantages that OERs have over traditional resources. The power for faculty to synthesize and tailor their materials to fit their curricula.
- **Redistribute** – you are free to share with others, so they can reuse, remix, improve upon, correct, review or otherwise enjoy your work.

-derived from BCCampus OpenEd

## Campus Promotion

- As with many new initiatives, services are much more likely to be adopted than suggestions that require faculty to add to their workload.
- We connect our faculty, staff, and students with the best possible resources. Nothing's changed.
- What about the bookstore?
  - Communication with the bookstore is important, but the economic future of bookstores lie in apparel and other goods, not textbooks. Bookstores no longer hold the monopoly on used textbooks and many students forgo purchasing them at all because of the cost.

## Evaluation

- As library professionals, we have the potential to really steer the OER conversation at our institutions.
- In addition to marketing and outreach like we have just discussed, our collection development and evaluation skills can add a great deal of value to the practice of identifying and curating pertinent OERs for our faculty.
  - Some Considerations for evaluation I have used are:
    - Not only focus on textbooks, but also other open educational tools that could be integrated into the curriculum- because of the openness and platform independence of many OER and OER services, many multimedia resources can be directly integrated into open text books. Librarians could be highly useful resources for our faculty in developing these types of tools
    - Curriculum mapping—The ability of librarians to bring together like resources based on the curricular needs of multiple faculty
    - Annotations—Let us not underestimate the power of bibliography, just like any other resources, OER can be curated and annotated, just within a modern medium.
  - You can see its application [here](#).

## OER @ Butler University: [oer.butlerlibraryservices.org](http://oer.butlerlibraryservices.org)

- The primary content of the site is a curated list of resources created with all of the considerations mentioned above.
- The aesthetically pleasing design makes the site a professional marketing tool for OERs.



## What's Next?

- Developing criteria for further evaluation- The criteria we have adopted for faculty was derived from BCampus Open Ed- Which was adapted from the ALA Choice Selection Policy:
  - ✓ Comprehensiveness
  - ✓ Content Accuracy
  - ✓ Relevance
  - ✓ Clarity
  - ✓ **Modularity**
  - ✓ Organization
  - ✓ **Interface**
  - ✓ Consistency
  - ✓ Grammar
  - ✓ Cultural Relevance
  - ✓ Comments
- Fall 2015 Launch- Open Access Week!
- Future Website Iterations
  - <http://wwwwhere.io/>
- Expanding Content
- Communication with liaison librarians

## Further Resources:

- **SPARC, Open Ed:** Provides overview and definition of open education and frames it as a position of advocacy for the academic library profession: <http://www.sparc.arl.org/issues/open-education>
- **The Academic Commons:** Academic Commons is dedicated to the development of free web-based resources for academic professionals focusing on liberal arts education via digital tools. The news aggregator showcases current developments and projects in the open education community: <http://www.academiccommons.org/>
- **Open Knowledge Foundation:** Open Knowledge is a worldwide non-profit network of people passionate about openness, using advocacy, technology and training to unlock information and enable people to work with it *to create and share knowledge*: <https://okfn.org/>
- **Student PIRGS:** Campaigning resources developed by Student PIRGS to advocate for affordable and open textbooks: <http://www.studentpirgs.org/open-textbooks/catalog>
- **Capetown Declaration:** The Cape Town Open Education Declaration arises from a small but lively meeting convened in Cape Town in September 2007. The aim of this meeting was to accelerate efforts to promote open resources, technology and teaching practices in education: <http://www.capetowndeclaration.org/>
- **Commonwealth of Learning:** The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL is helping developing nations improve access to quality education and training. Possibly the most comprehensive catalog of research on the topic of OE and OERs that exists: <http://www.col.org/Pages/default.aspx>