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**THEC Textbook Affordability Task Force**

**Introduction to OER Webinar - September 25, 2020**

**Questions & Answers**

**What is the source for the stats on impact of OER on DWFI students?**

Colvard, N., Watson, E., & Park, H. (2018). The impact of Open Educational Resources on various student success metrics. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, *30*(2), 262–276. *OER improve end-of-course grades and decrease DFW (D, F, and Withdrawal letter grades) rates for all students for Pell recipient students, part-time students, and populations historically underserved by higher education.*

Wiley, D., Williams, L., DeMarte, D., & Hilton, J. (2016). The Tidewater Z-Degree and the INTRO Model for Sustaining OER Adoption. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *24*(0), 41. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.24.1828>

*For additional research references, see the References List associated with this webinar.*

**On places like YouTube, how much do we have to worry about people posting content claiming it is open when they have actually misappropriated it and are violating someone else's rights?**

Very good question, and while none of us are qualified to give legal advice, we can answer this question with advice based on our understanding of the law. YouTube regularly uses a Content ID match to automatically match content against all the videos uploaded to the site; if a user’s content matches, then it will be flagged or removed for potential copyright violation. So, in most cases, YouTube can catch copyright violations before they occur, provided there is a record of that content somewhere in their huge library of reference files.

That said, you have to do your homework with YouTube. Since YouTube itself serves only as a "vehicle" for the content, it takes no responsibility for checking that the content itself is or is not violating copyright. That said, if you use/cite something that you found on YouTube that displays an open license (open the "Show More" portion in order to see the license), then if an issue arises, your responsibility would certainly be less because people would be able to trace back your use to that content and see you had used it in good faith seeing it labeled under an open license (another reason why including the URLs and date of access is important in your citation).

**Is it possible for students to get a print copy of the textbook Ryan discussed?**

Yes! The beauty about OER is that you can print it (as much or as little of it) as you wish.

Some institutions partner with their campus copy shops to provide copies to students. There are also companies that specialize in printing OER textbooks as well. OpenStax, for example, prints copies of its textbooks that campus bookstores can order and keep in stock, which allows students to use financial aid dollars to purchase them.

In general, only a small percentage of students end up printing OER material since they have it readily available in digital form across all of their electronic devices. The important thing is that you CAN print it if you want.

One thing to pay attention to is that several predatory booksellers have popped up on the popular book distribution websites who sell print editions of OER books at inflated prices. It’s good practice to let students know about this phenomenon, and provide them with direct links for affordable print versions.

**What are best practices for implementing an OER text so that students are becoming familiar with the text and utilizing it throughout the course? What are best practices for training faculty to fully integrate the OER text into their course?**

This is an important instructional design question, and the full answer extends beyond OER materials because it is something that everyone who incorporates textbooks or assigned reading materials into their courses needs to grapple with.

For the most part, we might suggest a few overlapping approaches:

* Regular low-stakes assessment of students’ comprehension of assigned reading materials. These assessments can take several forms, including quizzes and reflection assignments.
* Collaborative reading using hypothes.is or a similar service.
* Integrated reading comprehension questions inside of the reading using a third-party software tool.
* Utilizing in-class activities that draw directly from content presented in the reading material.

Another strategy is to explain to students the value you’re hoping that they gain from the reading assignment. The answer to the question, “why am I reading this?” is not always clear, and providing information as to the rationale for giving students the particular reading assignment is motivating.

**I would love to know more about how this type of multi-format book is best created.**

In most cases, high-quality OER already exist for most General Education and high-enrollment course areas. Sometimes it’s as simple as “adopting” (I.e. downloading or linking out to) an OER textbook. In these cases, you only use/link to the portions or topics that follow your scope and sequence.

If OER is not readily available for your course, start with your Learning Outcomes! Check out Ashley’s portion of the presentation which talks through some of the considerations and ways to approach adopting, adapting, or creating material for your course. It may be advisable to list your learning outcomes in an Excel spreadsheet

**How do you know if a CC book went through an editorial process vs. something self-published that wasn't reviewed, edited, etc.?**

There are a few ways to tell. First off, major companies like [OpenStax](https://openstax.org/subjects/view-all) or [Lumen Learning](https://lumenlearning.com/courses/) utilize peer reviewers and the process is just as thorough as with a traditionally copyrighted textbook. Other places like the University of Minnesota’s [Open Textbook Library](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks), the [BC Campus Find a Textbook tool](https://open.bccampus.ca/browse-our-collection/find-open-textbooks/), California’s [MERLOT](https://www.merlot.org/merlot/), and others also have a Review feature tool where you can find reviews on contents. The ultimate reviewer – regardless of whether it is openly licensed or traditionally copyrighted – is you, the end user and educator in the classroom. The very nature of the academic enterprise requires that educators vet and review content without just taking the word of any publisher. Any OER adopted in the classroom should be reviewed by committees the same way textbooks are reviewed.

This question brings up another important point for me [Elizabeth]. Overall, OER carries the same stigma (some of which, frankly, is politically driven, not only by publishers but also by the very nature of how professionals in academia currently gain prestige, i.e. in being incentivized by their institutions to publish in high-prestige publications. The truth is that you can have peer-review and academic rigor separate from publisher prestige. For instance, another closely aligned movement to OER is that of “Open Access Journals,” which are freely available with research articles that are in many cases also openly-licensed. Articles submitted to most of these journals undergo the same rigorous peer review process as publisher-submitted content. If you are interested in this topic, check out the [Directory of Open Access Journals](https://doaj.org/) for several examples of what is quickly becoming more the norm in academic publishing.

**Several years ago, I created videos for an edX “MOOC” and used a few video clips of copyrighted material, having run them through the “four fair use” questions. edX required course developers to store their videos at YouTube and embed them in the course to save memory. I had no trouble with any of the videos but one: I’d used less than 20 seconds of a pop-song video, but used it as an example of a concept, so it was parodied and “transformed.” After a couple of years, I got a notice from YouTube, highlighting this 20 seconds and saying that, unless I could guarantee that it was fairly used, the video was taken down. I didn’t know whether I could really guarantee anything, so I removed that example from the video. What do we do in this kind of situation? Should we ever risk guaranteeing that a use like this one is “fair”?**

While unqualified and therefore unable to provide legal advice, based on your description, it sounds like you had a compelling argument that your use was a transformative/Fair Use (the material was used to provide an example of a concept in the context of education; it was parodied; and only the shortest bit was used that was required to explain your point). That said, an important consideration is whether or not you want to even fool with having to explain whether or not something was Fair Use. It’s not impossible, it’s just a hassle, especially if there are alternatives available that are not such a hassle. In general, if you can find a way to express your point using material that IS openly licensed, go that route because then it will avoid any question as to whether the use was Fair.

Another point is that EdX/TedX/YouTube material, while freely available, is not always openly licensed. Much of it is copyrighted (again, why looking in the "Show More" section is important). Please also know that if you ever need a guide, institutional librarians are often the local campus experts to help work through issues and determine whether or not your intended use of material can be done/Fairly Used.

**I don’t understand. Did you [Ryan] write the textbook [Blueprint for Success in College and Career]?**

No. This was an OER that I adopted to use in my class. Dave Dillon wrote the book, called [*Blueprint for Success in College and* Career.](https://press.rebus.community/blueprint2/) Our selection process was not much different from selecting any textbook.

A slightly more labor-intensive option is to adapt pre-existing OER content for use in class. This adaptation is similar to the process involved in creating a custom version of a textbook from a major publisher, though there is room for writing new information as well. This is our next step, and will enable us to adapt this material more directly for the students we serve - that will take more work.

OER can also be created from scratch, as it were. This obviously takes more effort, but also provides unlimited flexibility.

**Is there a good site to search for open source textbooks for CTE courses, for example, Agriculture?**

<https://www.skillscommons.org/> has an amazing fund of resources for CTE courses. This free and open online library grew out of the US Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program.

**Can we get more info on searching for the instructor materials that Ryan mention, i.e. test banks designed for d2l and Blackboard?**

The supplemental materials for Dave Dillon’s *Blueprint for Success in College and Career* are located in [this shared google folder](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jkwHgNDRLeAmVCJdcwlF48eONBPdxzQ9).

What is exciting about OER is that communities of practice spring up around widely used OER materials. These communities are happy to share the materials they create to supplement the OER textbook, and to offer tips and suggestions for others using the resources. I [Ryan] have found these communities of practice to be very helpful and encouraging. Communities like this exist for other OER materials, or exist around other OER materials too.

**How can I join the TN Textbook Affordability listserv?**

THEC administers this listserv; to be added or removed, email lauren.collier@tn.gov. You can also find more information here: <https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/academic-affairs-and-student-success/textbook.html>

**I know it was mentioned about quizzes being embedded in the reading. Do some of the textbooks associated with OER come with virtual activities or interactives (like we would see sometimes with the courseware from a textbook) or are these pulled from other resources when an instructor uses OER?**

Yes, OER materials are as innovative as other print and ed tech resources. You can see one such example here that shows how quizzes are embedded in the reading. These types of interactives (most of which are created with a program called [H5P](https://h5p.org/), for which anyone can create an account!) provide students with instant feedback on their learning.

**How are OER resources being reviewed for accessibility for formats offered? Often the html portion may be accessible, while accompanying pdf files are not. Is there a repository that accesses this?**

Accessibility is obviously an incredibly important consideration. One point to note here is that not all textbooks published by major publishers or platforms and services offered by Ed Tech companies meet minimum accessibility standards. Unfortunately, this means that determining if content is accessible or not often falls to institutions and instructors.

Users of OER quickly become savvy to recognizing tools that are based on HTML5, which helps items become accessible. The H5P program mentioned above, for example, utilizes HTML5 (as opposed to Java or Flash-based programs, which are known for not being accessible... in most cases, all publishers have moved away from these). This is also why companies like OpenStax and Lumen Learning utilize web-based tools for displaying content, as these tools can be more easily checked for accessibility, and the official versions of OER on their websites are typically thoroughly checked and vetted. For the most part, instructors who are linking out to material on these websites can be assured they are screen-reader friendly.

**I am working on finding OER materials for a course, and I 'think' I was told that multi use e-books from the library would be considered ok**

OER and library subscription/reserve materials are often an ideal combination for lowering the overall cost of materials for your students AND utilizing the resources that the institution is already paying for.

This webinar focused on OER, and as such, did not include library materials, as while they are “free” for students, usually these materials are copyrighted and not open. The University of Tennessee Libraries provides a useful chart that distinguishes different types of resources: <https://libguides.utk.edu/facultychoice>

**WEBINAR LINKS SHARED:**

* [**THEC Textbook Affordability Website**](https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/academic-affairs-and-student-success/textbook.html)
* **Link to the textbooks Dr. Korstange uses in his college success course:** 
  + **Dave Dillon,** [***Blueprint for Success in College and Career.***](https://press.rebus.community/blueprint2/)
  + **Csabi, Sohail, Pavo, Swiatoschik, Odeh, and Ramesh*,*** [***Learning to Learn Online*.**](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/)
* **Places to Explore OER**
  + [**Creative Commons General Directory Search**](https://creativecommons.org/about/program-areas/education-oer/education-oer-resources/)
  + [**OER Commons**](https://www.oercommons.org/)
  + [**OpenStax**](https://openstax.org/subjects)
  + [**Lumen Learning**](https://lumenlearning.com/courses/)
  + [**MyOpenMath**](https://www.myopenmath.com/)
  + [**Skills Commons Trade-Oriented Materials**](https://www.skillscommons.org/)
  + [**BC Campus Find Open Textbooks**](https://open.bccampus.ca/browse-our-collection/find-open-textbooks/)
  + [**Open Textbook Network**](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks)