Open Educational Resources
The ISU Textbook Affordability Initiative and Student Success

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OER AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Completion and affordability are critical challenges for higher education in terms of student success. One method being adopted internationally to address such challenges is integration of freely available Open Educational Resources (OER) in course content. OER can address the rising costs of attending college by reducing the overall cost of expensive college textbooks. However, by providing OER in lieu of such costly materials, faculty do more than just address student debt concerns. OER can facilitate student learning by reducing student stress in obtaining required materials, by making learning materials more easily accessible, and by engaging students in course content using such resources as OER interactive media.

WHAT ARE OER?

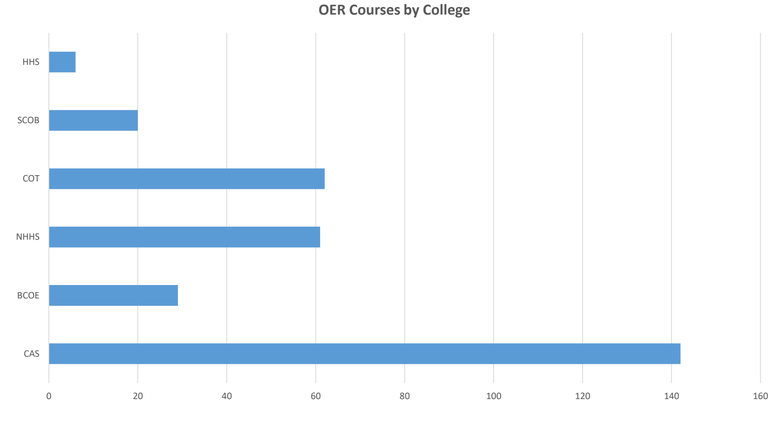
OER are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge – William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

THE INITATIVE

A 2011 study conducted by, the ISU Textbooks and Supplies Subcommittee of the ISU Strategic Plan Affordability Taskforce, led to the creation of the, *Open Educational Resources Textbook Affordability Initiative* at ISU. The initiative focuses on student success through college cost savings. Faculty are rewarded a stipend of $3,000 for successful participation and production of a converted course. In 2017, the initiative was revised to include an OER Team (subject matter experts in scholarly communication librarianship and instructional design), updated training materials and more one-on-one assistance for participating faculty. Participants enroll in a self-paced Blackboard course to learn of OER, licensing and OER integration into their courses. As faculty

progress through the program, they meet 2-3 times with their OER Team. The program concludes with a review of the first 3 weeks or 3 modules of the participant's newly converted class to provide feedback on accessibility, attribution, quality of resources. During delivery, faculty invite their students to participate in an IRB-approved pre-survey and post survey administered in the beginning and end of the semester. Faculty also provide details of their converted course to the Cunningham Memorial Library to be archived in the university's institutional repository, *Sycamore Scholars*.

IMPACT AT ISU FY14 – FY19



Total Student Savings: $3,008,743.40

Communications 101 Savings: $939,230.45

Average amount saved per student: $113.64

THE RESEARCH

Replacing costly textbooks with OER has been shown to contribute to student success.[2-4] OER can improve end-of-course grades and decrease course failure and withdrawal rates.[5] Studies suggest that faculty and students perceive OER to be similar to, or of better quality than commercial textbooks[6] and, in some cases, students have performed better using OER than in comparable courses using commercial textbooks.[7-11] Other investigations indicate that OER may be particularly effective in teaching at-risk learners.[12-14]

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