

OER at UBC: Environmental Scan & Possible AMS Action Items

1. What is OER?

“Open” can mean many things, and there are varying degrees of openness. On one end of this spectrum, a resource is open access if it can be accessed freely by anyone. However, in the context of discussing OER, and, for example, in the case of Open Textbooks, “open” often refers to content that (at least for non-commercial purposes and with proper credit to the owner) satisfies the “five Rs”: it can be retained, reused, revised, remixed, and redistributed.¹ Finally, the most extreme version of open content is content that is in the Public Domain: it can be reused in any way by anyone.

2. The Broader Landscape: Beyond UBC

B.C. Context:

- BCcampus Open Textbook Project homepage, contains lots of information, guides, etc., and links to existing OER and Open Textbooks for adoption: <http://open.bccampus.ca/about-2/>
- BCOER Librarians, a group of campus librarians from BC interested in OER; includes various tools and guides: <http://open.bccampus.ca/bcoer-librarians/>
 - o Rubric for assessing OER Repositories: <http://open.bccampus.ca/files/2014/07/OERR-Rubric.pdf>
 - o Rubric for assessing resources: <http://open.bccampus.ca/files/2014/07/Faculty-Guide-22-Apr-15.pdf>
- Some BC institutions with lots of adoptions: Kwantlen Polytechnic, Thompson Rivers, Douglas, BCIT

Beyond B.C. Context:

- Open Education Working Group, a global initiative: <http://education.okfn.org/>

¹ See especially the various possible combinations of Creative Commons Licenses for various iterations of openness: <http://creativecommons.ca/en/licenses>

- o Open Education Handbook: <http://booktype.okfn.org/open-education-handbook-2014/about-this-book/>
- Chem wiki at UC Davis; a very comprehensive open resource, has been adopted by professors in place of text books: <http://chemwiki.ucdavis.edu/>
- OpenStax College at Rice University, producer of Open Textbooks: <https://openstaxcollege.org/>
- Lyryx Learning at University of Calgary, adapter and producer of Open Textbooks and other course resources, customized for specific professors and courses: <https://lyryx.com/>
- Open Professionals Education Network, provides free support and technical assistance to all grantees of the \$2 billion Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College & Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program from the U.S. Department of Labor; also includes a “Find OER” resource: <https://open4us.org/about/>
- Creative Commons lets you search for openly licensed material: <http://search.creativecommons.org/>
- The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) works to create open systems within scholarship by providing tools for advocacy and education in this area: <http://www.sparc.arl.org/>

Universities that offer grants for professors to develop OER:

The following university websites describe grants for professors desiring funding from the university to create OER, usually to be adopted in their courses in place of textbooks

- Emory University: <http://guides.main.library.emory.edu/OERs/open-education-initiative>
- American University: <http://www.american.edu/ctrl/Open-Educational-Resources-Grants.cfm>
- Queensborough Community College: <http://qcc.libguides.com/c.php?g=113301&p=1547702>
- University of Oklahoma: <http://guides.ou.edu/alternativetextbooks>
- Temple University: <http://guides.temple.edu/alttextbook>
- University of Wisconsin: <http://www.library.wisc.edu/textbooks/etexts-adopt-remix-create/>
- Lane Community College: <http://www.lanec.edu/oer/oer-faculty-fellowship>
- Virginia Community Colleges system (this is a grant program across all CC campuses in the state, not at a single institution): <http://edtech.vccs.edu/educational-technology-resources/chancellors-oer-adoption-grant/>

3. The Current UBC Landscape

While there are many, localized initiatives and resources at UBC, there is a lack of general, widespread knowledge about where to find OER and how to use it in interesting ways to enhance teaching and learning. The following are some of the many ways OER is being promoted or utilized at UBC.

UBC Online Resources:

- A general mix of resources are collected and linked to at: <http://open.ubc.ca/learning/>
- Library Resources:
 - A comprehensive OER Resource guide: <http://guides.library.ubc.ca/content.php?pid=659422&sid=5461485>
 - cIRcle is UBC's open access repository; it mainly houses research by UBC faculty members and graduate students. The website describes it as also containing teaching materials, but at this time little is done to encourage faculty to share teaching materials on cIRcle. Of course, research papers can be used as open resources in courses, but are limited in how extensively they can be retained, reused, revised, remixed, redistributed. <https://circle.ubc.ca/>
 - Open Access Journal hosting: <http://ojs.library.ubc.ca/> (again, focus is on open access—restricted usage)
- UBC Copyright's Guidelines for Open Content: <http://copyright.ubc.ca/guidelines-and-resources/support-guides/open-course-educational-resource-guidelines/>
- AMS Exam Prep Database; unfortunately, the AMS is currently struggling to encourage faculty to populate the database with exam prep content: <http://exams.elearning.ubc.ca>

Efforts to Promote OER at UBC:

- UBC Open Week, run out of CTLT: <http://oaweek.open.ubc.ca/>
- UBC's new Policy 81: <http://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2015/04/policy81.pdf>
 - The original policy was perhaps the biggest example of a central push toward open sharing of teaching materials (faculty essentially had to opt out of sharing materials); there was a lot of resistance to the policy from faculty, so the new policy is much more watered down (materials can only be re-used if put in a shared repository, or if the university has provided extra funding for their creation)
- UBC Hosted a Geography Textbook Sprint for BC Campus in 2014: <http://ctlit.ubc.ca/2014/06/16/a-sprint-through-the-pages/>

Some current uses of OER for UBC courses:

- UBC Math Wiki: http://wiki.ubc.ca/Science:Math_Exam_Resources
- Stefan Heinsberg and Georg Rieger, Physics 100: will be using an Open Textbook starting Fall 2015, reaching around 900 students. It is not just being used as a textbook, but is being taken apart and incorporated in an interactive way into the class's online learning platform. This was the result of a TLEF application, and includes hiring a TA for support of this process
- Arts One Open: extends class discussions from Arts One beyond the classroom, allows anyone to participate: <http://artsone-open.arts.ubc.ca/>
- John Festinger, Law: runs two courses where almost everything about the course is open (syllabus, recorded lectures, readings, student assignments, etc.); members of the community beyond UBC can take part in the course by commenting on content (often, previous course participants who are now practicing lawyers do this):
 - <http://videogame.law.ubc.ca/>
 - <http://creativity.law.ubc.ca/>
- Simon Bates, Physics, CTLT: incorporates student generated learning objects into the course curriculum; Learning Object repository: <https://blogs.ubc.ca/phys101/>
- Eduardo Jovel, Land and Food Systems: incorporates student generated OER into multiple course curriculum; students add to content each year, which is then built upon by students in subsequent years; LFS 350 course: <http://wiki.ubc.ca/Course:LFS350>
- Jon Beasley-Murray, Latin American Studies: uses and creates OER in many different ways; works on a very niche topic in Latin American Studies for which many resources don't currently exist, so he and his students create new, open resources, including videos produced with TLEF funding; students in his course together created and edited Wikipedia pages for course topics, which were hugely successful:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Murder_Madness_and_Mayhem
- Rose-Marie Deschaine, Linguistics; uses Wikipedia:
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_Program:University_of_British_Columbia/Linguistics_\(Fall_2014\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_Program:University_of_British_Columbia/Linguistics_(Fall_2014))
- Judy Chan, FNH; uses wiki assignments: <http://wiki.ubc.ca/Course:FNH200>
- Maja Krzic, LFS: initiated this open resource in collaboration with many profs from different universities: <http://soilweb.landfood.ubc.ca/promo/>
- Michael Blades, Chemistry: Adopting an Open Textbook

Biggest challenges and barriers to OERs at UBC:

- The biggest barriers to faculty adoptions of OER:
 - o Open Text books may not be updated frequently enough in disciplines that are constantly evolving, especially in science
 - o There is a perception on the quality of these resources, with a sense that open resources are not good enough for publishers to pick up
 - o Using OER really well can involve having to curate and edit resources from many different places, which takes a lot of time and effort
 - o Often, integrating OER into courses is part of a broader curriculum renewal process, which also takes time and effort, and has to come at the right time for faculty
 - o It is difficult to adopt OER into courses with the same curriculum across multiple sections because it needs buy-in from multiple faculty members, or departments as a whole
- Up until now, there has been a lack of advocacy, especially from the student side to engage the University administration, faculties and faculty members
- There is a lack of funding dedicated to creating, reviewing and adopting OER
- For the institution, Open Textbooks don't necessarily generate money, so there is less incentive to push for creation and adoption

4. AMS Opportunities for Encouraging OER Growth at UBC

The benefits of OERs at UBC:

- Accessibility & Affordability:
 - o For students:
 - In the US, cost of textbooks has gone up 812% over past 30 years: <http://www.aei.org/publication/the-college-textbook-bubble-and-how-the-open-educational-resources-movement-is-going-up-against-the-textbook-cartel/>
 - Students often don't even buy textbooks because of the cost, they just make do using other resources; however, "the best textbook is the one students are actually going to read" – Will Engle
 - Textbooks are one of the many factors, including tuition and housing, that make a post-secondary education inaccessible
 - o For the University:

- The cost of Library content is constantly going up, with the Library having to make cuts every year to its subscriptions
- The current research university publishing model is flawed: UBC pays faculty to do research and publish, and must then pay the publisher to get the research back into UBC's Library
- Pedagogy:
 - o In using Open Resources, especially Open Textbooks, faculty can adapt the textbook around the way they want to teach the course instead of designing their course around an existing textbook
 - o Students can contribute to the creation of open content, which allows students to contribute meaningfully to the work of the university and be full partners in the university's designing of learning experiences
 - o When professors assign OER in place of textbooks, students have positive attitudes about their courses and professors because of the thoughtful work put in, and are thus more engaged in their learning
 - o If students are not able to access course content because of the cost, they won't be reading assigned material or engaging with material, which is a pedagogical detriment

Key UBC Collaborators:

Collaborations happening right now

- Christina Hendricks: BCcampus Open Textbooks Fellow and UBC Instructor
- Will Engle: Strategist, Open Education Initiatives at UBC Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology
- Erin Fields: UBC Library Flexible Learning Coordinator
- Michelle Lamberson: Director, Flexible Learning Special Projects

Future Collaborations

- Copyright Office
- UBC Bookstore
- Senate Library Committee
- UBC Senior Appointments Committee

Goals and Actions the AMS would like to accomplish in terms of OER advocacy at UBC:²

Student Focused Goals

Raise awareness about the existence and importance of OER to students, and promote advocacy

- Develop a Social Media Campaign targeted at students and other members of the UBC Community.
 - o The AMS running a week-long campaign during UBC's Open Week, or during UBC's Celebrate Learning Week.
 - o Asking students different questions over social media every day for a week, such as "what have you done to avoid paying for textbooks?" and then include information about OER and how students can get involved themselves in advocacy for OER
 - o Physical displays (e.g. whiteboard in Nest asking same question, letting students write their response, displaying physical copies of Open Textbooks in strategic places)
- Hold core messaging surrounding OERs in all major messaging of the AMS, as well as through other groups within the AMS and at the university.
 - o VP Academic Caucus
 - o Student Senate Caucus
 - o Graduate Student Society, Undergraduate Societies, AMS Clubs

Collect data on student use of traditional textbooks and OER in next year's Academic Experience Survey.

- Potential topics to cover:
 - o Do students feel the cost of textbooks is prohibitive?
 - o How many students go without buying textbooks for courses? How often? Why?
 - o What do students use instead if they don't buy textbooks, if anything?
 - o What have students done to avoid paying for textbooks (e.g. scanning + returning books, downloading illegally, etc.)?
 - o How do students use textbooks?
 - o Do students feel that as part of their course experience they've contributed meaningfully to the work of the university (e.g. by being involved in the creation of content)?
 - o How many students have used OER, what were the experiences like, etc.?

² While some of these goals may be accomplished over the next year (e.g. collecting data from students, engaging students through social media), many may not be possible to accomplish until after current student leaders lay the appropriate groundwork this year.

Faculty/Staff Focused Goals

Raise awareness about the existence and importance of OER to faculty/staff.

- Partner with UBC units (e.g. Library, CTLT) to hold coordinated events, including professional development for faculty and staff, a “sprint” style event for creating and reviewing open content.

Put in place mechanisms for encouraging the creation and adoption of OERs

- Work with UBC partners to develop a proposal for funding to integrate OER into a course in a creative way that allows for assessment of impact on learning outcomes
Some possibilities:
 - o Include component of students generating content
 - o Compare 2 sections of the same course, one integrated with OER and one not
 - o Most popular research on OER has been done in STEM disciplines; could create new research by focusing more on Arts or Humanities

Work with UBC partners to collect data on how OER can be used effectively

- Evaluate the current UBC landscape and how OER can effectively be integrated into systems already in place
- Ensure that resources to implement OER are easily accessible, and that faculty and staff know of their colleagues who can help to facilitate a move to these resources

UBC Administration Focused Goals

Promote support for OERs in the UBC Administration

- Work with UBC to incentivize creation, adoption, and reviewing of OER and Open Textbooks through grants for faculty
- If UBC expresses an interest in contributing funds to this, the AMS could contribute as well
- This could be in the form of grants for faculty time spent developing OER and curriculum, or spent reviewing existing OER; could also fund TAs to help with these processes. Grants could also support flexible learning more generally in supporting student creation of content, or using materials from CTLT and the Library.
- Working with the Senate Library Committee and the UBC Librarian to promote the inclusion of open sources in catalogue
- OER creation has been funded from TLEFs in the past, but it would be even more encouraging to establish a fund specific to this purpose
- Could also consider adding a check box to all TLEF applications that involve creation of resources that allows faculty to specify whether the resources will be under a CC license. Additionally, the

TLEF process could include the promotion of both the adoption and creation of open access materials from these projects, as well as a mention of the OERs available in consultation with CTLT upon the receipt of TLEF funding.

Work to put in place mechanisms to promote the creation and adoption of OERs (Put in place mechanisms for encouraging faculty creation and adoption)

- Work with UBC to incentivize creation, adoption, and reviewing of OER and Open Textbooks through specifying that such work can be used as evidence for promotion and tenure of Teaching faculty, including OER creation as of the example of educational leadership. This would involve working with the Senior Appointments Committee.
- See: Senior Appointments Committee Guide to Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Procedures at UBC, esp. Appendix 1, “Guidelines for Promotion to Professor of Teaching and Senior Instructor,” pg. 47: <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/faculty-relations/files/SAC-Guide.pdf>
 - o Guidelines list “educational leadership” as well as “innovative curriculum development” as potential criteria for promotion, and include examples. Creation and use of OER could be included as examples as well