

4-12-2019

Report of 2018-2019 Open Educational Resources & Affordable Course Materials Task Force

Thomas Pentecost
Grand Valley State University, pentecot@gvsu.edu

Annie Bélanger
Grand Valley State University, belange1@gvsu.edu

Lihua Huang
Grand Valley State University, huangl@gvsu.edu

Charles Lowe
Grand Valley State University, lowech@gvsu.edu

Erin McIntosh
Grand Valley State University

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/library_reports



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Scholarly Communication Commons](#)

ScholarWorks Citation

Pentecost, Thomas; Bélanger, Annie; Huang, Lihua; Lowe, Charles; McIntosh, Erin; Ruen, Matt; and Szczepaniak, Eric, "Report of 2018-2019 Open Educational Resources & Affordable Course Materials Task Force" (2019). *Library Reports and Communication*. 5.
https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/library_reports/5

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Reports and Communication by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Authors

Thomas Pentecost, Annie Bélanger, Lihua Huang, Charles Lowe, Erin McIntosh, Matt Ruen, and Eric Szczepaniak

OER/ACM¹ Task Force: Reporting on Charges

Thomas Pentecost (Chair), Annie Bélanger, Lihua Huang, Charles Lowe, Erin McIntosh, Matt Ruen, Eric Szczepaniak

4/12/2019

Overview

The OER/ACM Task Force was charged by EC/UAS to

1. Explore current GVSU practices involving course material decisions.
2. Recommend strategies to recognize existing OER/ACM use by GVSU faculty.
3. Recommend strategies to increase use of existing OER/ACM services and support.
4. Recommend new initiatives or support to increase OER/ACM adoption by GVSU faculty.

As explained in the memo which formed the task force (see Appendix E), “OER/ACM can reduce the financial burden on students and also enable more innovative and effective teaching. Zero-cost OER/ACM empower faculty to teach from the assumption that every student has access the course readings on the first day of the semester, allowing deeper exploration of the topic. With OER, the combination of free access plus broad reuse permission enables faculty to customize and remix content to better match their own learning objectives, or to engage students in the process of creating and revising course materials.”

Moreover, the task force believes that GVSU could establish itself as a leader in the creation of OER. When it comes to many scholarly/creative activities, our colleagues at research universities have an advantage over us in their ability to produce. They have fewer classes to teach each year, and they have better resources for engaging in those activities. They are also able to teach graduate classes, classes where they often can more directly focus their attention on the subject of their research, while cultivating graduate research assistants.

When it comes to the creation of OER, we have the advantage. We teach more classes each semester, and many of us teach more undergraduate classes than most of our research university counterparts, the courses where there is the greatest opportunity for impact for creating OER due to high enrollment. Because of the courses we teach, we have the greater expertise to bring to the creation of OER.

Therefore, in order to both benefit our students through reduced cost of educational materials and to also create a culture at GVSU that places a higher value on the creation of OER by our faculty, the OER Task Force offers the following priority recommendations:

1. Charge the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee to develop a new incentive for faculty adopting OER or other zero-cost materials.
2. Articulate and clarify GVSU’s support for creating and adapting OER/ACM.

¹ Open Educational Resources/Affordable Course Materials (OER/ACM). A list of working definition can be found in Appendix A.

3. Challenge every department to drastically reduce the cost of materials in at least one high-enrollment course, through the use of OER/ACM.

The section “GVSU Practices Involving Course Materials” below provides our response to Charge 1. The “Task Force Recommendations” section that follows addresses all of Charges 2, 3, & 4. It provides a subsection with detailed explanation of our priority recommendations, along with other subsections with additional recommendations that the task force offers for consideration.

GVSU Practices Involving Course Materials

To address Charge 1, we collected data from various campus stakeholders. We made use of survey items from projects external to GVSU (see Appendix B, as well as items developed by the GVSU Open Education Resources Faculty Learning Community.

Conversation with the campus bookstore

We met with staff from the campus bookstore (Tony Glaab & Tom Bevington) to understand their side of the course materials adoption picture. There are many evolving trends and places where units and departments can help keep costs down. Key points learned:

- Approximately 25% of all sections do not list a required text. (Note this includes courses such as internships.)
- For multi-section courses, the use of a common text varies by department. Math/science tend to use the same books across all sections, while social sciences and humanities will have different books for different sections. This variety impacts the bookstore's ability to negotiate prices from publishers and presents challenges for late-hired instructors as well as students needing to transfer between sections.
- The sooner the bookstore can get the information from the departments, the more time they have to negotiate and source materials to lower the price.
- Textbook publishers are pushing digital texts, but the bookstore still sees that students prefer the print versions. For example, McGraw Hill's 2019 editions are available in both digital or loose-leaf format. Moves like this have cut out the resale market and raise costs to students.
- Book buyback: If multi-section courses use the same books and use them for multiple years, the bookstore can buy more of them back from students each semester. One reason for the early request for Fall textbook orders is so the bookstore will have an idea of how many books to buy back from students.
- In the past, the bookstore has eagerly helped faculty/units with the process of making available to students in-house created materials, whether in print or online, and it will continue to do so. It also partners with the Libraries to reduce the costs of coursepacks.

Course material choices in high enrollment courses

A survey was sent to Unit heads asking for feedback about the course materials selection process in their unit (Appendix C). They were asked to discuss the process for one of their larger enrollment courses. There were 25 responses, representing 17 units. Highlights of the findings:

- 9 of these the choice was left to the individual instructor. The other 16 indicated that some type of committee/course coordinator was responsible for the selection of the materials.
- When asked to describe the process used, three responses indicated some concern for the price to students.
- Two courses, one undergraduate and one graduate, use OER materials. One other course described reviewing OER materials, but it did not find them suitable.
- Two courses used materials posted to Blackboard exclusively, with no cost to students.

It is not surprising that the process used to select course materials varies widely by unit. While there are potential academic freedom issues to respect, the current process makes it difficult for the Laker Store to secure the lowest possible prices on materials. Additionally, the absence of OER/ACM consideration in many of the responses suggests that many faculty/units might not be aware of these options for their courses.

Faculty teaching sections that did not require a text

We collected the names of 320 faculty whose courses did not require a text for purchase at the campus bookstore. A survey was sent to these instructors (Appendix D), and we received 112 responses. Out of the respondents, 16 mentioned using some form of OER, often alongside other free resources. 94 mentioned some variation on materials that students can access for free.

From this research, three barriers to OER/ACM emerged

1. Time to find, produce, evaluate OER/ACM.
2. Quality concerns about OER/ACM.
3. Concerns about information not being up to date--sometimes about commercial textbooks, some comments about OER materials.

The survey also showed a potential fair use issue that is not a surprise. 63 respondents mentioned providing access to PDFs of journal articles, book chapters, and other materials through Blackboard, Google Drive, or email, as well as through in-class handouts. Very few mentioned fair use or indicated awareness of potential copyright implications for this practice.

In the long term, this is potentially an issue if Blackboard implements any automated content filtering or copyright-infringement-detection tools. Especially with online courses where students may be studying abroad, how will use of these texts be affected by the new EU copyright laws requiring websites to screen for copyrighted content? Additionally, the Libraries cannot accurately measure the use of library resources directly uploaded to Blackboard. As library collections evolve, this could lead to cancellation of subscriptions that incorrectly appear to be rarely used.

Task Force Recommendations

Our initial research indicated that schools that have had successfully transitioned towards OER/ACM have done at least one of the following:

- Ensured that Contract Renewal, Tenure and Promotion standards acknowledge the creation of OER and often the transformation of OER as new scholarship.
- Ensured support in the Libraries and Teaching & Learning Centers for OER adoption and creation.
- Provided faculty with incentives to recognize the effort involved in developing and evaluating OER. Successful programs have provided stipends, release time, bonus professional development funding, and more. See Appendix B for examples.
- Developed best practices and support to identify course sections that use OER/ACM.

The recommendations for GVSU which emerged from considering those best practices often addressed more than one of Charges 2, 3, & 4. Thus, the recommendations are not broken out by individual charge. They are listed below, beginning with priority recommendations, which we feel have the greatest potential for effective, impactful change. The subsequent sections identify additional opportunities for the university to advance the use of OER/ACM on campus, make education more equitable and affordable for Lakers, and continue to support our community of exceptional teacher-scholars.

Priority Recommendations

Charge the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee to develop a new incentive for faculty adopting OER or other zero-cost materials.

We realize that the FTLC Advisory Committee cannot mandate allocation of resources to this, but we look to the Provost and Deans to provide leadership in this area by supporting these incentives.

Replacing a commercial textbook with an OER or with similarly zero-cost materials provides tremendous benefits to students: roughly \$100 savings per student per course. This also empowers instructors, as students no longer have financial barriers to access required materials from the very first day of class. Even if everything else in a course is the same, students in an OER or zero-cost course have better access to learning materials.

We recommend the development of a new incentive to reward faculty members who take the time and effort to implement OER/ACM and thereby reduce the cost of course materials to zero. OER/ACM incentive programs at a growing number of institutions are successfully encouraging widespread OER/ACM use, with dramatic benefits for student savings. Models range widely (see Appendix B), but include release time, stipends, and additional professional development funding. Although selecting course materials is often considered part of an instructor's teaching obligations, further incentives could encourage additional effort to find and consider OER/ACM instead of familiar and expensive commercial materials.

Stakeholders: FTLC Advisory Committee, Provost, Academic Deans

Articulate and Clarify GVSU's Support for Creating or Adapting OER/ACM.

Developing OER/ACM, as previously argued in the "Overview," is an opportunity for GVSU to leverage the talents of our exceptional teacher-scholars and build on our reputation for educational excellence. The university's framework of responsibilities (Shared Governance policy 3.0.1) embraces an

expansive definition of scholarly and creative activity, which could in theory encompass some OER/ACM development projects.

In theory, existing mechanisms like the CSCE's Catalyst and Collaborative grants, FTLC's teaching innovation grants, or individual faculty members' Areas of Significant Focus offer opportunities to directly accelerate faculty OER/ACM creation. However, it is unclear when and how OER/ACM development projects might be eligible for these different support mechanisms.

We recommend that the FPPC, FTLC Advisory Committee, and R&D Committee work to identify and articulate characteristics of OER/ACM development projects which would be eligible for support as scholarly and creative activity.

We similarly recommend that the UAS develop guidelines for Areas of Significant Focus involving OER/ACM creation, to facilitate more use of this existing mechanism by colleges and units.

Stakeholders: FTLC Advisory Committee, R&D Committee, FPPC

Challenge every department to drastically reduce the cost of materials in at least one high-enrollment course, through the use of OER and ACM.

We believe a university-wide commitment to action has the potential to dramatically catalyze OER/ACM engagement at GVSU, building on increased faculty support to remove barriers and improve access for thousands of Lakers every year.

This goal is aspirational yet achievable. High enrollment courses are a high-impact, low-barrier target, with generally more available OER/ACM, and more opportunities for collaboration on course material selection.

Regardless of the eventual outcome, pursuing this goal will benefit current students, make GVSU more appealing for potential students, empower instructors, and embody the university's mission, vision, and values.

Stakeholders: UAS, Provost's Office, College and Department leadership

Opportunities - No Budget Allocation

Formally designate a group to coordinate and support ongoing OER/ACM initiatives across the university.

GVSU stakeholders have been meeting informally to collaborate on OER & ACM support since 2015. However, the current task force is the first official university-wide effort, and as such raises the visibility of OER/ACM activities and demonstrates university-level involvement. When the task force disbands, interest and conversations will continue; formal designation for these activities will help sustain the high profile of OER/ACM as a priority for the university.

As with [Big Data at GVSU](#), an OER/ACM working group could serve as a clearinghouse for information, a community of practice, a promotional channel for news and professional development opportunities and a consultant for other stakeholders on the other OER/ACM recommendations in this report.

This formalized group could initially begin with participants in ongoing, informal OER conversations, which will continue regardless of designation. These collaborative discussions are coordinated by the University Libraries, and involve the Laker Store, FTLC, CSCE, and eLearning & Emerging Technologies. A formally-designated group would welcome opportunities to engage more closely with Student Senate, UAS, and other campus stakeholders, whether through regular communications or the stakeholders' direct participation in the formal group.

Stakeholders: University Libraries, Laker Store, FTLC, CSCE, eLearning & Emerging Technologies, UAS, Student Senate, College Dean's Offices, Provost's Office.

Charge the University Curriculum Committee to include an opportunity to report on OER/ACM availability in new and significantly revised course proposals.

The process of developing a new course proposal, as well as when learning objectives for an existing course are revised, seem to be strategic and effective times to consider the availability of OER/ACM. By expanding current questions in the SAIL system to encourage the listing of OER/ACM, faculty would be prompted to more completely evaluate the range of possible materials for a course proposal.

Note: we do not recommend mandating the use of OER/ACM in new or revised courses; as a matter of academic freedom and pedagogy, faculty should be empowered to select the most effective materials for their courses. Rather, this recommendation is meant to encourage more critical, reflective examination of available educational materials when (re)designing a course.

Stakeholder: University Curriculum Committee.

Develop indicators in Banner to identify course sections using only OER/ACM, for use in registration.

Section indicators in class registration systems are a high-value opportunity to help students make informed decisions about the potential cost of their courses. While Banner does allow students to access information about required materials, this information is not easy to use. Adding OER and/or ACM attributes to relevant courses will allow students to more readily understand the complete cost of

possible schedules. It may also encourage students to register for additional credits when they know that they will face few or no additional costs for materials.

For the university, incorporating OER/ACM indicators in Banner will assist in promoting GVSU to potential students, improve our information on actual student costs, and recognize faculty or departments who contribute to educational affordability. It may also encourage earlier decisions on course materials from faculty and departments, and anticipates the possibility of state legislation mandating OER/ACM course markings. The latter is a growing trend among state governments, including California, Oregon, and Texas, driven in part by parent and student advocacy groups.

Note: in states with mandatory course markings for OER/ACM, some instructors have expressed concern that their courses will be effectively penalized by student preferences for low-cost classes. However, it is worth noting that at GVSU, information on the cost of course materials is already available to students, either laboriously through Banner or informally through peer networks. Adding indicators in Banner would simply provide more equitable and transparent information to all students and faculty.

Stakeholders: Registrar's Office, UCC, Academic Policies and Standards Committee, Academic Technology Advisory Committee, other university offices and governance bodies as appropriate.

Develop faculty badges to recognize faculty evaluation of OER/ACM, development of materials, and other forms of OER/ACM engagement.

The [FacultyBadges@GVSU program](#) already includes one OER badge focused primarily on OER adoption. Additional badges for ACM adoption, OER/ACM evaluation, and developing OER/ACM for courses would provide faculty with recognition for these efforts.

Stakeholders: University Libraries, FTLC.

Expand faculty professional development resources on using Blackboard to provide students with course materials, emphasizing library support, OER/ACM, and thoughtful fair use of copyrighted materials.

The many faculty members who share course materials with students via Blackboard and Google Drive may benefit from increased education about the copyright and practical implications of these practices, as well as available alternatives. The Libraries' e-reserves, liaison librarian participation in Blackboard, and OER/ACM can reduce the university's long-term risk of inadvertent copyright infringement and contribute to a more accurate understanding of library collections usage. More critical and reflective fair use practices will similarly reduce the potential for unintended copyright infringement with uploaded materials, and thereby lower the university's overall legal risk.

Stakeholders: University Libraries, FTLC, eLearning & Emerging Technologies, College and Unit leadership, FTLC; Division of Legal, Compliance, & Risk Management.

Develop expanded support during New Faculty Orientation and faculty mentoring processes to assist new faculty in selecting OER/ACM for their classes.

New Faculty Orientation and mentoring are a valuable opportunity to provide resources and promote the use of OER/ACM, as the new faculty members are in the process of defining their own approaches to the classes they teach. Targeted support can highlight campus partners and services, share information on assessing and integrating OER/ACM into pedagogy, and prime faculty members to consider OER/ACM as their GVSU career continues.

This is challenging, because new faculty are typically very busy in the limited time between the start of the contract year and the first semester of instruction. Non-tenure-track faculty often have even less preparation time, and may lack the mentoring channels that tenure-track faculty enjoy. We recommend that the listed stakeholders collaborate to experiment with providing OER/ACM support as early as possible to new faculty, potentially through online modules or resources available before the official start of a contract year.

Stakeholders: Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee, FTLC Advisory Committee, University Libraries, Laker Store, eLearning & Emerging Technologies.

Encourage colleges and departments to collaborate with the University Libraries on identifying OER/ACM and incorporating them into GVSU collections.

This is an area of continuing focus for the University Libraries collection development practices. As the Libraries strive to prioritize faculty and student needs, active engagement from faculty members, units, and colleges can amplify the Libraries' efforts to highlight existing OER/ACM in our collections, and to acquire more OER/ACM. Similarly, information from faculty who use OER/ACM in their classes will help liaison librarians provide more effective subject guides and resources for those classes.

In addition, explicit support from faculty and other university stakeholders can dramatically strengthen the Libraries' ability to negotiate licenses for content with unlimited simultaneous users and other features that enable the content to be effective as ACM. As recently demonstrated by the University of California system, commitment from engaged and informed faculty can allow libraries to walk away from unsustainable or unsatisfactory offers.

Stakeholders: University Libraries, Colleges and units, Provost's Office; Division of Legal, Compliance, & Risk Management.

Opportunities - Additional Budget Allocation

Establish a faculty course reassignment program for OER/ACM

According to GVSU and nationally-surveyed faculty, the greatest obstacle to OER engagement is time. An OER/ACM course reassignment would offer faculty the time necessary to refine existing instructor-created materials, evaluate and customize OER/ACM, or develop supplemental teaching and assessment materials.

This would be a competitive grant opportunity, mirroring the [course release for research and creative activity](#). As such, it would fill an existing gap in the university's support for faculty.

Note: we distinguish this opportunity from the priority recommendation on OER/ACM incentives, in order to focus that recommendation specifically on encouraging the selection of OER/ACM for courses. In contrast, a course reassignment might include OER/ACM development, refining and sharing existing materials, or redesigning a course around existing OER/ACM.

Stakeholders: FTLC, FTLC Advisory Committee, College and Unit leadership. Division of Legal, Compliance, & Risk Management (to address any intellectual property and/or licensing issues).

Commit support for an application to join the [OpenStax Institutional Partnership Program](#) (2019-2020, or 2020-2021)

This program provides mentoring, strategy consultations, and other support for institutions to rapidly advance the use of OER across the campus. With a track record of success (including at Grand Rapids Community College), this program could be a natural and powerful transition from the current task force to a major ongoing campus program.

Institutional partners do not pay any fees to OpenStax, as the program is entirely grant funded. Instead, partners commit to investing resources in OER support at their institutions. Program applicants must demonstrate support from a senior administrator with responsibility for the institution at-large, who will provide a letter of support and agree to regularly promote the initiative's activities. Applicants are also asked to provide a collective 10 hours/week of release time for the designated leader(s) of the campus OER initiatives. The program strongly recommends--but does not mandate--a dedicated budget of roughly \$1 per FTE enrolled student. This latter commitment may make the 2019-2020 program more fiscally strategic, given statewide financial trends for higher education.

Note: the 2019-2020 program application deadline is April 30. Meeting this deadline is feasible, but would require clear and prompt support from stakeholders.

Stakeholders: Provost's Office, UAS, University Libraries, CSCE, FTLC.

Investigate the level of student inequalities in access to mobile technology.

Students with the greatest financial need--the ones who benefit most from digital OER that are free--may not have a laptop or tablet. This especially disadvantages them when required by the teacher to have access to a digital open textbook during class. In some cases, open textbooks may also have a print version available for purchase; yet, the students least able to pay would then be burdened to buy a print copy. Moreover, when traditional textbook publishers provide both a lower cost digital version and a more costly print version of a text, such students are similarly in the position of having to spend more money to have a copy of their textbook in class. In all of these scenarios, many students will choose not have access to the course textbook, or they will struggle to access a digital version on a small smartphone screen.

The Academic Technology Advisory Committee is positioned to examine this issue, collaborate with university partners to determine how many students might be at risk, and develop strategies for more equitable technology support. For example, the Laker Store might offer a laptop/tablet rental program where reduced or full waivers of rental fees are available for students with financial need.

Stakeholders: Financial Aid, Academic Technology Advisory Committee, IT, Dean of Students.

Opportunities - Beyond OER/ACM

During the task force's work, we identified additional recommendations related to course materials, which were not directly connected with OER/ACM. The opportunities described below offer significant potential benefits to students and to faculty.

Request that the LIFT Management Committee modify LIFT evaluations to ask students to self-report how frequently they used a required textbook or other required course materials.

Student feedback at GVSU and national surveys indicate that students commonly question the need or relevance of textbooks. Anecdotal feedback from faculty mirrors this with a perception that students are all too often unwilling to read the course text. Students expressed dissatisfaction in spending money on materials they did not need to use, while faculty expressed concerns that students were not appropriately engaging with course materials. Some of these perceptions may reflect courses where a textbook is required but not incorporated effectively into instruction and assessment.

Documenting student perceptions about textbook use may provide valuable data which faculty can use to refine and improve their instructional practice, as well as evidence indicating when required materials are effectively used.

Students reporting that a required textbook was not relevant could be an opportunity to integrate textbook use into pedagogy, more explicitly communicate the intended role of the required resource, or rethink whether the resource should be required. Similarly, a positive correlation between active textbook use and grades could help an instructor convince students of the textbook's value and reinforce pedagogical choices.

Stakeholders: LIFT Committee, UAS

Develop programming to support more reflective, intentional, and effective teaching practices involving the use of textbooks.

The perceptions described above appear to be an opportunity for FTLC to encourage more reflective teaching practices, whether recognizing that a required resource should be optional, or developing instruction which is better integrated with the required resource. Faculty Learning Communities, workshops, and other programming could support this reflective practice.

Stakeholders: FTLC, FTLC Advisory Committee.

Develop incentives for departments and instructors to provide the Laker Store with course material decisions earlier.

Laker Store management noted that last-minute or late decisions on course materials limit their ability to negotiate lower prices or find more affordable sources for the course materials. Modest rewards for early selection of course materials could encourage departments to prioritize these decisions where appropriate.

The College Deans could consult with their Unit Heads to determine what incentives might best encourage faculty without inadvertently punishing instructors when early selection is inappropriate or

impossible. For example, a department could be offered additional professional development funding, while faculty members might receive a letter or token of appreciation.

Stakeholders: Provost, College Dean's Offices, and Unit Heads.

Appendices

Appendix A: Working Definitions

Open Educational Resources (OER)

[Open Educational Resources](#) are any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or are released under the terms of an open license. The nature of these open materials is such that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share them. Free resources on the web that do not use an open license are not OER (see open licenses definition below). OER range from textbooks to curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio, video, and open source software. ([UNESCO](#)) –and yes, [troves of these materials exist](#) and GVSU Libraries wants to help professors use them.

Affordable Course Materials (ACM)

ACM have little or no cost for students, but lack the reuse and adaptability of OER. These may include library-licensed materials, low-cost course packs or textbooks, and online resources which are free of cost but lack the open licenses which allow reuse.

Open Licenses

Open licenses allow anyone to legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share a form of media: text, image, video, audio, etc. Open licenses differentiate OER from *free resources*, such as many YouTube videos that do not provide licensing that would allow the teacher to copy or adapt the video. The ability to copy media permits the teachers and GVSU to host copies of the work to guarantee availability. The ability to adapt the media allows the teacher to update a text to current theory and knowledge, to remix all or part of the work into something the teacher is creating, and/or to situate the work for their classroom context. [Creative Commons licenses](#) are the most popular form of open license used in education for most media; software that is OER uses [open source licenses](#).

Open Textbooks

Open textbooks are textbooks that are released under an open license.

Library Resources

The term "library resources" refers to any material that GVSU Libraries purchases or subscribes to. Applications that propose the use of library resources do save students money by making use of materials the Libraries have already purchased; however, they do not offer the same benefits of adopting truly *open* materials.

Appendix B: Resources and Examples

[OER & Textbook Affordability Initiatives](#)² is a document originally assembled by the University Libraries to support the task force. The document features many examples of OER and Affordability programs at educational institutions, as well as background literature and national studies.

Appendix C: Survey Questions: Course Materials Selection and Use at GVSU

For this survey, please provide answers for one high-enrollment course taught through your department during Fall Semester 2018. It does not need to be the highest-enrollment course, if a different course is a better example of department practices. If you would like to respond with information about more than one high-enrollment course, you can use the same survey link to submit another response.

The following questions ask about the “required course materials” used in this course. This phrase refers to the core materials which students are required to obtain to support their learning, and may include print or digital versions of:

- Textbooks
- Course packs
- Homework systems
- Lab or studio supplies
- Journal articles or ebooks from the library's collections
- Materials placed on course reserves

1. Course code (i.e., CHM 115): _____
2. How many students registered for all sections of this course?
 - a. Less than 100
 - b. 100-250
 - c. 251-500
 - d. 501-750
 - e. 751-1000
 - f. 1001+

² <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lfxT9ya3xagOlnUU6wwzxPZRptfYX27UDucEAwewhoE/edit>

3. What required course materials are used by instructors in this course?

4. To the best of your knowledge, how do most students acquire the required materials for this course? Select all that apply.
5. Laker Store
- a. Other bookstore
 - b. Amazon, Chegg, or other online retailer
 - c. Library
 - d. Blackboard, course website, or instructor
 - e. Resources freely available online
 - f. Other _____
6. To the best of your knowledge, how much does the average student in this course pay for access to required course materials?
- a. \$0
 - b. Less than \$50
 - c. \$50 - \$100
 - d. \$101 - \$200
 - e. \$201- \$300
 - f. More than \$300
7. How are the required course materials selected?
- a. Individual instructor choice
 - b. Committee or group decision
 - c. Other _____
8. Please briefly describe the process for selecting materials for this course. This may include determining section instructors, evaluating potential textbooks, communicating with the Laker Store, and/or communicating with students. Please include estimates of when and how long the different stages of this process take place.

9. Would you be interested in participating in a focus group or other follow-up discussion? If so, please provide your email address. _____

Appendix D: Survey Questions: Course Materials in ‘No Textbook Required’ Sections

For Fall 2018, more than 540 course sections informed the Laker Store that no textbook was required. However, the actual situation is more complex: those sections included many which used online-only homework systems, course reserves or items from the University Libraries' collections, readings uploaded to Blackboard, or other types of material.

As an instructor listed for one or more of these "no textbook required" sections, your response will help us fill in the gaps and build a more accurate picture of how textbooks and other course materials are used across Grand Valley State University. If you taught more than one "no textbook required" section, you are welcome to complete a survey for each section.

The following questions ask about the “required course materials” used in a class. This phrase refers to the core materials which students are required to obtain to support their learning, and may include print or digital versions of:

- Traditional textbooks
- Course packs
- Homework systems
- Lab or studio supplies
- Journal articles or ebooks from the library's collections
- Materials placed on course reserves
- Other information resources

Thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions please contact Tom Pentecost (pentecot@gvsu.edu) or Matt Ruen (ruenm@gvsu.edu).

1. In the section(s) you taught where no textbook was required from the bookstore, what did students use as "required course materials"?

2. How did you discover and decide to use these materials?

3. How do students obtain or access these "required course materials"?

4. Is there anything you would like the task force to know about this survey, your experiences with textbooks and other course materials, or other issues related to our charge?

Appendix E: Charge from UAS



gvsu.edu/library

MEMORANDUM

To: Felix Ngassa, Chair of ECS
From: Jonathan Bowman, President of Student Senate, and Annie Bélanger, Dean of University Libraries
Date: March 30, 2018

Request:

establish a task force to identify strategies for recognizing and encouraging the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Affordable Course Materials (ACM) at Grand Valley State University.

Definitions:

Open Educational Resources are textbooks, assessment tools, and other learning materials which are in the public domain or have an open license, making them free to access and to "retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute" (the "5 Rs of OER").

Affordable Course Materials have little or no cost for students, but lack the reuse and adaptability of OER. ACM include library collections (purchased and/or subscription content), physical and electronic course reserves, other free-to-students content, and learning materials sold at or near cost.

Context and Rationale

The traditional, commercial model of textbooks and other course materials is an increasingly expensive and unsustainable problem in higher education. Textbook prices have increased four times faster than inflation since 2006, and as a result many students choose to delay or skip purchasing textbooks, drop out of courses, or spend an estimated \$3 billion per year of financial aid on course materials.¹

OER/ACM can reduce the financial burden on students and also enable more innovative and effective teaching. Zero-cost OER/ACM empower faculty to teach from the assumption that every student has access the course readings on the first day of the semester, allowing deeper exploration of the topic. With OER, the combination of free access plus broad reuse permission enables faculty to customize and remix content to better match their own learning objectives, or to engage students in the process of creating and revising course materials.

Awareness and use of OER/ACM continues to be relatively low among faculty instructors nationwide. For many, the time required to find, evaluate, and integrate OER/ACM into their teaching is a persistent obstacles, even though the same faculty acknowledge the cost and other impacts of traditional course materials.² However, a growing number of institutions have established successful initiatives to encourage and enable instructors to adopt OER/ACM³.

The attached Board of Trustees report provides an overview of GVSU's current OER/ACM activities, which include 18 GVSU-authored OER as well as \$480,000 in student savings in F2017-W2018. Expanded campus-wide efforts could greatly accelerate the use of OER/ACM at GVSU, with high impact on students and faculty. This is an opportune moment to take action: the 2018 federal budget includes a \$5 million pilot grant program for higher education institutions supporting OER creation or use⁴.

¹ <https://studentpirgs.org/reports/sp/open-101-action-plan-affordable-textbooks>

² <https://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/openingthetextbook2017.pdf>

³ <https://sparcopen.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Connect-OER-2016-2017-Annual-Report.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2018/03/28/oer-gains-momentum-federal-push-2018-budget>

Proposed Task Force Charges

1. To explore current GVSU practices involving course material decisions.
 - o Potential questions to investigate: what influences shape faculty choices for course materials? How do faculty course material decisions impact students? How do course material practices for multi-section courses impact students? What existing courses, departments, and/or faculty members use OER/ACM?
2. Recommend strategies to recognize existing OER/ACM use by GVSU faculty.
3. Recommend strategies to increase use of existing OER/ACM services and support.
4. Recommend new initiatives or support to increase OER/ACM adoption by GVSU faculty.

Potential Outcomes

- Recommendations to Provost and/or Provost's Cabinet.
- Recommended charges for Standing Committees of University Academic Senate.
- Recommended charges for University Governance Committees.
- Documentation on state of OER, ACC, and traditional course material use at GVSU.

creation

Timeline

Academic year 2018-2019

Membership

Core Task Force:

- Two student representatives selected by Student Senate
- Two faculty members selected by the Executive Committee of the Senate
- One faculty member selected by the Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center
- Dean of University Libraries
- Scholarly Communications Outreach Coordinator (University Libraries faculty)

Stakeholders & Contributors

Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence	Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships
Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center	University Curriculum Committee
Laker Store	Academic Policies & Standards Committee
University Libraries	Graduate Student Association
eLearning and Emerging Technologies division	Faculty creators and adopters of OER/ACM
Institutional Analysis	Office of the Provost
Institutional Marketing	University Registrar
University Communications	Board of Trustees

Support

University Libraries faculty and staff are compiling information resources to support the work of this proposed task force. This compilation will include background information about OER/ACM, relevant scholarly and professional literature, and examples of initiatives at other institutions.