



Libraries



Open Educational Resources

Talking Points

Open Educational Resources

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Open Educational Resources: A Brief History

What are Open Educational Resources?

Open Educational Resources (OER) are freely available educational materials that often have a Creative Commons license. The history of OER is relatively new and is building momentum through movements to bring more free educational resources to teaching, learning, and research.

Beginning of Free Educational Resources

The OER movement began when The California State University developed MERLOT in 1997. This was a collection of mostly free educational resources aimed at higher education (Singh, 2018). Rice University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) saw the importance of open courseware and built platforms to share open courseware on the web (Plotkin, 2010). Rice University created Connexions in 1999, which has developed into the current OpenStax platform. OpenStax has open textbooks “being used in 48% of college and universities in the U.S. and over 100 countries” (OpenStax, 2018). MIT began freely sharing course content in 1999 with OpenCourseWare. They saw open resources as the future in distance learning and wanted to be part of the move towards online learning.

Creative Commons

While free educational resources began emerging on the web, David Wiley, an Assistant Professor at Utah State University, proposed a license for use on free and open content in 1998 (Plotkin, 2010). This type of copyright concept helped make web-based and other open education materials easy to share. In the early 2000s, a group at Stanford realized Wiley’s proposal by founding Creative Commons to develop free legal licenses.

OER Defined

A 2002 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) forum on the impact of open courseware for higher education in developing countries coined the phrase open educational resources. At this forum, open educational resources were defined as:

technology-enabled, open provision of educational resources for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes. They are typically made freely available over the Web or the Internet. Their principal use is by teachers and educational institutions support course development, but they can also be used directly by students. Open Educational Resources include learning objects such as lecture material, references and readings, simulations, experiments and demonstrations, as well as syllabi, curricula and teachers' guides. (UNESCO, 2012)

The Future of OER

Over the years, the OER movement has gained momentum from instructors in higher education with or without support from their institutions. Slowly, more institutions are adopting OER because of its importance in the education system.

Department of Education. (2018). #GoOpen states - Office of educational technology. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from <https://tech.ed.gov/open/states/>

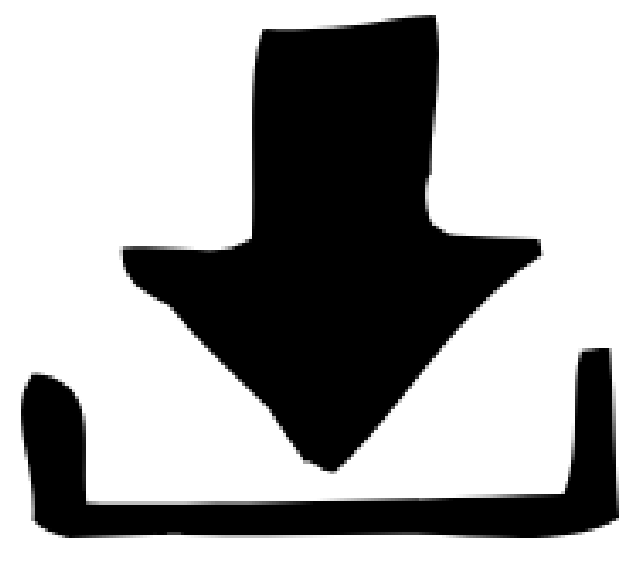
OpenStax. (2018). Who we are. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from <https://openstax.org/about>

Plotkin, H. (2010). Free to learn: An open educational resources policy development guidebook for community college governance officials. Creative Commons, 1–40.

Singh, V. (2018). A brief history of open source, 9–27. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/gitcoin/a-brief-history-of-open-source-3928cb451767>

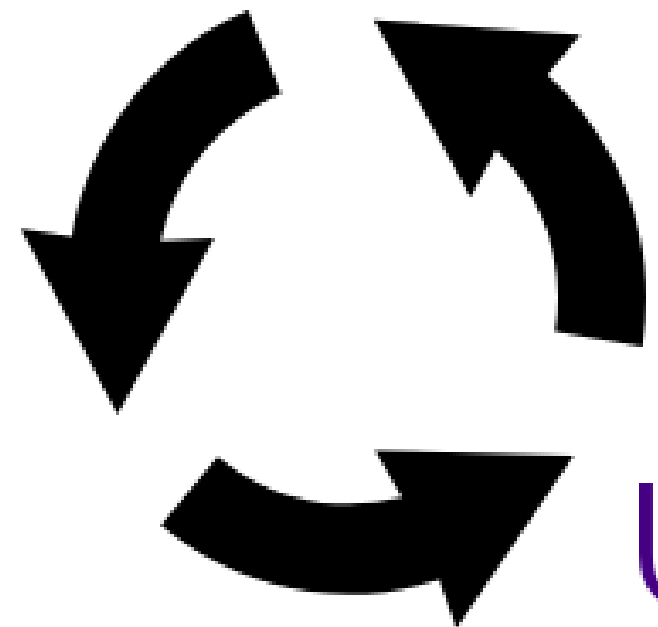
UNESCO. (2012). Open educational resources (OER). Retrieved October 31, 2018, from <https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer>

Five R's of OER



Retain

Make, own, and control copies of the content



Reuse

Use the content in a wide range of ways



Revise

Adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself



Remix

Combine the original or revised content with other material to create something new



Redistribute

Share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others

This material is based on original writing by David Wiley, which was published freely under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license at <http://opencontent.org/definition/>.

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Understanding of Licenses

Below are visuals to help understand the different types of Creative Commons Licenses that are used with OER. There are multiple levels of openness when it comes to publishing with a Creative Commons License. The following elements can be combined to create customized licenses. See below for some examples.

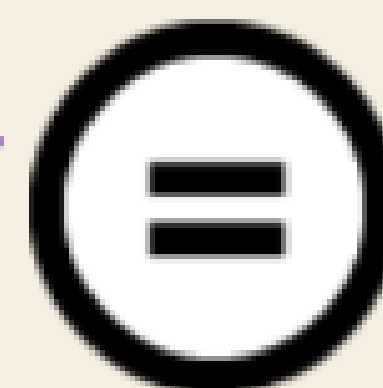
Creative Commons License Elements



Attribution
attribute the author



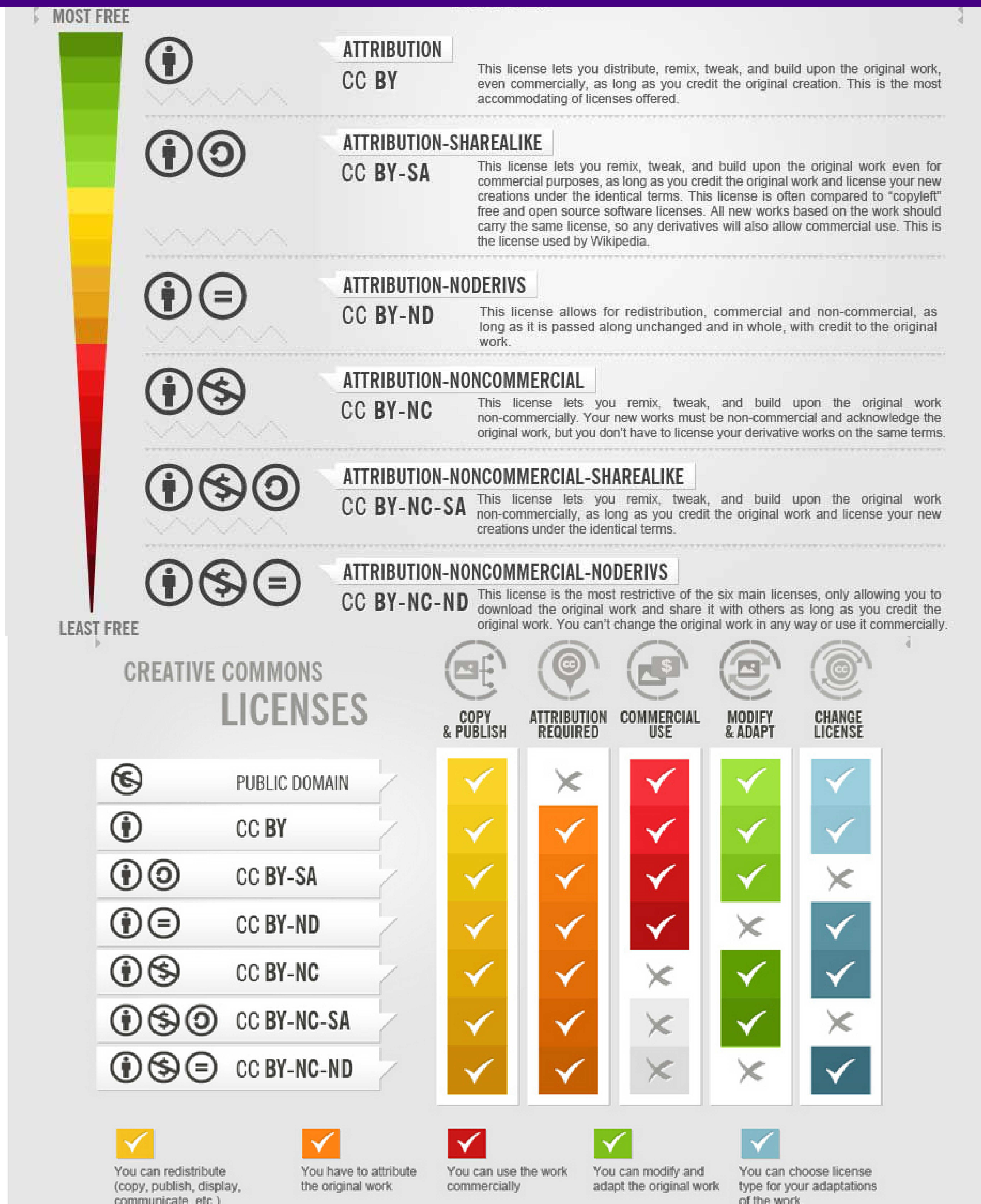
Non-commercial
no commercial use



No Derivative Works
no remixing



ShareAlike
remix only if you let others remix

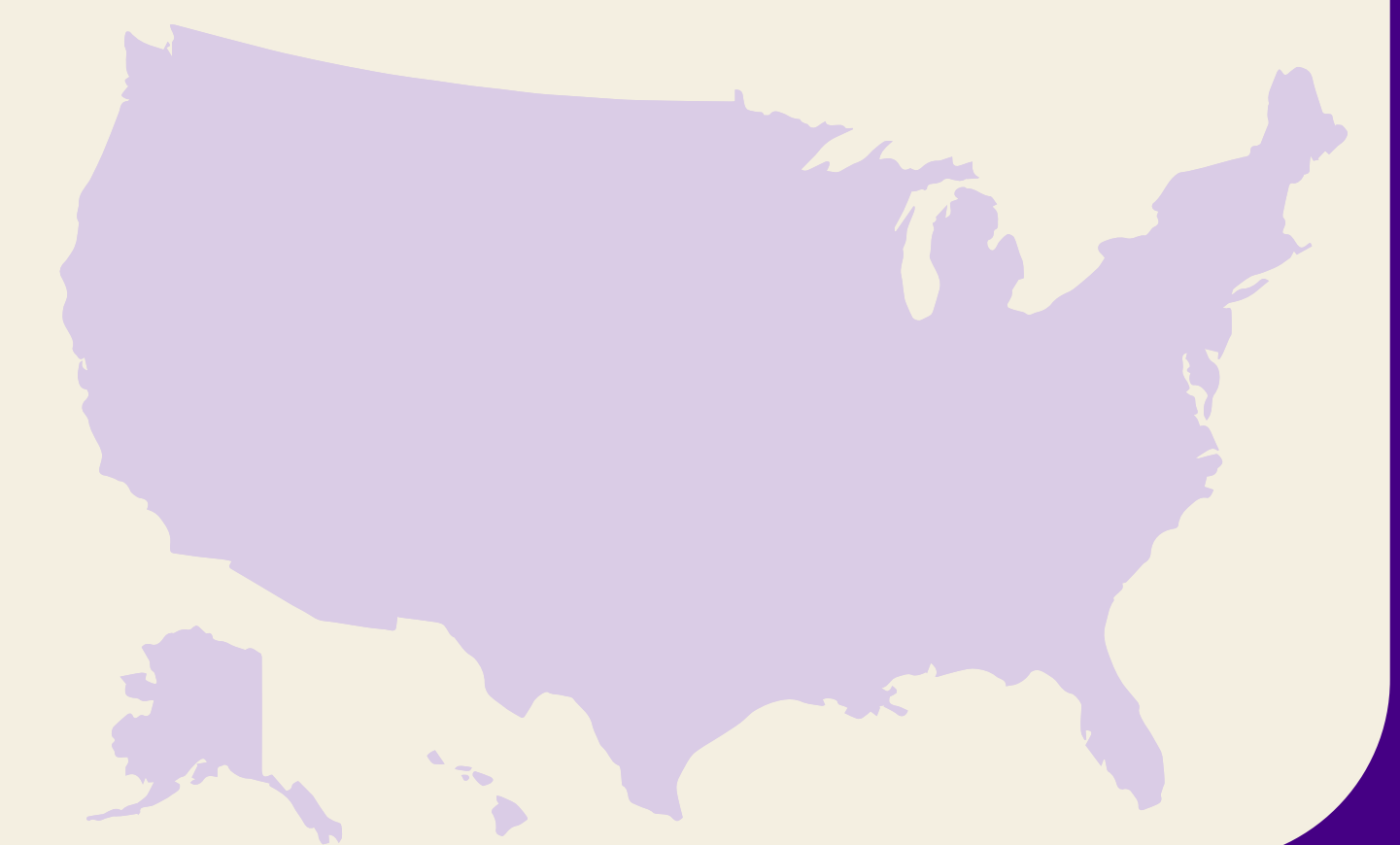


The OER Landscape

The United States

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 (HR 4137) created a baseline set of standards for textbook publishers to make an impact on textbook affordability. The primary components of the HEOA require publishers to a) disclose textbook prices when marketing to professors, b) offer unbundled course materials (access codes separate from textbooks), and c) asks colleges to provide the list of course materials (including ISBNs and pricing) during registration. Though this is not open per se, it was an early indicator that textbook prices are unacceptable. HEOA went into effect in 2010.

The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2018 provides \$5 million for an "Open Textbook Pilot." During the first round of funding, the bill focused on awarding up to three grants. The entire grant was awarded to UC Davis for developing open Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM) textbooks and expand the LibreTexts project. Additional rounds of funding are available each year depending on approval of the bill.



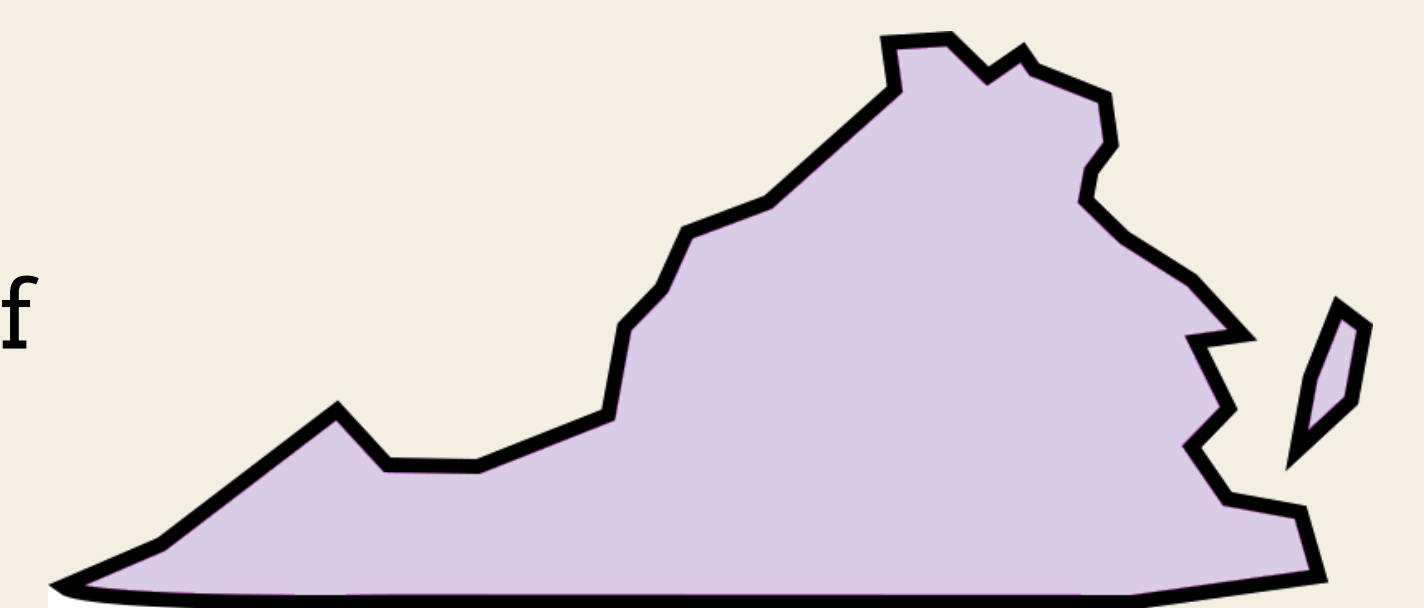
Virginia

In 2018, HB 454 was passed. It includes the following provision: "Requires the governing board of each public institution of higher education to implement guides for the adoption and use of low-cost and no-cost open educational resources in courses offered at such institution. The bill provides that such guidelines may include provisions for low-cost commercially published materials." Prior to the passage of HB 454, Virginia's Department of Education had in place an OER initiative called GoOpenVA. It appears that this initiative mostly applied to primary and secondary schools rather than higher education institutions.

In 2019, HB2380 was passed. It includes the following provision: "Requires the registrar or another appropriate employee of each public institution of higher education to identify conspicuously in the online course catalogue or registration system, as soon as practicable after the necessary information becomes available, each course for which the instructor exclusively uses no-cost course materials or low-cost course materials."

Programs already in place prior to the passage of HB 454 include the Virtual Library of Virginia's (VIVA) membership in the Open Textbook Network. VIVA also provides training for library leaders to enhance their understanding of OER. Libraries and the Open community share philosophical values, such as a commitment to free access to information. Libraries are often the home for Institutional repositories (IR), which are a logical and often used hosting platform for OER materials. Libraries also offer collection development and management, copyright, instructional design, and scholarly communication consultations and services which are all valuable to instructors adopting, adapting, and creating OER.

The Open Virginia Advisory Committee (OVAC) is another program through the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) that recommends initiatives and policies to facilitate the adoption of open educational resources by Virginia's public institutions.



James Madison University

Every semester since Spring 2017, JMU Libraries has offered at least one Open Textbook Workshop. Based on the workshops pioneered by the Open Textbook Network, JMU's workshops offer a stipend for faculty to publish a review of an open textbook on the Open Textbook Library.

Several JMU faculty members have adopted open textbooks and/or OER for their courses. Some faculty choose to adopt open materials "as is" and some are creating unique OER. JMU faculty who have adopted OER come from the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, the College of Business, the College of Integrated Science and Engineering, and the College of Science and Math.



Challenges of OER

Discovery

It can be difficult to find OER due to a variety of platforms and inconsistent or shoddy metadata.

Funding

Creating OER, especially full-length textbooks, is a labor-intensive process. Those who create textbooks with traditional book publishing companies can earn royalties. Therefore, if there is no institutional funding available to recompense OER authors for their time, it can be hard to motivate or encourage authors to enter the fold.

Localization & Remixing

Many creators of OER do not “localize” or translate the material they adapt or remix from other OER objects. Similarly, very few OER creators remix existing OER objects to fit their curricula or pedagogical objectives.

Quality

Without a peer-review process or an established body of widely-praised work, it can be difficult to assess the quality of OER. While that can be the case for self-published open textbooks, some OER materials, like those from OpenStax, state clearly that their textbooks go through a traditional peer-review process.

Funding Opportunities



VIVA Course Redesign Grant- <http://vivalib.org/courseredesign>

This program, starting in 2019, will award grants from \$1,000-\$30,000 to assist faculty members in transitioning to course materials available at no cost to students, such as open educational textbooks and/or library resources.

4-VA Grant- Course Redesign- <https://4-va.org/james-madison-university/>

4-VA provides small-scale grants to pilot research teams collaborating across 4-VA universities. With access to this funding, teams can build evidence to show that their projects will make valuable, impactful contributions to their fields, thereby increasing their chances of winning larger external grants.

OER Resources

JMU Guides- <https://guides.lib.jmu.edu/openandaffordable> & <https://guides.lib.jmu.edu/findopenandaffordablecontent>

A collection of definitions, handouts, & links to open resources. These guides are a good place to learn about & search for OER.

JMU Scholarly Communications Guide- <http://guides.lib.jmu.edu/scholcomm>

A collection of resources defining Scholarly Communication and resources on topics. This guide is a good place to stay up to date with Scholarly Communication topics.

MERLOT- <https://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm>

Provides access to curated online learning and support materials and content creation tools.

OpenStax- <https://openstax.org>

Publishes high-quality, peer-reviewed, openly licensed college textbooks that are free online and low cost in print.

Open Courseware (OCW)- https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Open_Education_Handbook/History_of_the_OER_movement

OpenCourseWare is the digital publication of high quality educational materials that are freely and openly licensed, and are available online to anyone, anytime. They frequently include course planning and evaluation tools along with thematic content. OpenCourseWare initiatives range in scope from mirroring traditional classroom sized endeavors to the MOOC (massive open online course) model, which enables large-scale participation by anyone with Internet access.

Open Textbook Libraries- <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/faq>

A comprehensive referatory that points to open textbooks by a variety of authors and publishers, The Open Textbook Library also provides instructor and faculty reviews of open textbooks.

Glossary of Terms

Attribution- Citing openly licensed materials, whether they're images or videos or textbooks. To "attribute" something, you are giving credit. It's the same idea as "citing" -- just a different term for it.

Creative Commons License- The process by which the creator/owner of a work allows others to use (and/or reproduce/adapt) their works.

Copyright- Protects the creator of an original work (or the owner of the copyright for that work) by granting them exclusive rights to the work for a set length of time, including the rights to reproduce, publish, sell, and make derivative works.

Fair use- Rules and conditions which must be met in order for copyrighted work to be used for educational purposes. [without the copyright holders' explicit consent – implied, but best to clearly include this caveat]

Institutional repository- An online archive of materials hosted and maintained by an organization, such as a college or university. It allows institutions to house the scholarly work of their members online.

Learning resources- Any tool that helps teachers teach and students learn (Flashcards, DVDs, software, books, models, podcasts, study guides, etc.)

Open Access (OA)- "The free, immediate, online availability of research articles coupled with the rights to use these articles fully in the digital environment. Open Access ensures that anyone can access and use these results—to turn ideas into industries and breakthroughs into better lives." -- because the focus is less on remixing in OA (research and scholarship) than in OER (teaching and learning).

Open Educational Resources (OER)- Openly licensed (i.e. public domain/Creative Commons) educational materials that can be used, reused, modified, and redistributed for teaching, learning, and researching purposes free of charge or at low cost.

Open pedagogy- The practice of engaging with students as creators of information rather than simply consumers of it. It's a form of experiential learning in which students demonstrate understanding through the act of creation. The products of open pedagogy are student created and openly licensed so that they may live outside of the classroom in a way that has an impact on the greater community.

Open science- The practice of science in such a way that others can collaborate and contribute, where research data, lab notes and other research processes are freely available, under terms that enable reuse, redistribution and reproduction of the research and its underlying data and methods.

Open source- Code and software in which the creator allows it to be freely used, modified, and shared.

Attribution. (2019). In *Student guide to Open Educational Resources (OER): What is OER?* Retrieved from <https://tacomacc.libguides.com/oerstudentguide>.

Creative Commons License. (2019). In *Open educational resources: Guide to OER terms*. Retrieved from <https://irsc.libguides.com/openeducationalresources/terms>.

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