The OER Ambassadors Pilot

Eleta Exline  
*University of New Hampshire - Main Campus, eleta.exline@unh.edu*

Jen Carroll  
*University of New Hampshire - Main Campus, jennifer.carroll@unh.edu*

Catherine Overson  
*University of New Hampshire, catherine.overson@unh.edu*

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The OER Ambassadors Pilot
Eleta Exline, Jennifer Carroll, Catherine Overson, University of New Hampshire

Introduction
In spring 2015 the University of New Hampshire Library, Academic Technology, and Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning launched a pilot initiative to encourage faculty adoption of Open Educational Resources. Nine “OER Ambassadors” were selected to engage with OER in a course and share that experience with the UNH community.

Pilot Goals
1. Support and evaluate the use of OER in a variety of courses at UNH.
2. Maximize student learning outcomes while reducing or eliminating the cost of instructional materials.
3. Establish a cohort of academic leaders committed to improving student learning through the use of OER and eager to share their experiences with the UNH community.

Financial Support
Each OER Ambassador received a grant of $3000 to support work over the summer. Funding for the pilot was provided by the Provost’s Office, Schools and Colleges, Library, and Academic Technology.

Support Teams
OER Ambassadors were assigned a Support Team that included an instructional designer, librarian, and assessment expert. The team assisted with course design, locating and selecting OER, technical and copyright issues, and implementing an assessment plan.

Pilot Timeline
2014
November: Core team from Academic Technology and the Library began meeting to plan a pilot program
December: Presentation to Provost’s Council

2015
January: Created an OER Library Research Guide
March: Presentation to Dean’s Council
March - April: Applications submitted and reviewed
May: Kick-Off Meeting
June - August: Brainshop sessions
September - December: Fall courses and assessments
October: OER Presentation at New England Regional Association for Language Learning Technology
December: OER Ambassadors Panel at Library

2016
January: OER Ambassadors Panel at Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning workshop
February-May: Spring courses and assessments

Brainshops
Ambassadors and Support Team members met as a group over the summer and into the fall to discuss plans, ideas, and challenges. These meetings have become the foundation for a community of practice around Open Education at UNH.

Pilot Evaluation Criteria
• Savings realized by students
• Student learning outcomes comparable to or better than previous outcomes
• Faculty success in identifying and incorporating OER materials
• Faculty satisfaction with support and services
• Student satisfaction with the course materials

Preliminary Outcomes
Test scores in OER courses have been comparable to those in previous years. Student and faculty attitudes about the use of OER have been very positive.

Future Plans
Phase II will support 15 UNH OER Ambassadors with a three-day workshop and $2000 summer grant. The event will include colleagues from Granite State College, Keene State College, and Plymouth State University. 2016-2017 OER Ambassadors were selected March 2016.

Estimated student savings: $148,900 for 6 courses taught in fall 2015.

More information: https://www.unh.edu/it/oer