Open Educational Resources: Moving from Pilot to Program

Eleta Exline, Daniel Carchidi, Catherine Overson, Scott Kimball, Jen Carroll

University of New Hampshire, Durham

PRESENTED AT:
OER AMBASSADORS PILOT 2015

In spring 2015 we launched a pilot initiative to encourage faculty adoption of Open Educational Resources. Nine “OER Ambassadors” were selected. Participants received a $3000 "mini grant" for work over the summer.

Goals

1. Support and evaluate the use of OER in a variety of courses.
2. Maximize student learning outcomes while reducing costs for students.
3. Establish a teaching cohort committed to improving student learning and eager to share their experiences.

Support Teams

UNH OER Ambassadors are assigned support teams that include a librarian, instructional designer, and assessment coordinator (Figure 3). Ambassadors and Team members attend monthly group meetings to share progress and ideas.

Outcomes

Test scores were comparable to those in previous years. Student and faculty attitudes about the use of OER were very positive. For examples, most students would choose to take an OER course again based on the quality of materials in their pilot course (Figure 1).

Estimated Cost Savings $149,205 for 6 courses in one semester.

OER Pilot Program, Fall 2015 Final Report (https://scholars.unh.edu/oer/1)
From OER to OpenEd

Based on the success of the UNH Pilot in 2016 we received a $385,350 grant from the University System of New Hampshire to support the growth of Open Education (defined as OER, Open Pedagogy, and Open Access) at Granite State College, Keene State College, Plymouth State University, and UNH.

Decline in Cost Savings

As part of this expanded program, the annual 3-day Academic Technology Institute (ATI) serves as an orientation for 45 new Ambassadors selected from among the four USNH institutions. Over time the focus of ATI has shifted toward Open Pedagogy and away from OER adoption, which conflicts with UNH's cost-saving goals around Open Education. Both the average class size and cost savings per student have decreased markedly since the 2015 pilot, although there may be other factors in play (Figure 2).

Assessing for Action

The concerning results of the expanded OER program, at least from a cost savings perspective, have prompted us to investigate new ways of supporting UNH faculty in adopting OER. To that end we increased our collaboration and outreach efforts, conducted a survey of UNH faculty, and engaged in strategic planning in order to reset our direction.
VISION STATEMENT FOR OER

OER adoption and creation will be normal at UNH when:

1. Faculty, students, and academic leaders:
   - are aware that OER can have a positive impact on student learning outcomes
   - support the idea that OER can save students money on course materials
   - see OER as an opportunity that includes Open Access Publishing and Pedagogy

2. Operating Funds and an active community are in place to support adoption, creation and usage of OER

[VIDEO] https://www.youtube.com/embed/ya7aW8BRPTM?feature=oembed&fs=1&modestbranding=1&rel=0&showinfo=0

UNH OER Ambassdors Program (https://www.unh.edu/it/oer)
DATA COLLECTION AND OUTREACH

Support needed to adopt OER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of support</th>
<th>Percent Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance finding content</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training opportunities</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipend/Incentive</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Support needed to adopt OER

Reaching Out

The OER Working Group met with representatives of Undergraduate and Graduate Student Senates, held a graduate student workshop, and met with campus groups that support students. We've also presented to the Faculty Senate and conducted a survey on faculty perceptions about OER. In addition to regularly "reporting up" about the successes and challenges of the OER program to campus administrators, we invited their participation in our 2017 strategic planning sessions.

Spreading the Message

To spread our message more widely we produced a promotional video (center panel), hosted campus speakers, and attended many student and faculty events. Our faculty OER Ambassadors also spoke about their experiences with Open Ed in academic department meetings and campus events.

Faculty Survey Findings

The survey was conducted by email in March 2017. 437 faculty members responded to the survey, yielding a response rate of 23%

- 79% of instructional faculty are solely responsible for selecting course materials.
- 72% use printed textbooks for their courses
- 95% consider cost to students when selecting materials.
- About half are aware of OER options, but many have difficulty finding materials and have concerns about quality.
- To adopt OER, faculty most need search help, training, and technical support (Figure 3).

OER Survey Report (https://scholars.unh.edu/oer/5)
NEW STRATEGIES

Figure 4: How much did you spend on textbooks?

Online Help
Our survey results (46% of respondents) indicated that a self-paced course would be a helpful way to receive OER training. We developed an open online course covering the basics of OER and open licensing. OER Online Course (https://mycourses.unh.edu/courses/27454) To further address help with finding content we expanded our OER Research Guide (https://libraryguides.unh.edu/oer) with (https://mycourses.unh.edu/courses/27454) resources covering UNH curriculum subject areas.

Workshop Series

Of faculty surveyed, 45% were in favor of workshop training in OER. We developed a 3 session workshop series and certificate program that covers searching for OER, open licensing, tools for creating OER, and course integration of online materials. These workshops have built-in time for discussion, hands-on practice, and technical assistance. Workshop Description (https://www.unh.edu/sites/default/files/departments/center_for_excellence_and_innovation_in_teaching_learning/ceitl_certificate_of_participation_info.pdf)

Inclusion Matters

While we've always tied our OER initiative to student success, UNH's emphasis on diversity and inclusion initiatives opens opportunities to view OER adoption through a new frame. First-generation college students and financially precarious students are disadvantaged by the use of high-cost texts. With OER, all students start with the same course materials on the first day of class. The use of a variety of OER sources to replace the authoritative voice of textbooks introduces opportunities to include a diversity of perspectives into the classroom, including marginalized voices.

Emphasis on Impact

As a result of our strategic planning, data gathering, course assessments, observation of trends, and continued work training and supporting faculty OER adopters, we propose realigning our OER initiative toward large-enrollment courses and department-based projects instead of smaller, individual projects. Focusing on a smaller number of projects involving multiple faculty and potentially thousands of students would allow us to provide greater student cost savings at sustainable levels of effort. The approach could be effective in large introductory courses in Math, Biology, Psychology, Sociology, Business, and Chemistry, for which there are multiple OER options.
AUTHOR INFORMATION

Eleta Exline

Scholarly Communication Librarian and Associate Professor

University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
ABSTRACT

Our OER program provides funding and support to faculty transforming their teaching using open educational resources. In this session we’ll discuss the partnerships we’ve developed across campus, how we gathered support, working with faculty on OER adoption and assessment, student cost-savings and outcomes, challenges, expansion of the program to the state university system, and our plans for building on our failures and successes. We’ll highlight how we are building capacity for sustaining our program long-term, including launching a workshop series, creating an online course, including more students and students advocate perspectives, and aligning our efforts with diversity and inclusion initiatives.
REFERENCES

Project Reports
Keirns, Tracy and McKinley, Sean P., "The University of New Hampshire Open Educational Resources Survey" (2017). Open Educational Resources. 5.
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Overson, Catherine, "Open Educational Resources (OER) Pilot Program, Fall 2015 Final Report" (2016). Open Educational Resources. 1.
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Overson, Catherine and Day, Melissa, "Open Educational Resources (OER) Project, Fall 2016 Final Dissemination Assessment Report" (2017). Open Educational Resources. 3.
https://scholars.unh.edu/oer/3

Websites
Academic Technology Institute @ USNH (https://at.usnh.edu/academic-technology-institute)

UNH OER Ambassadors Program (https://www.unh.edu/it/oer)

UNH OER Open Online Course (https://mycourses.unh.edu/courses/27454)

UNH OER Research Guide (https://libraryguides.unh.edu/oer)