

Open Educational Resources offer an affordable solution to the growing cost of course materials

OVERVIEW

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use. OERs include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, homework sets, software and any other tools, materials or techniques that help get educational materials into the hands of students. In 2017 the Legislature passed SB 810 providing funding to initiate an OER program administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The program provides grant money to help faculty develop content and maintain a works repository.

THE CHALLENGE

Textbooks are expensive and paying for these resources is a significant challenge for students. Many individuals, especially those from low income families, simply cannot afford to buy every textbook required for their classes. Since 2016 UTSA has supported faculty creating and utilizing OER materials by leveraging institutional funding and resources. There is great potential for further OER growth at UTSA, but resources are limited. Additional support from the State would help offset some of the expenses involved in the production and storage of OER content. Once more, additional OER professional development training for faculty and staff—provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board—would go a long way toward further adoption and use of these free materials.

THE IMPACT

To date, UTSA Libraries' Open Educational Resources Program has improved access to textbooks for all students. The UTSA Libraries incentivizes UTSA faculty to adopt free or low-cost books for their courses by offering OER grants. This strategy has shown tangible results. Since UTSA started its OER program in 2016, it has realized **OVER \$10 MILLION** in savings for students. Just as important, satisfaction rates among faculty and students using OER materials remains high (>90% highly satisfied or satisfied).



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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\$10M

Student Savings Since 2016

>90%

Satisfaction Rate with OER materials



PROGRAM FINANCIAL IMPACT

Year	Grants Awarded	Investment	Student Savings	Return on Investment
2016	5	\$7,500	\$376,000	\$50
2017	24	\$49,000	\$4,438,000	\$88
2018	18	\$32,000	\$1,700,000	\$53
2019	21	\$27,000	\$985,172	\$36
2020	29	\$31,500	\$791,316	\$25
2021	31	\$35,000	\$2,106,482	\$60
2022	13	\$25,000	\$205,583	\$24
Totals	138	\$207,000	\$10,602,553	\$48



TAKEAWAY

Higher faculty adoption of OERs translates into a more affordable educational experience for students, particularly those from low-income households. Continued support for this program helps to retain students, enhance learning, help faculty integrate new resources into their lessons, and expand access to key course materials.