

Exploring Open Educational Resources Attitudes in Mathematics



Ashley Morrison, Tocker Open Education Librarian
Lydia Fletcher, Physical & Mathematical Sciences Librarian
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Concept

Prioritize OER outreach on a large campus by focusing on a department for one semester, tailoring a contact plan to meet goals & objectives specific to that department.



Identify ideal
department with
liaison feedback



Develop action
plan for outreach
with liaison

Department Selection Criteria



Large faculty with high level of engagement



Some high enrollment, introductory level courses



Some OER adoption or authorship within the department already



Preferred: faculty OER champions, engaged contacts in multiple roles / levels

Elements of Action Plan



Pilot Project Goals & Activities

Goals

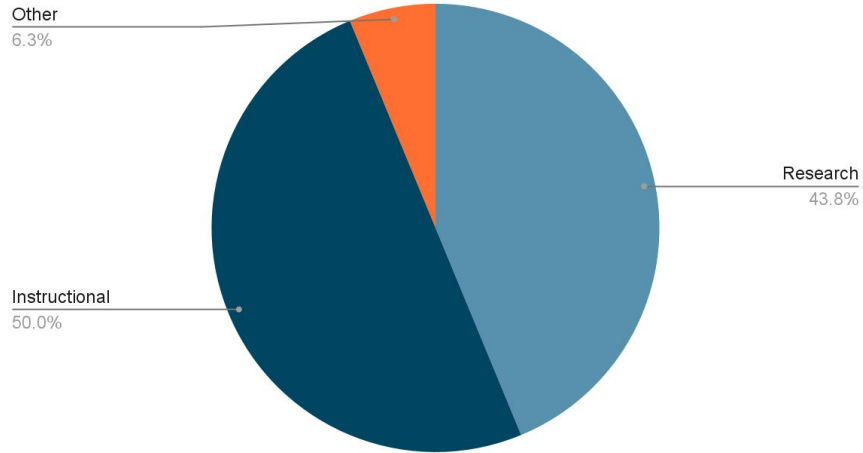
- Gauge current interest in and activities relating to OER within the department
- Encourage adoption of OER materials
- Encourage sharing already existing materials as OER

Activities

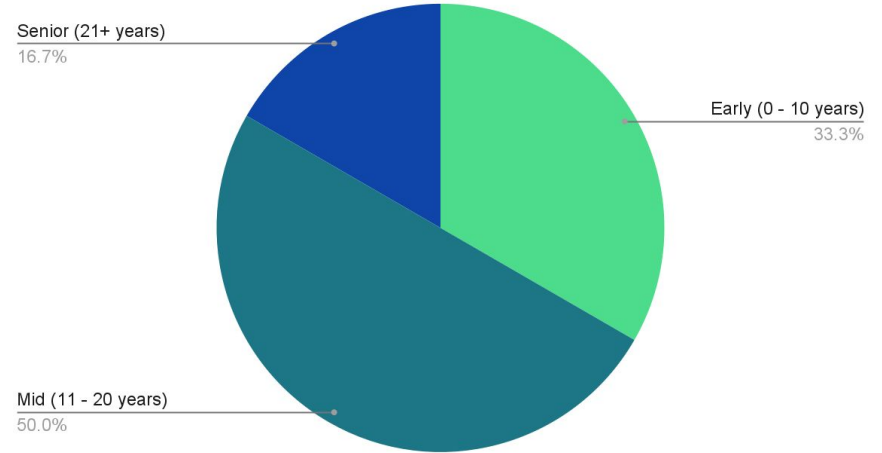
- Presentation on OER, including how to license works faculty made during the pandemic, to faculty
- One-on-one interviews with faculty on their awareness, adoption, and views of OER
- Compiling lists of relevant OER to interested faculty

Interviewee Demographics

Faculty Type



Career Level



$n = 16$

Motivations for OER Consideration & Adoption

- Cost-consciousness
- Value of openness in education
- Lack of quality commercial alternatives

“Cost was 70% of the motivation, the other 30% is because I wasn’t happy with the textbooks I used previously.”

“For students in this class, it’s the last or only math class they’ll take at college, so why should they have to buy a book?”

“I don’t think we should be putting extra costs on top of tuition for books, especially for something... that is so easy to find on the internet.”

Barriers to OER Consideration or Adoption

- Lack of time to review or consider new material
- Inertia
- Sense of tradition or nostalgia
- Perceived prestige of certain materials / authors
- Availability of high quality practice problems / homework questions

“It’s very easy to teach from Stewart forever if you know it well.”

“Sometimes you get a textbook just for the problems they include.”

Incentives for OER Consideration & Adoption

- Perceptions & preferences differ between research & instructional faculty
- Research faculty rely on intrinsic motivation for adoption & creation, mostly unmoved by external incentives
- Instructional faculty advocate for greater recognition of OER activities in promotion consideration
- Monetary compensation for creation activities would be motivating
- Some would prefer course release time

“[If you] throw money and course releases at anyone, they’re going to think about it.”

“Things should be free for students, but creators and reviewers need to be compensated.”

Other Insights

- No one who used OER worked with a librarian to find OER, but most were excited to know that librarians could work with them
 - Ended up working with 5 instructors to explore OER and other low-cost/no-cost alternatives for the instructors to choose from for their classes
- Many faculty conflated Open Access and “free” resources (e.g. faculty websites without any license; PDFs/eBooks provided by the Libraries) with OER
- Generally, many faculty were “neutral” about open vs. commercial materials; just wanted “the best” materials that aligned with their approach to teaching the content regardless of cost (though they would prefer free if all other factors were equal)

“Stewart [calculus] textbook is fine but not great for the price. Would rather have something free of equal quality.”

Conclusions & Next Steps

Conclusions

- Instructional faculty (without high research expectations) are more likely to adopt OER
- Math faculty are open to considering OER but lack awareness of how to find it
- Having a faculty champion for OER is very helpful

Next Steps

- Continue interviews from referrals in the fall
- Review OER adoption for engaged faculty next year
- Follow up with faculty creators who have not utilized open licenses
- Explore how to measure impact data/metrics – helping faculty assemble their stats to add to their annual activity report (similar to traditional bibliometrics)

Questions?



Contact information:

- Ashley Morrison, Tocker Open Education Librarian | ashley.morrison@austin.utexas.edu
- Lydia Fletcher, Physical & Mathematical Sciences Librarian | l.fletcher@austin.utexas.edu