

A Quick Guide to Open Educational Resources (OERs)

What are OERs?



FREELY AVAILABLE

Most are legal to copy, adapt, and redistribute semester after semester.



OPEN

"Open" means openly licensed, indicating they are in the public domain or the copyright holder has abridged rights to eliminate barriers to access/use/derivative works.



CC LICENSED

Often contain a Creative Commons license. Check each resource for use rights.

creativecommons.org/licenses

Why are OERs and other types of affordable content important?



Course materials are freely available on the
FIRST DAY OF CLASS



INCREASES
in retention, completion, and grade point averages



COST SAVINGS
Students spend an average of \$1,200 on textbooks per year. Use of OERs reduces this out-of-pocket expense.



Increases opportunities for creativity, collaboration, and
INNOVATIVE TEACHING

Affordable content beyond OERs



LIBRARY SUBSCRIBED RESOURCES



OPEN ACCESS CONTENT

such as ScholarWorks at UMass Boston
scholarworks.umb.edu

Open options for instruction



REPLACE
a high-cost textbook with a free textbook

REVISE
existing OER to meet current needs



CREATE
new course materials

DEVELOP
course templates based on OERs to facilitate use of open resources in an LMS



PUBLISH
an open textbook

USE
library resources in place of a textbook



We're here to help!



Consult with UMass Boston staff experts: open@umb.edu

Visit our OER portal: open.umb.edu



Open Educational Resources (OERs): The Basics

What are Open Educational Resources?

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are teaching and learning materials that you may freely use and reuse, without charge. That means they have been authored or created by an individual or organization that chooses to retain few, if any, ownership rights. For some of these resources, that means you can download the resource and share it with colleagues and students. For others, it may be that you can download a resource, edit it in some way, and then re-post it as a remixed work. OERs often have a Creative Commons license that states specifically how the material may be used, reused, adapted, and shared.

What are the potential benefits of both using and creating OERs?

- Improving student performance and satisfaction
- Increasing access to educational materials for a wider range of learners, predominantly those underserved by traditional educational opportunities
- Creating community around critical reflection on and discussion of educational resources
- Helping students and institutions save money

What are some examples of OERs?

- Modules or other learning activities that provide insight and analysis on a particular subject, problem, question, or concept
- Lesson plans and syllabi
- Complete peer-reviewed electronic textbooks that replace traditional texts
- Full university courses, which might include course readings, media, lectures, assignments, problem sets, sample work, and even lecture notes
- Software and tools that support the creation, delivery, use, and improvement of open learning content, including searching and organization of content, content and learning management systems, content development tools, and online learning communities

UMass Boston is here to help!

Locating OER and library-licensed resources, understanding open licenses, and navigating OER repositories can be time-consuming. We're available to review your needs and help you find suitable open resources.

For consultation with staff experts at UMass Boston, contact:

open@umb.edu

For information on publishing to ScholarWorks, UMass Boston's open access institutional repository, contact:

ScholarWorks@umb.edu

Explore OERs:

open.umb.edu

(Maintained by the UMass Boston Learning Design Team)