TeachTech Research Cohort
Affordable/OER Course Materials Initiative

Project Facilitators:

Angela Lucero: Scholarly Communication Librarian
Steven T. Varela; Associate Director
TeachTech Research Cohort: Affordable/OER Course Materials Initiative

Since the signing of Texas’ Senate Bill 810 in 2017, the pressure has been on statewide organizations to hasten the development and support of Open Educational Resources (OER) in colleges and universities. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s 60x30 Texas Initiative, for example, has established an Open Educational Resources Grant Program to encourage faculty to turn to OER. This could mean as little as replacing a course’s textbook with an OER option to as much as designing degree pathways which use only OER course material (a practice which Achieving the Dream’s OER Degree Initiative has demonstrated leads to improved student outcomes, including success and degree completion).

The UTEP Library and Technology Support Services seek faculty at all levels (tenured, tenure-track, and adjunct) to work with Creative Studios and UTEP Librarians to identify, discover/curate, create, support and evaluate OER or other affordable instructional materials to be used in a variety of UTEP courses. Up to 12 faculty will be selected to transform their courses by replacing commercial instructional resources, including textbooks, with OER or affordable instructional materials—either curated or created—to maximize student learning outcomes while reducing or eliminating the cost of these materials for students.

Large enrollment and gateway courses from diverse departments will be given priority, but the review committee will also consider creative projects in which faculty use OER or UTEP Library resources to improve the quality of the student learning experience while lowering student costs. We also hope to establish and recognize faculty who are committed to improving the student learning experience through the use of OER and who were eager to share their experiences with colleagues and peers throughout the university.

To incentivize faculty to transform their courses and teaching strategies, and for the time and support required, we will provide up to $3,000 in available funds for technology and/or conference travel purchases for faculty to further enhance their teaching, learning, and research.

Goals of TeachTech OER Initiative:

- Making course materials more affordable for students;
- Ensuring students have access to course materials on the first day of class;
- Increasing student engagement with course materials;
- Supporting open pedagogy (e.g., faculty collaboration, peer review, resource sharing, iterative curriculum improvement);
- Decreasing reliance on commercial publishers;
- Providing materials that can be localized to meet learners’ needs;
- Providing materials that can better help to meet accessibility requirements at the institution;
• Providing materials that can be tracked and analyzed for effectiveness in achieving content and mastery knowledge in a course.

Application Process:

Participants must submit their application via an online form. Indication that the proposer’s department chair and school/college dean support his/her application may be required.

A committee consisting of representatives from UTEP faculty, UTEP Librarians, and Creative Studios/Technology Support staff will review the proposals.

Selection Criteria/Rubric will be based on (see attachment for full rubric):

• Potential cost savings to students and institution;
• Transformation of course through affordable or OER materials/clarity of goals;
• Feasibility (availability of affordable or OER materials and/or sustainability);
• Clarity of plan for evaluating student success and data collection.

Additional Selection Criteria to consider:

• Availability of instructor to participate in the entire project (Fall 2019 – Fall 2020) and to commit to share findings of his/her experience throughout the TeachTech Research Cohort participation period)
• Representation across schools and colleges
• Demonstrated support from Department Chair and Dean

Selection preference will be given to projects that utilize or create the most open materials, incorporate OER transformatively, that have the greatest impact, and may foster collaboration and interdisciplinary connections (going beyond textbook or adaptive courseware adoption).

Library/Instructional Technology Support:

A team consisting of select librarians from the UTEP Library and Creative Studios staff in Technology Support Services will facilitate the planning, implementation, and assessment of courses created by the faculty participating in the TeachTech OER Initiative.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Roles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela Lucero and Steve Varela</td>
<td>TeachTech facilitators/leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Studios</td>
<td>Multimedia and digital interaction development, graphics, icons, cinemagraphs, student engagement design and artifacts, and customization for course content and course shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Varela and Center for Faculty Leadership and Development</td>
<td>Pedagogy consultation, Assessment/Learning outcomes, Promotion of OER with CFLD, facilitating presentations/workshops to share cohort experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angela Lucero and UTEP Librarians</td>
<td>Discovery and curation of academic materials/articles, creating Research, advise on/facilitate deployment of course materials to students, adding newly created or modified OER to UTEP’s institutional repository, profile + promote participant’s work in “Textbook Hero” series</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bb Central</td>
<td>OER LTIs, adaptive courseware integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angela Lucero, Steve Varela, and Jessica Duran</td>
<td>Copyright, Creative Commons Licenses</td>
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Deliverables:

Selected TeachTech participants agree to the following:

- Transform a F2F or Hybrid class.
- Costs to students for materials in the participants’ courses must be $0 (or substantially reduced).
- Attend “check-in/lunch and learn” meetings as established by TeachTech facilitators.
- Give permission for the UTEP Library to deposit educational resources resulting from TeachTech into Digital Commons, UTEP’s institutional repository.
- Educational resources resulting from TeachTech must be licensed under an open license, such as the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license. Resources may not be licensed with a Creative Commons No Derivatives clause.
- Share data that assists in measuring the impact of the project.
- Assist with data collection in courses where open education project is implemented.
- Present and submit a final project report evaluating the challenges and accomplishments of the project and its impact on student performance.
- Share results on campus through workshops and presentations hosted by Technology Support Services, UTEP Library, and/or Center for Faculty Leadership and Development

Assessment:

Upon completion of courses, collected data will be analyzed to describe impact to:

- Cost savings realized by students enrolled in the course that adopted affordable or OER resources;
- Student learning outcomes for the OER courses being comparable to or better than previous outcomes (grades, retention);
- Faculty success in identifying and incorporating affordable and/or OER materials;
- Faculty satisfaction with the support and services offered through the Affordability pilot (through survey and focus group);
- Student satisfaction with the affordable and/or OER course/modules materials (survey, course evaluation and focus group).

Learn more about instructional material affordability and OER: [http://libguides.utep.edu/oer](http://libguides.utep.edu/oer)

Find OER materials using the tools: [http://libguides.utep.edu/oer/find](http://libguides.utep.edu/oer/find)