Central Washington University’s OER and No-cost Textbook Initiative: Pathways to Affordable Course Materials

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CWU snapshot

- Geographically Central
- Approximately 2,000 graduates each year
- Enrollment numbers: 12,342
- On-campus residents: 2,800
- Male/female ratio: 47.22%/52.78%
- Students of color: 35%
Institutional Values

• Small classes
• Affordability & accessibility
• However, our data on textbook costs does not align!
  • Second highest textbook cost of the State of Washington public universities*

The Story so far

- Washington Educational Council Grant allowed us to get 26 General Education courses OER in 2019
- Growing momentum on affordability issue in campus conversation
- Affordable Course Materials a feature of the developing strategic plan for the University and the Libraries
Building Awareness, addressing concerns

- Discussion of OERs as an administration priority caused concerns to surface about the quality of materials and faculty autonomy
- The statistics for textbook costs made impact
- Used opportunities to speak with Faculty Senate and an workshop during Open Education Week
- Presented a layered approach to moving towards OERs
Washington Student Achievement Council
OER Pilot Grant

• 26 Gen Ed Courses Changed to OER
• Between $358,000 and $602,000 saved by students in the first year
• More than 5,000 students reached
• Materials Used:
  • OER textbooks
  • Professional websites
  • Scholarly articles
  • Videos
Specific Example 1: World Regional Geography

• Three Open Textbooks
  • Chapters other than China:
    • http://caitiefinlayson.com/WRGTextbook.pdf

• China chapter:
  • https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-worldgeography/chapter/10-2-emerging-china/
  • https://courses.lumenlearning.com/atd-westhillscc-geography/chapter/the-realm-regions-4/
Specific Example 2: Epidemiology

• Most up-to-date information
  • Centers for Disease Control
    • https://stacks.cdc.gov/browse/collections
Specific Example 3: Social Demography

• RAND
  • www.rand.org

• World Bank
  • www.worldbank.org
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<th>Health &amp; Well-being</th>
<th>Civic &amp; Community Engagement</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
<th>Perspectives on Current Issues</th>
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Going forward

• Reserve program beginning Fall 2020 for high-enrollment courses
  • COVID-19 update: prioritize eBooks

• Explore robust, low-flat-fee textbook rental programs

• Open Educational Resources
  • Cohort One testimony
  • Faculty Advisory Group
  • Cohort Two courses launch in Fall 2020; faculty realizing they can piggyback their work on transferring to online teaching
Questions?