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Title V Year 5 OER Courses Student Satisfaction Survey

College of the Canyons

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Institutional Research, Planning, and
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Introduction

As part of the Title V grant evaluation, the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness conducted a survey of students using Open Education Resources (OER) which were developed with grant funding. OER are learning tools (e.g. textbooks, articles etc.) that are free to use and share, as long as credit to the author is given. This brief is an update in year 5 of the grant whereas RB# 158 provided the results of OER satisfaction surveys in courses for which OER was developed in year 3 of the grant.

The research question guiding these analyses consisted of understanding and assessing student satisfaction with OER materials that were developed for specific courses identified as those with high Latinx student enrollment (Saxena, Meuschke, & Gribbons, 2017). These courses were part of the Title V grant’s year three activity objective under component 2: Build comprehensive student services and programs to facilitate student success. Three courses for which OER materials were developed in Year 4 were surveyed and two courses for which materials were updated were surveyed. Online surveys via Survey Monkey were administered toward the end of spring 2019, term in which students used OER materials in the specified courses.

A total of 113 responses out of possible 2,112 were received. There was a 5% response rate overall, and the response rate within each course was between 4% and 6%.

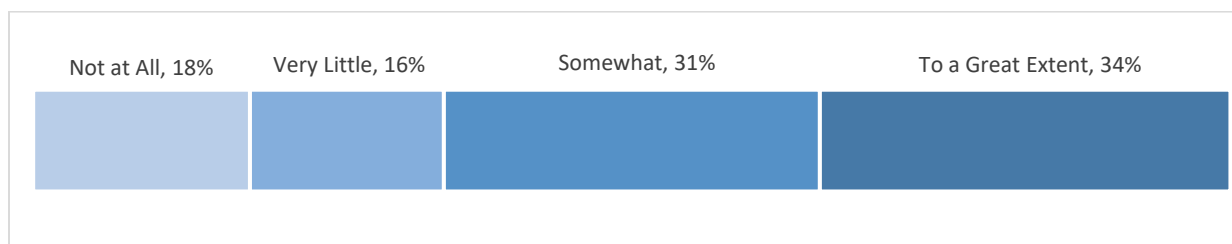
Research Results

Table 1. Title V OER Courses Surveyed

Course	Course Information	OER Content Year 5	Enrolled (N)	Responses	Response Rate
ANTHRO-101	Physical Anthropology	Developed	71	3	4%
COMS-105	Fund. of Public Speaking	Revised	800	41	5%
HLHSCI-100	Health Education	Developed	614	33	5%
MATH-140	OLI (Concepts in Statistics)	Developed	434	24	6%
PSYCH-101	Intro to Psychology	Revised	193	12	6%
Total			2,112	113	5%

Students were asked in general about how much the cost of textbooks influences enrollment in courses. Most respondents indicated that the influence was “somewhat” (37%), followed by “to a great extent” (30%) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. “How much does cost of textbooks influence course enrollment?” (N=105)



Additionally, students were asked about factors that influenced their course selection process. The top 3 commonly selected factors were “time of day”, followed by “instructor reputation” and “location”. Cost of textbook ranked 4th among the factors that influence course selection (see Table 2).

Table 2. “Factors that influence enrollment in courses. Mark all that apply.”

	N
Time of Day	93
Instructor Reputation	69
Location	63
Cost of Textbook	48
Other: All of the above	2
Other: And if I need that class depending on my major	1
Other: Availability/Necessity of Class	1
Other: Classroom availability	1
Other: Cost of units	1
Other: I was told I needed to do that class to move on with my life.	1
Other: If they will contribute to my transfer and if they are honors classes.	1
Other: Instructor’s teaching methods	1
Other: Necessity	1
Other: Required course	1
Other: Requirements such as required classes for IGETC.	1

Students were also asked what they do when the cost of the textbook for a particular course is expensive. Most students indicated that they ‘rent the textbook’ (N=73) followed by ‘borrow textbook from friends’ and ‘use the book on reserve’ (see Table 3).

Table 3. “Please indicate what you do when the cost of textbook is expensive. Mark all that apply.”

	N
Rent textbook	73
Borrow from friends	46
Use copy on reserve	31
Still buy textbook	28
Delay Enrollment	24
Other: Look for less expensive other options online	5
Other: Download PDF online	2
Other: Complain about costs	2
Other: Find a cheaper option from other sources	1
Other: Look to see if there is an OER section for that course	1

Another question about students’ experience with textbook purchases was related to whether students had enrolled in courses and did not purchase the required textbook. Fifty-three students indicated that they did so (47%), and most expressed that they were ‘very much concerned’ or ‘concerned’ (N=37) about it affecting their grades in the course (see Table 4). Those who indicated that they did not forgo purchasing a textbook were not given the follow-up question about concern level (“Please indicate how concerned you were that your grades would be affected by not having the textbook.”).

Table 4. Not Purchasing a Book for a Course by Concern Level that it would Affect Grade

		Not at All Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Concerned	Very Much Concerned	Total
Have you ever not purchased a textbook for a course in which a textbook was required?	Yes	8 (15%)	8 (15%)	16 (30%)	21 (40%)	53

Overall satisfaction with OER materials used in the specified courses was high with 77% of the students indicating either ‘very satisfied’ (N=58) or ‘satisfied’ (N=29). Disaggregated by course, MATH-140 had the most number of students who were neither very satisfied nor satisfied.

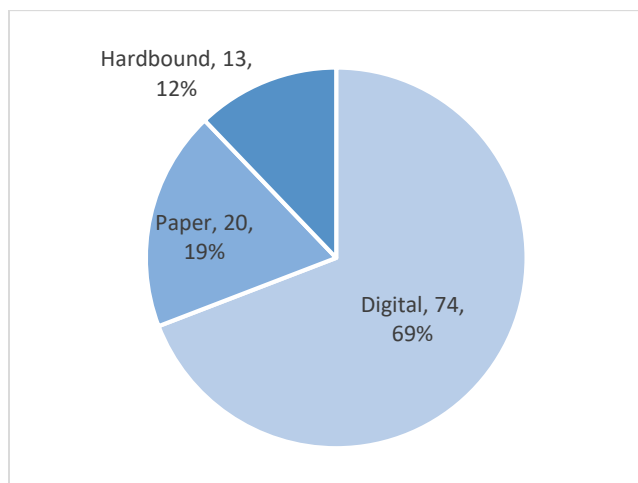
Table 5. Satisfaction with the Use of OER in Your Class

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Total
ANTHRO-101	-	-	1	1	1	3*
COMS-105	2 (5%)	-	4 (10%)	11(27%)	24 (59%)	41
HLHSCI-100	2 (6%)	-	2 (6%)	6 (18%)	23 (70%)	33
MATH-140	6 (25%)	5(21%)	3 (12%)	7(29%)	3(12%)	24
PSYCH-101	-	-	1 (8%)	4 (33%)	7 (58%)	12
Total	10 (9%)	5 (4%)	11 (10%)	29 (26%)	58 (51%)	113

*Rates are not calculated for courses with less than 10 respondents.

Most students’ preferred format for OER was in digital form, followed by paper/hardbound (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Preferred Format for OER (N=107)



To assess the comparison of OER materials to textbooks provided by publishers, students were asked about their agreement level with whether OER materials were comparable to traditional textbooks. Most indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed (89%) (see Table 6).

Table 6. Agreement Level with "Academic value of OER is comparable to resources provided by textbook publishers"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
ANTHRO-101	-	-	1	-	2	3*
COMS-105	1 (2%)	-	4 (10%)	14 (34%)	22 (61%)	41
HLHSCI-100	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	8 (24%)	20 (13%)	33
MATH-140	2 (8%)	4 (17%)	7 (29%)	8 (33%)	3 (13%)	24
PSYCH-101	-	-	3 (25%)	2 (17%)	7(58%)	12
Total	5 (4%)	5 (4%)	17 (15%)	32 (28%)	54 (48%)	113

*Rates are not calculated for courses with less than 10 respondents.

In an open-ended follow-up question, students were asked to elaborate on their responses to the question on the academic value of OER. The comments were positive and students indicated that the OER text was comparable or equivalent to the content in textbooks by publishers. There were a total of 80 statements related to the comparison of traditional textbooks and OER materials. Suggestions for improvement with OER were also provided with 9 of the 14 suggestions being associated with the MATH-140. A list of all of the open-ended responses are provided in Appendix A and a list of the suggestions provided are provided in Appendix B.

A question on barriers faced in using OER was also included. Most students indicated that they did not face barriers (90%) and those who indicated a barrier (8 students), they ranged from needing a text in print, not enough study materials (e.g. quizzes) and other technical issues in reading the digital form.

Comments/Suggestions

At the end of the survey, students were asked to provide additional comments/suggestions about the overall use of OER in the classroom. A total of 28 responses were provided. The comments comprised specific suggestions and positive assessments of OER. Below are the responses.

Suggestions: Content

- “Ask critical thinking questions between major content shifts. Have a higher standard for cohesiveness of material.”
- “Give examples or practice problems.”
- “Improve the actual text, and cut back on the quizzes.”
- “More text cues”
- “The content and the tests/quizzes had no correlation, so reevaluating content would be my suggestion.”
- “There were too many quizzes involved with the textbook. It was overwhelming, and I did not like the format of having to learn at home.”
- “There’s lots of good information in the OER but there’s a good chunk of it that can be irrelevant to what’s needed for studying.”

Suggestions: Formatting/Technical

- “Better interfaces.”
- “Correct grammar and spelling.”
- “Having viewing options, such as iBook format, in which you can flip pages.”

- “I think it works the way it is. Maybe not make every chapter start with the page "1," but instead keep the number of pages consecutive.”
- “It would be helpful if the chapters within the book were working the same section. Sometimes I found myself searching for material that was at the bottom of the page while the rest of the chapter and activities were at the top. That would make navigating the book a lot easier.”
- “Make it easily accessible through canvas.”
- “Make it easy to navigate and provide a physical copy
- “Maybe an interactive textbook. Like quizzes within the textbook.”
- Quicker grading, more interactive with students.
- “Redo the chapters based solely on organization.”
- “There were a few technical errors with the OLI quizzes and checkpoints. However, I reported those to the instructor.”

Positive Assessments

- “Don’t have any [SUGGESTIONS]. Just continue giving us an option of have digital format instead of purchasing a high prices textbook.”
- “Professor [NAME] teaching style in addition to the OER were a winning combination.”
- “This is an effective resource for a professor who does not need strong structure.”
- “Using the OER is easy and you can always have it on hand.... but the teacher help a lot because [PRONOUN] gives us handouts according to the chapters in paper and we review it in class so it was very helpful too...”

Recommendations

Upon review of the OER student-satisfaction survey results, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- Consider incorporating suggestions to the OER textbooks particularly in courses that were surveyed.
 - Consider providing faculty with information on providing OER in print to students who prefer it.

References

Saxena, P., Meuschke, D. M., & Gribbons, B. C. (2017). *Research Brief #158 Title V Year 3 OER Courses Student Satisfaction Survey*. Santa Clarita: College of the Canyons.

For more detailed information on this research brief, stop by the Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness office located in BONH-224, or contact Preeta Saxena, Senior Research Analyst at 661.362.3072, or Daylene Meuschke, Dean of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at 661.362.5329.

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Appendix A

Open-Ended Responses to the “academic value of OER in comparison to textbooks” by Course
ANTHRO-101
Concise and complete information, accurate information, and graphs and charts that were up to date
COMS-105
It is quite like other college textbooks I have read.
Teacher accurately derived many of the lectures from the textbooks, therefore being of an equivalent value to the textbook.
[OER is] Similar
It’s better
There is a lot of good information
The OER textbook gives information exactly or similar to other textbook publishers.
In my opinion OER books are at par if not better than published textbooks.
I believe the resources provided in both formats are equally as helpful. Although OER books are more accessible.
If I wasn’t told it was an OER, I would have thought it was any other textbook.
Excellent format. Easy to post. Only problem was that there were additional assignments from previous semester which was confusing.
I was able to access all of the information provided free of charge, and the amount of information provided really helped as much as a traditional textbook would have.
The information was relevant and thorough.
The OER is the better and easier to use than having a textbook.
Had what the class needed
The online resource has everything I need to do well in the class.
I think the content is great! The layout and graphic design needs some work.
Text goes over multiple relevant definitions and provides clear examples. Also provides sources for whatever is used from the outside.
OER is comparable to any info I independently sought as a supplement to Fundamentals of Public Speaking. Textbooks are cost prohibitive & sourcing info this way balanced out other textbook costs that aren't available through OER.
I found that OER had about the same amount of information provided as a textbook and much easier to understand too.
The information was relevant and specific to the information learned in the class.
Well put together, easy to follow and had great examples throughout.
Amazing book. Very easy to navigate!
I think it covered everything important for the class.
The OER textbook was very useful, especially when using it to study. The questions and the answers on the tests came right from the book.
This is my first experience with this kind of resource for school “textbooks” and I think it’s been pretty useful when I need it but I don’t always remember I have it since it’s online versus having the actual book
I like the OER texts better because they are more centered around the most important topics that are being taught in the class.
Easy to access, accessible anywhere I am, able to write notes
There was great knowledge in this textbook
HLHSCI-100
Served its purpose.
Same content
OER textbooks are comparable to resources by textbook publishers because it’s the same thing as regular books just online
Just as good.
It’s more convenient to the student

Open-Ended Responses to the “academic value of OER in comparison to textbooks” by Course
The OER was very valuable
all the information needed to succeed in the class was provided by OER
It’s cheaper and easier to access
Yes, it holds the same important information which is needed for the class.
It is the same thing. I find it more accessible
It’s free and has the same or better material
Everything I needed to know for the course was in the book
I read the material and it is comparable to other paper textbooks I’ve read
In my experience many online sources give the same information as regular textbooks.
Textbooks waste your time, OERs don’t
I think it’s even better than traditional books we have to purchase. Because some classes offer the OER books, I’m able to afford more classes. All of the books I’ve had to purchase basically go to waste when the class is over because I haven’t been able to sell any back.
Excellent
I’ve enjoyed using OER text in other classes but the content of this OER had absolutely no connection to tests or quizzes.
The information given by an open educational resource is comparable to a hard copy book. It provide the same amount of information if not straight given answer.
Gave us enough information.
MATH-140
I strongly agree because there are other affordable resources one can use other than just a very expensive text book.
They both equally have the same context.
Provides the same information
Makes it easier to have without caring heavy books and can do work anywhere
An OER is much, much cheaper than the textbooks... is accessible at any time and to the point. On the other hand it depends on the students... sometimes It feels more comfortable to read in an actual textbook... but you have to be carrying it around... but save money... I think for math 140 this OER was so much more helpful and understandable than the introductory statistics that other teachers suggest.
I actually found the OLI book to be more useful than traditional books. The information is straight to the point, and the explanations are very thorough.
It gives straight to the point information compared to textbooks.
Loved the book and resources. Thought they were easy to navigate and very helpful to work at my own pace and take quizzes afterwards.
PSYCH-101
It was like a copy of the text book basically
it's pretty useful
I found this resource to be just as effective as a normal classroom textbook
Not in this class but in another the chemistry book had some issues because it was confusing and didn’t cover some useful topics. This book was okay, it almost felt too approachable and friendly but I didn’t mind it.
Has all of the same information
I see no decrease in content quality from textbooks I have paid 100s of dollars from. Also the material is newer and more topical.
I don’t use other resources, so I cannot compare it to anything
it’s very efficient and cheap with good quality material

Appendix B

Suggestions by Course
ANTHRO-101
The first OER book could have been formatted better and did not go into explanation of definitions
COMS-105
The OER textbook supplied in this class was inaccurate, contained improper grammar, and contradicted itself on multiple occasions.
HLHSCI-100
The only reason it wasn't answered as "strongly agree" was due to the textbook's organization. Some chapters were better organized than others.
Though technically accurate, most OER materials suffer from a lack of conceptual continuity; they don't connect themes in a way that is conducive to higher learning. The format has no hallmarks of consistency from class to class. There're no exercises to apply read knowledge in a critical thinking capacity. All of these problems could be solved if there was a more rigorous criteria for submission of OER materials.
MATH-140
The actual textbook information was confusing and the many quizzes were not helpful. The text did not prepare me for them.
Material is too hard and I wish the source code was available so educators can edit as they wish.
Material not easy to read
I learn better with both text and on-line materials complimenting one another
Difficult to navigate
I found the online book to be a little u organized. I had a hard time finding some sections, but when I did, the information wasn't too helpful. I found myself having a hard time finding where some numbers were calculated
I prefer an actual textbook with examples and practice problems especially for math.
In my other classes, such as Sociology 101, they are valuable. As for Math 140, it was difficult since math is more difficult to understand. With a class like this, there is more absorption of information through a tangible textbook.
I feel that the OER can be more formatted to canvas
PSYCH-101
Sometimes OER have the same depth of content as paid textbooks, but sometimes the content is simplistic and lacking.