

Open Educational Resource Policies

The cost of textbooks can be a significant barrier to student success and learning. The goal of the University of Arkansas OER Course Materials Conversion Program is to encourage and support the use of open educational resources (OER) by U of A instructors to positively impact the learning and ease the burden of students.

OER Course Material Conversion Program

Faculty may apply for up to \$7,500 to create or adapt and implement OER in their courses.

Individuals, teams, and departments/programs may submit proposals describing a project to:

- Adapt OER by choosing an existing (or multiple existing) open educational resource and significantly remixing it to update the material or to fit the needs of the course. It is then expected that the adapted OER would be published under an appropriate open license for use by others. The OER would then be assigned to the specified course, thereby eliminating the need for students to purchase textbooks or other course materials.
- Create OER by designing an original project of at least 75% of the course content. The remainder can be adopted from existing openly published resources. The final product must be submitted as a complete textbook or collection of course materials that can be used to fully teach a course. Work product must be submitted in a format that can be printed in PDF format. It may also be created as an interactive online resource as well. The resource must eliminate the need for students to purchase traditional textbooks.

General Guidelines

Conditions of the Program

Awardees are expected to comply with several provisions designed to ensure the openness and availability of the funded project, as well as provide feedback to inform assessment of the grant initiative. Specific requirements are addressed in the agreed upon and signed project MOU. Generally, awardees agree to the following conditions:

- Application of an OER-compatible [Creative Commons](#) license to the final project (CC BY or CC BY-NC are preferred).
- Provide finalized product/s for deposit into the University of Arkansas’s digital repository, (including editable files) or a submission for publication and download through the University of Arkansas’s Pressbooks catalog.
- All materials created must meet [WCAG 2.0 accessibility guidelines](#).
- Submission of a project evaluation reflecting on the implementation of the resource(s), its impact on teaching, and student reception and interaction with the OER.
- Willingness to share experiences and findings with OER Team and peers.
- Submit a copy of any created work product to the University Libraries, if the faculty member departs from campus employment before the project is completed.
- No additional University compensation programs can be accessed to support this project. For example, participants cannot receive compensation for online course development and course material conversion for the same course at the same time. **Participants are welcome to apply for Global Campus’s Online Course Development Program after they complete the OER Course Materials Conversion Program.

Project Support

Librarians will help faculty search for open access materials, remix and adapt chosen textbooks, and navigate copyright inquiries. Instructional designers will support faculty in organizing developed or curated resources and assist in creating supplemental learning components/materials if needed. Global Campus Instructional Designers will also assist in checking materials for accessibility and compliance. To keep the project moving on time, regular meetings with the Open Education Librarian are required; additional meetings with the team and a member of the bookstore team may be recommended.

About the Funding

There are two models through which OER may be implemented for the OER Course Material Conversion Program:

- Adapt existing resources (such as by remixing or revising)
- Create new resources to fill a gap in suitable materials

Each model requires an investment of time and effort to identify materials and redesign the course to the new material. The OER Course Materials Conversion Program seeks to support and incentivize OER adaptation and creation through additional compensation to participating instructors.

Eligibility of Applicants and Projects

Eligible Applicants

University of Arkansas faculty of record (faculty, other full-time teaching positions, and adjuncts) are eligible for funding at the course and/or section level (i.e. could be all sections of a program of instruction, or just section/s under the applicant's control). Graduate teaching assistants can apply under the direction of faculty/staff. Awards range from \$4,500 to \$7,500 as determined by the mode (adapt, create) of the project. Previous awardees will be considered when they apply for other courses.

OER Course Materials Conversion Projects can be completed by individuals or by a cooperative group. In the case of a collaborative project, funds will be distributed among the project participants.

Activities Eligible for Funding

Funds may be used to complete the project outlined in selected proposals pursuant to the adaptation or creation and implementation of OER in a course that instructors are teaching or will soon teach. Funding may be used to recompense time invested to adapt or create OER, to hire graduate or undergraduate student assistants, to pay for copyediting, or other editorial or design support, equipment, or materials. Additional activities may be considered for funding upon request. The University Libraries does have access or subscriptions to publishing tools and resources to assist in some editorial work.

Projects will span up to five semesters (not including summer terms). One renewal may be allowed to complete the project, implement the OER in at least one section of a course, and complete the final report.

Funding cannot be used to cover the purchase of commercial electronic versions of textbooks, rentals of textbooks, or for already adopted open materials. No additional University compensation programs can be accomplished using this project. For example, participants cannot receive compensation for online course development and course material conversion for the same course at the same time. Participants are welcome to apply for Global Campus's Online Course Development Program after they complete the OER Course Materials Conversion Program.

Submission of Application

Interested faculty should follow these steps to be considered:

1. Complete the application form available on the UARK Library website and required supplemental materials and collect the appropriate chair, department head, or dean signatures.
2. Submit the completed and signed application the advertised due dates.
3. Submissions should be sent to oyer@uark.edu.
4. During the application review period, applicants may be interviewed by the OER Team and OER Campus Advisory Group members.

Selection Criteria

Selection of program participants will be based on the application's overall quality, alignment with selection criteria, and the feasibility of the completion timeline. Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Serve the greatest number of students
- Focus on a university, college, or departmental core course
- Will be used in multiple sections or classes
- Replace expensive course materials

If you're funded...

Disbursement

Upon acceptance, project members will be informed via email and provided with a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and an invitation to schedule a meeting to discuss the project with the goal that all parties understand expectations and commitments. Projects cannot be formally launched until the MOU is signed by project participants and a member of the OER Team.

OER Adaptation (\$4500) compensation will be disbursed in three phases:

1. \$1,000 upon submitting the remix project outline and project completion timeline
2. \$2,000 upon the delivery and publication of the final project (edited and formatted) and made available on an accessible open platform or format and published with a Creative Commons license

3. \$1,500 when the resource is adopted and used in one or more courses and a short summary reflecting on the implementation of the resource(s), its impact on teaching, and student reception and interaction with the OER

OER Creation (\$7500) compensation will be disbursed in three phases:

1. \$1,000 upon submitting the textbook outline and project completion timeline
2. \$ 3,500 upon the delivery and publication of the final project (edited and formatted) and made available on an accessible open platform or format and published with a Creative Commons license
3. \$3000 when the OER is implemented in the course(s) and a short summary reflecting on the implementation is submitted to the OER team

Other Projects

Special projects that have unique value to the University Arkansas community will be considered on an ad hoc basis by the Open Education Librarian in consultation with the OER Team. These projects may be funded at levels comparable to the Course Materials Conversion Project depending on the project's scope. With the approval of the OER Team, these projects will have access to the same support and resources as other OER projects.