

getting
started
with **OER**

Getting Buy-in with Faculty Champions

Ariana E. Santiago, OER Coordinator
Twitter: @aripants

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON** | LIBRARIES

Hi everyone,

My name is Ariana. I'm the OER Coordinator at the University of Houston, and I'm going to talk about getting buy-in from faculty by using people who are already on-board and supportive of OER, who we like to call "faculty champions."

Faculty buy-in is incredibly important, and from the beginning of when I started doing OER work, I heard the phrase "faculty listen to faculty." It can't be coming from just the library, or from just administration - you need faculty buy-in and support to be successful in seeing OER adoptions.

So today I'm going to share three specific examples of how we've showcased our "faculty champions": first a reception, then a presentation, and in reviewing our incentive program applications.

For a little bit of context, at UH we do have an OER grant program, which we call the Alternative Textbook Incentive Program, and that encourages instructors to replace commercial textbooks with open educational resources, or other freely available or library sponsored resources. We're near completing the first round of the incentive program and are in the process of reviewing applications for the second year.

Reception

- Celebrate incentive program award winners
- Opportunity to learn about OER
- Lightning-round presentations
- Building an OER community
- Identify more faculty champions



Images from [UJH Libraries Facebook](#)

The first example is a reception that was held last fall semester. The library hosted this event as a way to recognize and celebrate those who were awarded through the incentive program, and to provide an opportunity for others to learn about the program and OER.

It was a reception, so there was wine and cheese, snacks, mixing and mingling, so it was mostly informal. The way faculty champions were incorporated was that I asked five of the award-winners to do lightning-round presentations about how they used OER in their course. I asked everyone doing the lightning rounds to prepare just one powerpoint slide (if they wanted to) and to try to keep it within two minutes to talk about their project. They shared things like their reasons for participating, the benefits to their students, and how it impacts their teaching.

A huge benefit of doing this was that it started to form an OER community, partially because it was so early on in our program and this was the first time we got this many people in a room together talking about these things. I think the structure of the lightning rounds added a lot to this experience, because it allowed people to share their stories and learn about what others were doing. There were a lot of great conversations at the event and you could really see the excitement that people had about OER - and from a practical sense, it also helped me identify who was super enthusiastic about spreading the word and would also be faculty champions in the future.

Presentation

- Promote incentive program
- Share faculty experiences
 - First Year Writing
 - Accounting for Hospitality
- High attendance and interest
- 5 follow-up consultations
- 8 applications out of 25 resulted from presentation

Alternative Textbook Incentive Program: Faculty Insights

Ariana Santiago, Libraries
Nathan Shepley, Dept. of English
Arlene Ramirez, Hilton College
Agnes DeFranco, Hilton College

ATIP in ENGL 1303: First Year Writing I

Nathan Shepley, Associate Professor,
Department of English



HRMA 2340
System of Accounts in The Hospitality Industry
Agnes DeFranco and Arlene Ramirez

- No Book...
- Better Class...
- Higher Quality Learning!!!

The Beginning of a New Era

Screenshots from [UJ Emerging Trends](#)

The next example of using faculty champions is from a presentation earlier this semester. The timing of it was right around when applications opened up for the second round of our incentive program, so the purpose of this presentation was to promote the incentive program and generate interest in applying for it.

Now I could have made the presentation all about defining OER, talking about open licenses, and telling people what the benefits are of open or alternative textbooks. But, knowing that faculty listen to faculty, I invited some faculty to co-present with me and we focused on making the presentation about their experiences and insights from participating in the first year of incentive program.

For the hour-long presentation, we split it up into three chunks. I took the first 15 minutes to talk about the incentive program, mostly covering really practical things that people would want to know: program eligibility, award amounts, timeline, what the application process looks like, and evaluation criteria. Then each of the faculty members had 15 minutes to present, plus time at the end for questions. I gave some guidance on things they might talk about, but really left it up to them, which worked out well because they took different approaches to sharing their experiences.

The first person talked about using a variety of OER for a First Year Writing course, and included things such as where he searched for OER, how he evaluated the resources, and reasons for taking this approach, including the freedom to choose which text best explains different concepts. The other two presenters talked about course on Accounting for the Hospitality Industry, for which they used a combination

of library resources and videos that they created. They focused more on how they incorporated the resources into their course modules, and used screenshots to show exactly how they had it all set up in Blackboard.

Hearing directly from people who were doing this work was so much more effective than if I had talked about open licenses and the 5 R's for 45 minutes. It also helped with attendance - people are much more likely to show up to hear their colleagues talk than someone from the library who they probably don't know. SOMething else that helped with attendance is that this was a partnership with the Office of Educational Technology in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. They host a series of talks throughout the year so there's already a consistent audience - and they handled the marketing and all other logistics for the presentation.

Was this a successful strategy in actually getting faculty buy-in? We had 40 attendees at the presentation, most of whom were faculty, though there were a handful of others from instructional design, the bookstore, and the writing center. We got a ton of questions at the end of the presentation, so much that we went a little over the scheduled. And it wasn't all skeptics and naysayers, but the kinds of questions that showed that people were really interested and wanted to know more.

I followed up with people afterwards and ended up doing 5 consultations with people who had attended to talk more in-depth about OER and applying for the incentive program. We now have 25 applications. On the application form, they're asked how they heard about the program, and 8 out of the 25 said it was from this presentation.

Also, word of mouth is really strong at our campus (and it might be at yours as well). For example - for the people I co-presented with, I'm already seeing more interest in their subject areas. The two faculty who talked about their hospitality course have already got their colleagues interested in ready to use OER in other hospitality courses.

Reviewing applications

- Review applications for incentive program
- 3 faculty, 1 instructional designer, 2 librarians
- Set expectations and make it easy
- Learning from each other

The last example is a little different, as it's not having faculty share in a presentation, but about involving them in the process. We recently had our deadline to apply for the incentive program and are now in the thick of reviewing the applications. This is definitely something that should be done collaboratively rather than by just one person, so I put out a call for volunteers on the UH OER listserv. I was hoping to get 2 or 3 volunteers, but I ended up with four. The group includes 3 faculty, 1 instructional designer, myself and 1 other librarian.

Throughout this process, I found it helpful to set expectations and make it as easy as possible for everyone involved. For example, when asking for volunteers, I let people know who this would be a good opportunity for (those familiar with OER and who are not applying for the program this year) and letting them know what they would be asked to do. I also developed a rubric and rating form that are easy to use and understand.

We actually had our second meeting a few hours ago to discuss the applications (on 4/9/19), so I can't tell you exactly the outcomes of this process. But overall I think it's turning out to be a really good learning experience - everyone is learning about the types of OER projects that other instructors are involved in, I'm learning what they think about OER, and as we come across questions this is an opportunity to work through them together.

Call for volunteers - Email text:

Seeking ATIP Application Reviewers

Are you interested in open educational resources (OER) and alternative textbooks? Want to contribute to advancing textbook affordability at UH? Consider being an Application Reviewer for the [Alternative Textbook Incentive Program](#)!

I am looking for up to four instructors to serve as ATIP Application Reviewers. There will be a *maximum* of four meetings from late March through April. Meetings will be used to discuss the ATIP program, test a scoring rubric, score applications, and contribute to award decisions.

This is an ideal opportunity for you if:

- You have some familiarity with OER and alternative textbooks
- You want to learn more and contribute to the UH OER Program
- You are NOT applying for ATIP this year

If you are interested in being an ATIP Application Reviewer, let me know at [\[email address\]](#)

Please forward to interested colleagues.

Takeaways

Faculty listen to faculty

Create opportunities to share experiences

Word of mouth

Resources

Reception:

[Facebook album](#)

Presentation:

[Recording and slides](#)



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To sum up, I covered three concrete examples of using faculty champions to get more faculty buy-in:

1. A reception which started building an OER community
2. A presentation focused on faculty insights, which was successful in increasing applications for our incentive program
3. And involving faculty in reviewing incentive program applications, which is a way to cultivate more faculty champions

Takeaways:

- Faculty listen to faculty, so
- Create opportunities for them to share their experiences, and
- Word of mouth can be an effective tool for buy-in