Developing Best Practices & Driving Adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) at the University of Texas

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What is OER?
OER is any openly licensed learning resource that can be freely used & repurposed by others.

Project Objective
To help drive adoption of OER and other open access materials at UT in the long term, decreasing the cost of education.

Activities & Outcomes
• Identified & interviewed instructors at UT currently building or utilizing OER as course materials
• Documented best practices distributed to UT subject librarians & other instructors
• Conducted research on the role that librarians in other higher education institutions have in driving adoption of OER
• Created OER LibGuide for instructors: http://guides.lib.utexas.edu/OER

Opportunities
• Some disciplines have many existing OER materials
• Newer instructors may be more likely to adopt OER based on ideological buy-in
• Awarding instructors grants to implement or create OER drives adoption
• Student demand spurs consideration at departmental level
• High instructor willingness & interest to work more closely with librarians

Challenges
• Variable awareness of OER & discipline-specific materials
• Authoring textbooks perceived as low prestige
• Department curriculum committees can slow process
• Revising syllabi, homework, and tests is time-consuming
• Perceived quality concerns with OER
• Low awareness of librarians as potential partners in identifying relevant OER

Top Recommendations to UT Libraries
1. Encourage subject liaisons to identify well-reviewed OER in their respective disciplines & share with relevant instructors.
2. Develop campus-wide & departmental OER marketing plans aimed at instructors.
3. Offer awards &/or grants to instructors implementing OER.
4. Continue working with student government organizations & university committees to drive awareness & demand for OER.

13 Instructors Interviewed
12 Departments Represented