Three tips for teaching with open educational resources

Over the past year, there have been many conversations on campus about the use of open educational resources (OER) in the classroom. OER are teaching materials that are free to access and available under an open copyright license (e.g., Creative Commons [https://creativecommons.org/licenses/]). An OER can be as large as a course (textbook, quizzes, and all) or as small as a lesson plan, but they are always free to access online. So, how can you get started using OER in your courses?

1. Look Around

Getting started with OER is as easy as looking around you at what is available. Depending on your subject area, there may be dozens of resources or there may be none. Tools like the OASIS OER Search tool [https://oasis.geneseo.edu/] and the Open Textbook Library website can make locating OER easier, but you may not find all the materials you want in one place.

The one exception to this rule is the OpenStax textbooks website [https://openstax.org/], free textbooks for general education courses that have been paired with additional instructor materials such as test banks and PowerPoint slides.

If you are interested in using OER in one of your courses but unsure where to start, follow the instructions on the Open & Affordable Education Committee’s Find an OER webpage [http://bit.ly/2Sa72kN] or send your syllabus via email to Abbey Elder (aelder@iastate.edu), Open Access Librarian for Parks Library, and schedule a consultation.

2. Start Small

If you cannot find any OER that meet your needs right now, keep in mind that more materials are being published, shared, and adapted every day. If you cannot locate an open textbook or other major resource that fits your needs, consider starting small. You can also start working with OER by utilizing supplementary materials such as the PhET Simulations website [http://bit.ly/2SfTWCR], interactive simulations that can be used in a wide variety of courses.

As you go through your usual course material review process, keep OER in mind and look at the content currently available to see if there may be a resource you could integrate into your course, either as a supplementary resource or as a replacement for a textbook or lab book you currently assign.

You can read more about why some instructors at ISU are using OER on Iowa State University’s OER Trailblazers webpage.

3. Reuse, Remix, Redistribute

Teaching with OER is not inherently different from teaching with any other educational materials you might find. However, you can do more with OER than most traditional learning materials allow.

Because of their open licenses, OER are freely available to edit, update, and share without requiring any additional copyright clearance or permission from the creator. This leaves more room for instructors to assign individual chapters of a resource or create low-cost course packets containing a variety of resources. You can learn about the various ways that some instructors are adapting OER with their classes on the Open Pedagogy Notebook website [http://openpedagogy.org/].

Regardless of how they got started, educators around the world are implementing OER in their courses to create innovative, personalized learning experiences for their students.

Are you interested in an opportunity to enhance your scholarship of teaching and learning by integrating OER into your course? The request for proposals for the Miller Open Education Mini-Grants, co-sponsored by the University Library, the Center for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT), and the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost (SVPP), will be released in early March. You can learn more about these grants on the Miller Open Education Mini-Grants webpage.

Sara Marcketti, Director
Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
Register to attend the Iowa State Conference on Race & Ethnicity (ISCORE)

The Thomas L. Hill Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity (ISCORE) is a designed to provide an ongoing platform of sharing and applying new knowledge through presentations and workshops. Register through the ISCORE website (https://www.iscore.iastate.edu/conference/) for:

• Conference is on Friday, March 1 (8:15 a.m.-5 p.m., Memorial Union) and is open to the Iowa State University community (students, faculty and staff).
• Pre-Conference Wednesday, February 27 (11 a.m.-5 p.m., Memorial Union) is open to faculty and staff only.

Canvas News & Updates


Upcoming CELT programs (alpha by topic then date)

To learn more about our comprehensive array of events visit CELT’s Event and Registration website (http://www.celt.iastate.edu/events-registration) and register via the Learn@ISU website (http://learn.iastate.edu/).

Award-Winning Seminar Series

• Good Class Bad Class - Intentions vs. actions in classroom teaching (Raj Raman), Mar 7, (12:10-1 p.m.)
• Real Talk About Inclusion: Do your students feel safe? (with Audrey Kennis) Mar. 27 (12:10-1:30 p.m.)

Seminars, Workshops, and Workshop Series

• Workshop: Miller Open Education Mini-Grants Q&A, Mar. 4 (4-5 p.m.)
• Discuss Published Education Research in Your Discipline (DBER Journal Club), Mar. 5 (12-1 p.m.)
• Coffee and Networking: Using Open Educational Resources in the Classroom, Mar. 6 (2-3:30 p.m.)
• Seminar, Top Hat Content Authoring, Mar. 26 (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Building & Managing Your Course in Canvas Workshop Series

• Managing Large Enrollment Courses in Canvas: Blueprints and More, Feb. 28 (9-11 a.m.)
• Building a Canvas Course that Makes Sense to Your Students, Mar. 4 (2-3:30 p.m.)
• Low and High Stakes Quizzes in Canvas, Mar. 5 (9-10:30 a.m.)
• Grading and Student Data in Canvas, Mar. 6 (9-10:30 a.m.)
• Group and Collaborative Work in Canvas, Mar. 7 (9-10:30 a.m.)
• Personalized Learning in Canvas, Mar. 11 (9:30-11 a.m.)
• Video Instruction and Learning in Canvas, Mar. 12 (10-11:30 a.m.)
• Rubrics and Outcomes in Canvas, Mar. 14 (3-4:30 p.m.)
• Your Canvas Course on Smart Devices, Mar. 15 (9:30-11 a.m.)

Programs on Teaching Inclusively

• Inclusive Classroom Workshop, Mar. 13 (2:10-5 p.m.), or Apr. 12 (9 a.m.-Noon)
• Does my ____ scare you? Let’s talk about it - An open discussion on microaggressions & perceived bias with Lover Chancler, Director of The Center for Multiculturalism and Inclusivity at University of Central Missouri, March 29 (1:10-3 p.m., Gallery Room, MU - registration not required) This event is sponsored by the Department of Human Development and Family Science (HDFS), the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), and the HDFS Graduate Student Network

ISU Online Learning Community

• Seminar, ISU Online Leaning Community (ISU-OLC), Mar. 15 (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Quality Matters (QM) Programming

• Quality Matters Teaching and Learning Community, Mar. 8 (3:30-5 p.m.)
• Workshop, Improving Your Online Course (IYOC), Mar. 29 (8 a.m.-Noon)

Team-Based Learning (TBL) Programming

• Team-Based Learning-Teaching and Learning Community (for graduates of the TBL Series), Feb. 28 (1:10-2:30 p.m.), and Mar. 13 (12:10-1:30 p.m.)

Additional Professional Development Opportunities
• Thomas L. Hill Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity (ISCORE), Professional Development Pre-Conference, Wed., Feb. 27 (11 a.m.-5 p.m., Iowa State Memorial Union), and Conference, Fri., Mar. 1 (8 a.m.-5 p.m., Iowa State Memorial Union)