

Exploring Faculty Perceptions of OER and Impediments to Their Use: A Multi-Institutional Study

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ABSTRACT

Understanding faculty perceptions about Open Educational Resources (OER) is a vital step for those hoping to support the growth of OER initiatives at higher education institutions. Faculty members' perceptions of OER often influence their interest in adopting open educational practices and their willingness to seek out support from campus staff. To explore how faculty members across their four institutions feel about open education, the authors developed a survey to discover faculty members' (1) perspectives on, (2) barriers to, and (3) beliefs about OER use. The survey corroborated past research findings that faculty often have difficulty finding time to locate and evaluate OER, and that there is a need among the ac-

ademic community to better compensate educators for their work developing open content. More notably, the authors discovered that faculty who are aware of library support services and other institutional OER initiatives are more engaged in open educational practices and willing to explore OER, regardless of their prior experience with open education.

Keywords: open education, Open Educational Resources (OER), barriers, incentives, OER initiatives, academic libraries

Explorando las percepciones de los profesores sobre los REA y los impedimentos para su uso: un estudio multiinstitucional

RESUMEN

Comprender las percepciones de los profesores sobre los REA es un paso vital para quienes esperan apoyar el crecimiento de las iniciativas de REA en las instituciones de educación superior. Las percepciones de los miembros de la facultad sobre los REA a menudo influyen en su interés en adoptar prácticas educativas abiertas y su voluntad de buscar el apoyo del personal del campus. Para explorar cómo los miembros de la facultad en sus cuatro instituciones se sienten sobre la educación abierta, los autores desarrollaron una encuesta para descubrir las perspectivas de los miembros de la facultad (1), (2) las barreras y (3) las creencias sobre el uso de REA. La encuesta corroboró los resultados de investigaciones anteriores de que los profesores a menudo tienen dificultades para encontrar tiempo para localizar y evaluar REA, y que existe una necesidad entre la comunidad académica de compensar mejor a los educadores por su trabajo en el desarrollo de contenido abierto. Más notablemente, los autores descubrieron que los profesores que conocen los servicios de apoyo bibliotecario y otras iniciativas institucionales de REA están más comprometidos con las prácticas educativas abiertas y están más dispuestos a explorar los REA, independientemente de su experiencia previa con la educación abierta.

Palabras clave: educación abierta, REA, barreras, incentivos, iniciativas REA, bibliotecas académicas

探究教师对开放教育资源（OER）的感知 以及OER使用障碍：一项多机构研究

摘要

理解教师对开放教育资源（OER）的感知对那些希望支持OER倡议在高等教育机构中发展的人士而言尤为关键。教师对OER的感知经常会影响其在采纳开放教育实践方面的兴趣，以及其在寻求学校员工支持方面的意愿。为探究4个机构的教师对开放教育的感知，作者设计了一项调查以了解教师在OER使用方面的感知、障碍和信念。调查证实了以往的研究发现，即教师经常难以有时间对OER进行定位和评价，并且学术界需要更好地补偿教育者在开发开放内容方面付出的劳动。更重要的是，作者发现，那些了解图书馆支持服务及其他机构OER倡议计划的教师会更多地参与开放教育实践，并更愿意探究OER，不管他们是否此前接触过开放教育。

关键词：开放教育，OER，障碍，激励，OER倡议，学术图书馆

Introduction

Open Education has become an impactful tool for ensuring equity, affordability, and student success in higher education. This is thanks to the freedoms permitted by open educational resources (OER), “teaching, learning, and research resources that are free of cost and access barriers, and which also carry legal permission for open use” (SPARC, n.d.). As more instructors adopt, adapt, and author these resources, it is important for support staff to understand the support that instructors on their campuses might need.

The authors aimed to examine disciplinary differences in the use

of OER among faculty in four North American universities—Iowa State University (Iowa State), North Carolina State University (NC State), Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), and the University of Arkansas (Arkansas)—and identify any specific support those faculty need in relation to their discipline. Although the survey could not get a statistically significant sample of any single discipline, some noteworthy findings were identified.

These include:

- Institutional support is a major factor in faculty awareness of, interest in, and creation of OER.
- Barriers to OER adoption are less related to personal concerns and

more related to a lack of support and time needed to adopt and adapt resources.

- Faculty still have misconceptions about what open resources are and how to get support for integrating them in their courses.

Background

The academic library has housed services like Course Reserves and institutional repositories for decades, serving as a space for sharing learning materials and research alike. Consequently, the library has become a natural home for Open Education initiatives (Kleymeer et al., 2010), and libraries have quickly become an integral part of the work being done in the Open Education space over the past six years (Jensen & West, 2015). As more OER services are becoming embedded in the academic librarian positions, it is vital that librarians examine how our services are being used and whether they are truly meeting the needs of our users.

To learn more about the perceptions of faculty toward OER on college campuses, many libraries turn to institutional surveys. In a meta-analysis of some OER perception studies, Hilton (2019) identified two major trends: first, although the use of OER does not have a strong, direct impact on student learning, OER do not harm student learning either (Croteau, 2017; Lawrence & Lester, 2018; Winitzky-Stephens & Pickavance, 2017); and second, a majority of faculty and student surveys have

positive opinions on the use of OER in their courses, even when compared to commercial textbooks (Gurung, 2017; Ikahihifo et al., 2017; Jhangiani et al., 2018).

Faculty perceptions are particularly impactful because instructors are usually the decision-makers about the materials they use in class. It is vital that faculty understand the pros and cons of different types of course materials and the support available to faculty through their institutions, so they can take advantage of the support available to them. Regardless of whether the use of OER could be positive in their classrooms, faculty will not make this change if they lack the time, money, or ability to find and integrate OER into their courses, three major barriers to adopting open content (Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Martin, 2018). As Zhadko and Ko (2019) stressed,

OER initiatives must include opportunities for faculty to share their successes and have established structures to ensure that faculty are supported and rewarded from the very start of the course planning processes.

To respond to the possibility that faculty needs are still going unmet on our own campuses, this survey was developed to explore faculty interests and needs related to OER. In addition, the survey hoped to determine if there were any disciplinary differences in faculty members' interest in and needs for adopting OER. Specifically, the survey was conducted to determine instructors' current knowledge and awareness

of open educational resources (OER), instructors' awareness of and interest in open pedagogy, what material formats and types of educational resources instructors in specific disciplines are most likely to utilize, and incentives and deterrents to instructors' use of OER.

Methods

We administered a mixed methods survey through Qualtrics. The survey questions were adapted from the *Identifying OER Needs by Discipline* survey guide (Elder, 2018).

The final survey instrument included 22 to 35 questions depending on each participants' answers. These questions were divided into five discrete sections: experience with OER, awareness of institutional support, interest in OER, open educational practices, and open licensing. These sections included a mix of multiple choice, open-ended, and Likert scale questions. The entire survey took approximately 22 minutes for participants to complete. To get an understanding of the disciplinary breakdown of faculty participating in the survey, a pre-populated list of disciplines was used and adapted from the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to attempt to limit any bias toward a particular institutional breakdown of subject areas.

Data Collection

Once the survey questions were refined, we loaded them into the Qualtrics platform, which was used for distribution

and data collection. Participants were recruited through an anonymous survey link sent out via email to the faculty at each researchers' institutions after IRB approval was acquired. For Iowa State University and the University of Arkansas, the link was sent to a list of all faculty. At Penn State, the link was distributed through the Open Liaison Program listserv and the Affordable Course Transformation grant initiative listserv. The Open Liaison Program has one volunteer at each campus library who is responsible for disseminating open related content to their location or subject area, which ensured the survey would be sent out at each campus location. The Affordable Course Transformation listserv ensured that it would reach individuals who had formally worked on OER. Due to institutional requirements, North Carolina State's survey was sent to a sample of 25% of all faculty (roughly 500 individuals) meeting eligibility requirements.

Email recipients self-selected themselves for participation. Reminders were sent two weeks after the original email to the same sample to encourage completion of the survey.

Data Analysis

Once the survey was closed in Qualtrics, the data was exported to Excel for basic quantitative analysis, with more complex analyses—such as cross-tabulations—handled within the Qualtrics interface.

For open-ended survey questions, thematic analysis was used to qualitatively analyze participants' re-

sponses and sort them into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasized, “a theme represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). Since the data was gleaned from open-ended responses alone, there was not an extensive amount of data to categorize; however, some themes were identified in the results below.

Results

Respondents represented a diverse set of disciplines, demographics, and years of teaching experi-

ence. Overall, 177 people responded to the survey, with 136 answering more than 60% of the questions.

Of those 136 people, a plurality were associate professors (30%), with another 19% full professors and 18% assistant professors. Combined, 67% of respondents were on the tenure track. Significantly, almost a quarter (24%) were full-time non-tenure-track faculty, with an additional 6% in part-time non-tenure-track roles. A handful (1%) of clinical professors and professional staff with teaching responsibilities also completed the survey.

Participants by Position

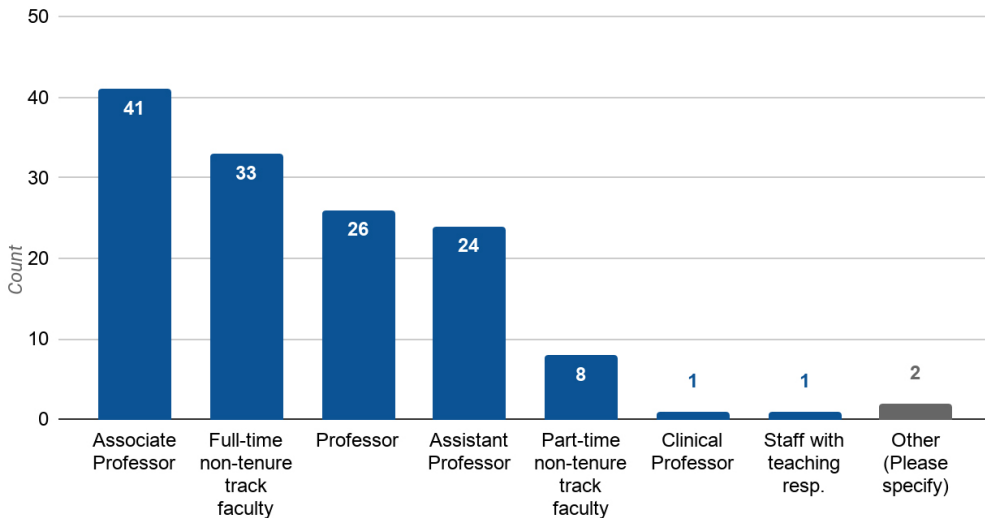


Figure 1. Participants by position

Respondents reflected a wide range of teaching experience. Again, there was no simple majority but a plurality (30%) had more than 20 years of teaching experience. Twenty-four percent reported experience between six

and 10 years, while another 15% had experience between three and five years. A similar percentage reported experience between 11 and 15 years (13%) and between 16 and 20 years (13%).

Table 1. Participants by year(s) teaching

Years Teaching	Participants (Count)	Participants (Percent)
More than 20 years	41	30%
16-20 years	17	13%
11-15 years	17	13%
6-10 years	33	24%
3-5 years	21	15%
1-2 years	2	1%
Less than 1 year	5	4%

Respondents came from an equally diverse set of disciplines. The Arts and Humanities (23%) and Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Statistics (21%) were most highly represented,

with Social Sciences (18%) and Engineering (14%) close behind. While several other disciplines were represented, none were reported by more than 7% of respondents.

Disciplines Represented

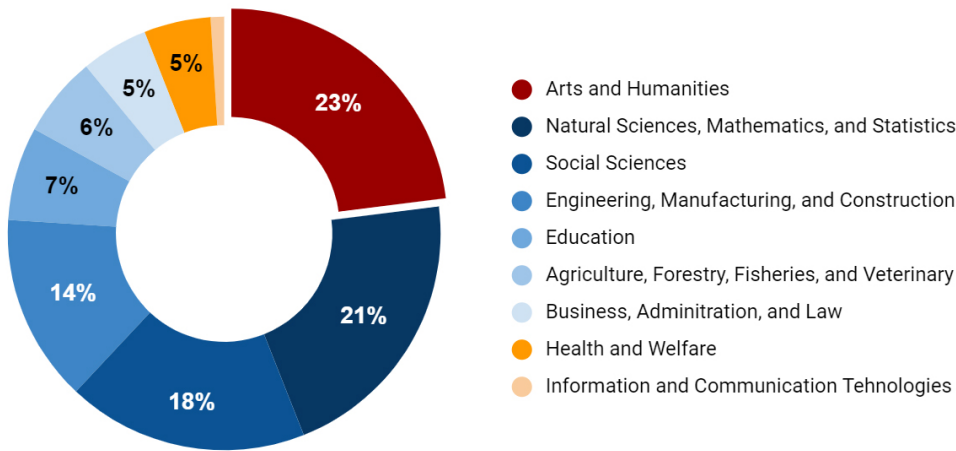


Figure 2. Participants by discipline

Within the broad umbrella of Arts and Humanities, literature and languages (10%) and history and archeology (9%) were best represented, with music, fine, and performing arts (7%) and fashion and design (2%) also reflected.

Within the Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Statistics, biology (8%) and math and statistics (8%) were the best-represented, while physics (6%), chemistry (5%), and earth and environmental sciences (4%) were also listed.

Within the Social Sciences, psychology (7%), political science (6%), and journalism (5%) were the most common, with economics (4%), sociology (3%), and library science (1%) also represented.

OER Use and Interest

The majority of respondents had not used OER, but pockets of use appeared

among instructors with more than 20 years of experience (13 of 41) and six to 10 years (12 of 33). Significantly, while OER use seems to become more common for instructors with more years of teaching experience, instructors with between three to five years of experience represented an outlier, with the majority of instructors in that group (13 of 21) reporting that they had used OER.

OER Use by Years Teaching

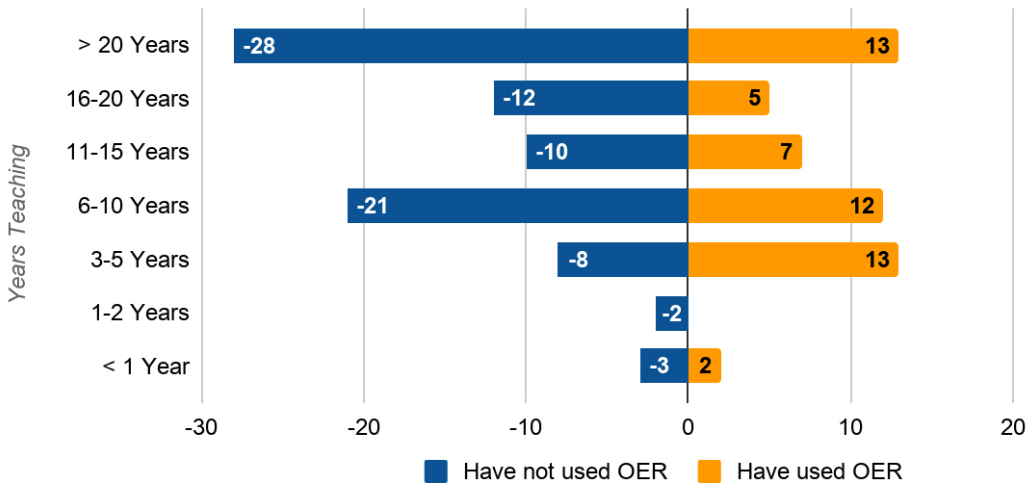


Figure 3. Experience with OER: Year(s) teaching

Within the set of instructors that reported having used OER ($n = 52$), adapting was the most reported approach, with creation and a combination of creating and adapting also reported.

Associate professors were the group that reported greatest engagement with OER, leading the field in creating, adapting, and using a hybrid of

adapting and creating. Full-time non-tenure-track instructors also reported both adapting and hybrid engagement, as did professors, although neither group reported simply creating OER without some adapting. At the other end of the spectrum, part-time non-tenure-track faculty reported creating OER but not adapting or using a hybrid approach.

OER Creation by Position

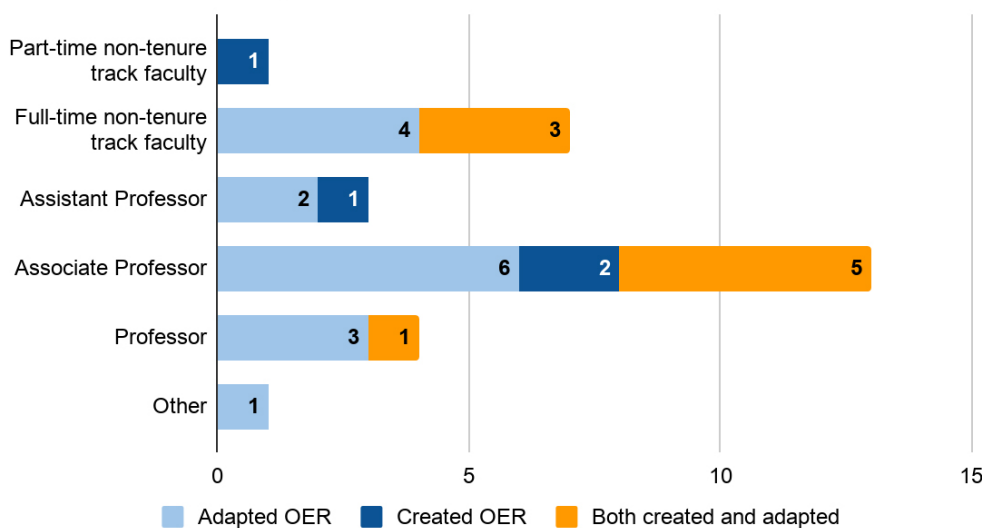


Figure 4. OER creation by position

Respondents also included a large number of instructors (75%) who were interested in OER but have not yet used them, while a much smaller set (nine) indicated that they were not interested in OER and thus had not used them. While these numbers are encouraging and align with national surveys suggesting that instructors are interested but may need more support (Seaman & Seaman, 2018), it is also possible that these results reflect some self-selection bias, since those who chose to complete, or at least participate in more than half of the survey, are more likely to be interested in OER than those who did not participate.

Qualitative responses suggest that instructors' interest in OER is largely due to its ability to increase cost savings for students, but faculty also noted interest in OER to fill gaps so that

they could find or develop materials for their niche subjects. Respondents also expressed interest in the ability to update materials in a timely manner and to contribute unique content to their discipline that might not otherwise be published.

The Impact of Institutional Support for OER

One finding revealed by the survey is that faculty want more institutional support, whether they are aware of the support currently available to them or not. Question 13, "Do you feel that your institution provides sufficient support for instructors in your discipline who are interested in adopting OER? Why or why not?" received 94 responses out of 136 total responses. When the answers for this question were coded by theme (see Table 2), the most populous category

was “unsure of the support available.” Fifty-four percent of the participants from Iowa State ($n = 20$) and 71% of the participants from NC State ($n = 5$) fell into this category, as did 43% of the participants from Arkansas ($n = 9$). This is

a significant finding for us at the institution level because as coordinators of OER initiatives, we want faculty to know that our services exist so they can utilize those services accordingly.

Table 2. Awareness of initiative by institution

Institution	Positive	Could be better	Unsure of support	Negative*	Total (Count)
Iowa State	9	6	20	2	37
Pennsylvania State	12	10	4	3	29
Arkansas	10	1	9	1	21
North Carolina State	0	1	5	1	7

*Negative comments largely skewed toward a lack of top-down institutional or departmental support rather than against the OER initiative or coordinator specifically. (See Appendix 1 for the complete list of responses to Question 13).

As shown in Table 2, Penn State had a significantly higher number of respondents who knew there was an initiative available to them, with 12 reporting “positive” awareness and 10 reporting “could be better,” for a total of 76% of respondents being aware and approving of the initiative ($n = 22$). This suggests that Penn State’s communication strategy is effective at making some faculty aware of the programs offered to them. Their communication strategy includes having news stories shared in Penn State News and emails sent out by the Deans of Academic Affairs, the Open Liaisons, and instructional designers. In addition, previous OER grantees are asked to share their experience in the program directly with their peers and new applicants are required to complete a mandatory consultation about their proposed project where they are briefed on the support offered

by the program at Penn State. It is worth noting that at Penn State the survey was delivered to instructors who had participated in creating OER directly in addition to others, and that this targeted survey dissemination may account for the higher awareness of services offered among their respondents.

Although this finding is useful for understanding whether faculty are aware of OER support services, it also belies a gap in what faculty think of as institutional support and what those of us in the role of OER coordinator think it means. As personnel dedicated specifically to support faculty in the adoption, adaptation, and authoring of OER, we see ourselves and our services as institutional support. However, faculty do not necessarily make that connection when they think of institutional support for OER.

For example, even where there are support staff and services available, participants frequently answered that they expect their institution to offer time, course releases, and honorariums as forms of support for adopting, adapting, or authoring OER for their classes. In addition, even though Question 13 asked about support at the institutional level, 10% of respondents expressed concern about a lack of personal time to devote to OER adoption and development.

Finally, when faculty respondents did recognize that OER is supported at the institutional level, they further noted that it is not supported intentionally at the college/department level. They also indicated that contingent faculty (fixed term, adjunct vs. tenure track) are not respected within their departments and have little opportunity to develop course materials or make programmatic change. So, while a President or Provost may support OER as part of their strategic initiative for affordability, open education work does not trickle down as something important at the department level. In addition, faculty indicated that using OER in their courses is often “primarily framed as a money-saving measure

rather than a pedagogical choice.” This framing is not necessarily bad, but it is notable that participants pointed it out. Saving students money is an important and worthwhile goal for an OER initiative; however, marketing OER as *only* a money-saving measure disregards the fact that these are “educational resources” that ought to support the learning needs of students.

The Impact of Institutional Support on OER Use

Often, institutional support takes the form of a grant initiative to provide a small stipend, dedicated personnel, or a combination of both, to help faculty adopt, adapt, or author OER for the classes they instruct. The authors of this study were interested in how aware faculty were about the grant initiatives at our institutions, and whether they have created or adapted OER. As shown in Table 3, faculty were largely unaware about whether their institution offered grants for adapting or authoring OER. In total, 73 of 136 faculty respondents were unaware that their institution provides funding opportunities for OER adoption or creation.

Table 3. OER creation: Awareness of grant program

Have you created or adapted OER?					
Does your institution provide grants?	Neither created nor adapted	Adapted	Created	Both created and adapted	Total (Count)
No	0	0	0	1	1
Unsure	12	8	0	0	20
Yes	11	8	4	8	31

Why is this significant? First, we each offer this support and we want our community to utilize it. Such a low level of awareness among respondents suggests that each of our institutional OER initiatives could do more to generate awareness of our work. Secondly, when asked what types of support they want from their institution, 37 of the 76 faculty who were unaware of grant programs available indicated interest in receiving “financial incentives to adopt or create OER (grants, stipends).” This group of respondents would likely benefit greatly from learning about the existing initiatives on their campus, and as OER coordinators, we need to know that these faculty exist to market our services to them.

Finally, the faculty who were aware of our grant programs were also much more likely to have adopted,

adapted, and created OER. This may be because these respondents were able to take advantage of the support available to them, or perhaps because faculty who are most interested in OER were willing to keep up with their institutional initiatives. More research is needed to determine the exact cause for this correlation.

Barriers to OER Use

In addition to exploring participants’ interest in and awareness of local support, our survey also explored barriers to faculty members’ use of OER. For Question 15, “Which of the following do you see as barriers to your use of OER?” participants were asked to choose options from a list of potential barriers. The full breakdown of responses is shown in Figure 5 below.

Barriers to OER Use

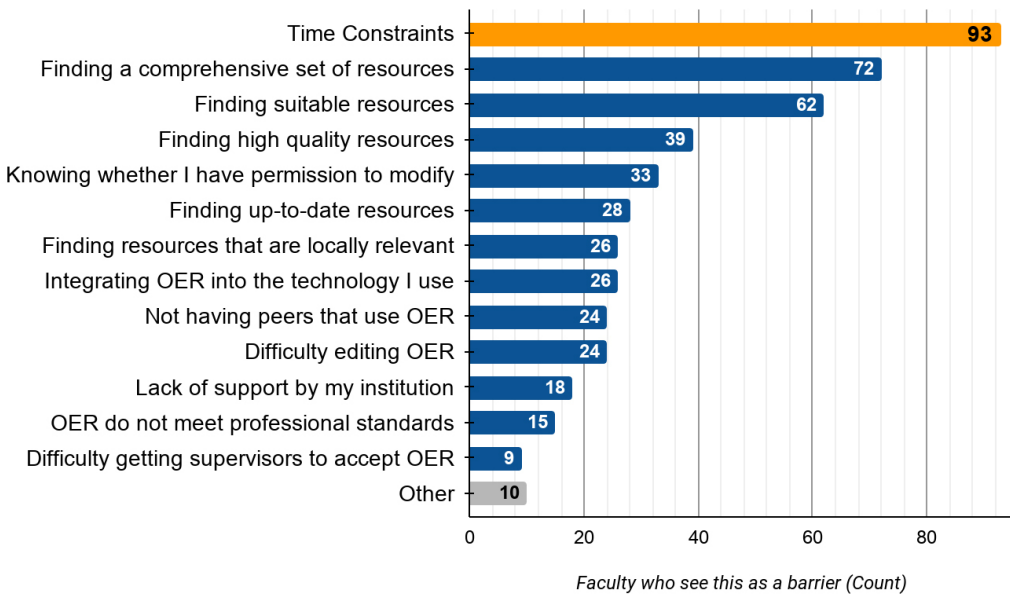


Figure 5. Barriers to OER Use

Participants could choose multiple options from the lists of variables, but the clear frontrunner from the results was “time constraints,” with 94 faculty members (69%) selecting this option as a barrier to their use of OER (one participant commented this in the “Other” category). Despite this clear lead, after analyzing the results the survey runners identified a more prominent concern among faculty was the ability to locate appropriate open content for their course. One hundred and seventeen participants (86%) selected at least one of the barriers related to finding OER from the survey’s options (finding comprehensive materials, finding suitable materials, finding high-quality materials, finding up-to-date materials, and finding locally relevant materials). It should be noted that the terms “suitable” and “high quality” used on the survey should have been rephrased for clarity before dissemination because they are both subjective and closely related. Because of this, the use of both terms may have confused the participants and limited their ability to respond accurately.

Open-ended responses in the “Other” category of Question 15 noted that a few respondents ($n = 3$) were uninformed about OER, and that this lack of experience led to an inability to choose barriers from the options listed. Other responses noted that the participant did not have any interest in OER.

It is thought-provoking to compare these responses with those drawn from an earlier study of faculty perceptions. Belikov and Bodily (2016) analyzed 218 open responses regarding

barriers to OER adoption provided by a portion of over 2,000 faculty. They coded the responses, creating 10 primary categories: need more information, lack of discoverability, confusing OER with digital, general positive perception, not applicable to faculty, lack of time to evaluate, cost benefits, equal to traditional materials, pedagogical benefits, and lack of quality (Belikov & Bodily, 2016). Many of their findings were echoed by our survey respondents. Time constraints still pose a barrier to faculty members’ adoption and exploration of OER, for example. However, unlike the Belikov and Bodily survey, fewer of the responses to our survey indicated a lack of participant understanding of OER. This may be due to an increased awareness of OER among faculty, but it is more likely because we did not provide an explicit option for this barrier, since three of the responses in the “Other” category indicated a lack of understanding about OER.

Incentives Requested by Faculty

As we noted in the “institutional support” section, many respondents were unaware of the resources available to them on a campus level. To explore the types of institutional support that participants need to complete their work in more depth, participants were asked “What sort of OER support would you like to receive from your institution?” The results to this question were not wholly surprising, with most faculty ($n = 49$) asking for help locating and evaluating content or receiving targeted disciplinary support (Figure 6 below).

Support Requested by Faculty

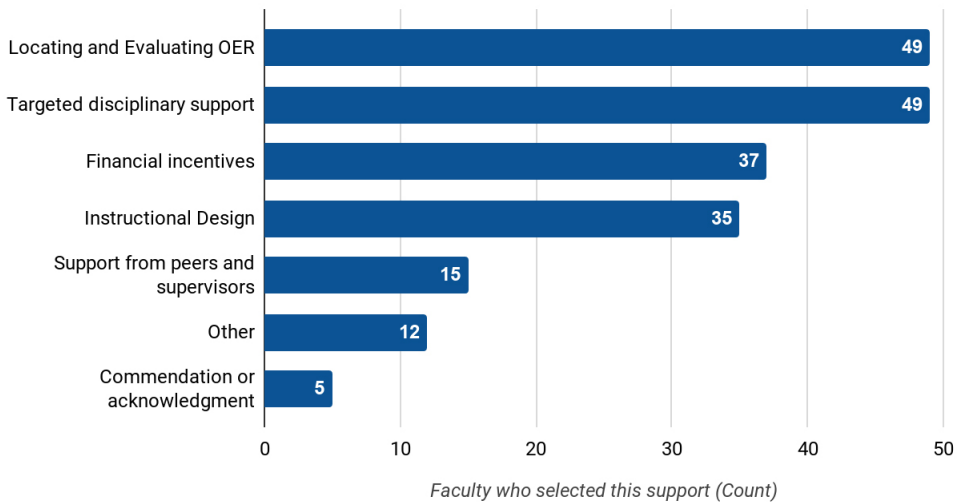


Figure 6. Support requested by faculty

The third and fourth most popular options were for financial incentives ($n = 37$) and instructional design support ($n = 35$). In addition to these, 15 participants asked for support from their peers and supervisors and five noted that commendations for their work would improve their use of OER.

Among the open-ended answers to the “other” category ($n = 12$), the most common responses ($n = 5$) belied confusion about what an OER actually is, and asked for “explanations of what OER is,” a “fundamental [sic] understanding of what OER is and how it can be applied,” and similar support through education. In addition to these, two responses asked specifically for compensation for developing courses that use OER, either monetarily or through course release time. These responses show that we were correct in our analysis of the previous question, and that we should have provided an option of

“lack of understanding about OER” for respondents to select in Question 15.

Discussion

Two points which require more discussion are findings that may be skewed by perceptions of specific terms, “locating and evaluating OER” and “institutional support,” respectively. These phrases were used within the survey guide because they seemed clear to the survey runners, but in both cases, they were misconstrued or perhaps not clear enough to the participants. This is explored in more depth below.

The first phrase that we believe may have skewed our results was “locating and evaluating OER.” The survey paired these two types of assistance, locating and evaluating, as a single option in multiple survey questions. However, responses from faculty that they “had

no idea” what OER are led us to question this pairing’s use and what faculty really meant when selecting this option. Assistance selecting resources might involve curating lists of resources from many search tools and repositories, and this assistance might be more easily provided than assistance evaluating resources. In addition, instructors are considered subject experts and it is up to them to determine the viability of educational resources for each course they teach. While OER evaluation rubrics can be used to help faculty evaluate open resources, some respondents might find it patronizing to be offered support evaluating content for their own course. Alternatively, because many of our respondents were either unaware of OER or unaware of the support available to them, they might have had difficulty both locating content and locating rubrics for evaluating OER. Therefore, separating out these two potential barriers could have helped the survey yield more specific and actionable results.

In another response that was affected by the respondent’s perception, faculty answering Question 13 equated “institutional support” with institutional support from administrators specifically. This led many to state that their institution did not offer OER support, despite the existence of an OER initiative on their campus. This is echoed in case studies from other institutions, where faculty have stated that they were prompted not to participate in OER initiatives based on the feedback of their department chairs (Soper et al. 2018). While the survey runners expected to

see more comments about the support already available through their initiatives, it is important to consider how faculty members’ conceptions of the phrase “institutional support” differ from our own. If faculty want institutional support as they define the term, it may be worthwhile for OER coordinators to consider ways we can approach institutionalizing support by investing in more top-down incentives for OER use. This work has become more common across OER initiatives in North America over the past two years, and is exemplified in the *Open Education Strategic Plan* at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (Jhangiani, 2018).

Limitations

The biggest limitation to this study stems from the amount and quality of data it was able to gather. Although the survey returned 178 responses in total, this sample makes up only 1.4% percent of the populations being studied (approximately 12,300 faculty total), and 42 of the responses returned were incomplete. This low return rate was likely due to the length of the survey and the complicated nature of the topic. With 19 participants stating that they are “not at all confident” about their knowledge of OER, it is remarkable that the 22-minute survey received as many responses as it did.

Besides the general response rate to the survey, there were also some missed opportunities with questions that the team could have included. For example, we did not ask faculty to share

their contact information for follow-up. This meant that, as we encountered responses that were confused about OER and wanted to get access to more basic information, we did not have the means to follow up with these participants with guidance. In addition, following up the survey with interviews could have given us a more in-depth look at some of the interesting responses to the survey's open-ended questions, and we could have further explored topics that we had not anticipated being so prominent, such as the need for course release time and a lack of awareness of institutional support available.

Because of the survey's low participation numbers, the team could not get a statistically significant sample of any single discipline, so the original concept of this survey, to figure out if there are disciplinary differences in OER use, could not be studied in any meaningful way. If this survey were to be run again, the research team would choose to provide incentives to participants and to follow up with interviews to receive better participation numbers and a greater depth of responses.

Next Steps

Because the survey's results came in during the Spring 2019 semester, the institutions' OER initiatives have been able to utilize these results in various ways over the past calendar year.

At Iowa State, the findings were used to communicate initiative needs to administrators. The data collected

through this survey was incredibly useful at articulating what faculty think about our OER initiative—or in our case, what faculty don't think. The most integral finding for ISU was that faculty members had no idea what OER were or that support was available on campus. This gave us the opportunity to create a new web presence for our initiative, alter our marketing tactics, and secure funding for an upcoming Affordability Summit on campus, slated for Fall 2021.

At Penn State, these findings were used to rethink the marketing of the Affordable Course Transformation grant initiative. We still used Penn State News to disseminate a general call and distributed emails through listservs, for example, the Open Liaisons, Instructional Design Community, Deans of Academic Affairs, and campus Chancellors. In addition, we added departmental meetings within colleges and with instructional design units for our in-person outreach efforts. Based on the results of the survey, we were able to switch up our marketing from being explicitly affordability-driven to putting more emphasis on pedagogy. For example, messaging shifted to the following: yes, affordability is important, but let's talk about how we can engage your students through open materials and pedagogical practices that support OER and transform your teaching.

At NC State, these results were illuminating, but less impactful, given the relatively low participation rate. They were discussed with the Alt-Textbook team and communicated to the Libraries' administration to be incorpo-

rated into our larger advocacy and programming efforts.

At Arkansas, survey results indicated the need to continue broad advocacy efforts. Only half of the respondents were aware of on campus OER workshops. More than half were aware of campus support initiatives. Communication and marketing strategies have been expanded to reach more targets. Most respondents expressed the desire for more support locating and evaluating OER. To address these desires, targeted outreach to specific departments and schools has increased. This has led to increases in individual consultation bookings which are necessary for assisting faculty identify subject-specific resources. Finally, the results were also used to encourage university administrators to increase public support for OER and tie OER initiatives to campus priorities such as student success.

Conclusion

The results of this study have been incredibly useful in the growth of the OER initiatives at Arkansas, Iowa State, NC State, and Penn State. The survey provides a guide for other institutions interested in learning about the needs of their own populations as well. In one sense, it serves as an excellent “what not to do” scenario, highlighting why surveys should be short enough for a faculty member to easily complete over their lunch break.

On the other hand, this survey shows how an in-depth survey with room for open-ended responses can allow for unexpected and interesting results to emerge.

Regardless of the process’ successes and failures, the data presented here contains three findings that could be explored and implemented at other institutions: 1) OER initiatives need to target faculty directly to promote basic services such as consultations, workshops, and seminars on “what is an OER?” even if the initiative offers more in-depth services; 2) in order to fully engage with faculty on campus, an OER initiative must have champions among the administrators and department chairs on campus, those who can speak up and show that there is explicit support for faculty who want to put time into “doing the work” of OER; and 3) even for established OER initiatives, initiative coordinators should employ regular marketing strategies to keep faculty invested in and aware of the grant initiatives and support available to them.

In short, nothing about an OER initiative should be assumed or taken for granted. Even if you think you know your audience, there are likely faculty falling through the cracks who need basic support, whether that support is acknowledgement of OER work from a supervisor or a better understanding of what an OER *is*.

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Appendix 1: Survey Instrument

An exported pdf of the survey instrument used in this study, adapted from [Identifying OER Needs by Discipline](#) can be found online here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17Z7VjFHDyrTs5E93ZmutQWWK84bSLLj/view>

Appendix 2: Responses to Q13

Question 13: “Do you feel that your institution provides sufficient support for instructors in your discipline who are interested in adopting OER? Why or why not?”

1. yes; it is cost effective
2. Yes. We're encouraged to do so, and the library staff are able to point us towards available resources.
3. Yes. We have a dedicated staff person, Abbey Elder, who is always willing to discuss OER with us.
4. Yes. They are certainly encouraging and willing to provide guidance in finding resources.
5. Yes.
6. Yes, they've answered questions.
7. Yes, they encourage it. Most of them in my area are terrible, which is why I haven't used them.
8. Yes, there are resources and support for those who wish to build or pull together OER. It's still a very time consuming endeavor in my subject area, but there is money available and people willing to at least serve in a consultative capacity.
9. Yes, there are grant opportunities for faculty to develop and/or adapt OER to their courses.
10. Yes, the support staff were willing to meet with me one-on-one to discuss adoption options.
11. Yes, the people in charge of OER resources were very helpful to me in my text creation process.
12. Yes, the OER site is specific and rich in content
13. Yes, the library does provide support in finding and adopting OER.
14. yes, IF we have the time and make the effort. I have asked for help and the staff was very helpful. I was a faculty member of an ad hoc committee to develop the OER grants program.
15. Yes, given the grant program and the OER support through the library.
16. Yes, but you have to want it badly enough to wade through the issues
17. yes, but could be better. larger “small” grants can be more effective.
18. “Yes There is opportunity to grow the support as more faculty adopt OERs or as they decide to develop their own”

19. Yes although the support is not necessarily discipline-specific, and seems primarily framed as a money-saving measure rather than a pedagogical choice.
20. Yes - I recently applied for a small grant to search for and adopt OER in one of my 100 level behavior and health courses. In addition to that, I feel that our librarians have been clear that they can be a resource in this area, whether or not I receive the grant.
21. Yes
22. Yes
23. yes
24. We have a librarian who is well-versed and very helpful with this. I would like to learn more about the legalities of it all and ideas on how to best utilize OER.
25. We could do a better job in informing the faculty of OER options.
26. Unsure: I lack the direct knowledge necessary to answer in an informed way.
27. Unsure.
28. unsure of what exists
29. Unsure
30. This is time consuming... I am a certified instruction/integration specialist. I have created and/or redesigned several (that I teach) courses with no compensation. I have attended OER workshops to be told there are little resources for content that I am seeking. Again, time consuming and frustrating. It seems as though Penn State does not value experience and expertise that non-tenured track education faculty bring to the table...
31. They do, but developing OER material is simply too time consuming.
32. They are trying to, by offering assistance and grants
33. There could be more support for adopting OER. Partly this is a matter of acknowledging this in faculty evaluations as adopting materials and techniques that are OER often requires some degree of effort.
34. The information that I obtained from my own searches and from the University support person's searches for content-specific information that is up-to-date, research-based and evidence-based was very sparse for my field of study/use.
35. The college does not put an emphasis on OER but the university does.

36. Support? If you define creative license as support, then yes. I like the freedom to tailor my course within the confines of the discipline-- rhetoric and composition.
37. Support is sufficient. Time for discovery and course integration are lacking at the department level.
38. Support is adequate, but usually consists of making us aware of open access texts.
39. So far it is not my experience. As far as I know this is not even within the metrics used to evaluate or assess professional performance.
40. Our institution provides a wealth of knowledge and resources, but there is a need to spread the word so to speak, as traditional teaching and learning needs to adapt to such opportunities.
41. Our department provides a lot of autonomy to instructors. This is good, but it makes it hard to disseminate pedagogical support because instructors need to take initiative to find and pursue resources and face few consequences if they do not.
42. Not sure. OER can be helpful, but most of what I've had access to is lesson slides. Software, simulations, games and interactive tools would be extremely helpful for the kind of teaching I do.
43. Not sure. Not very familiar with OER in my field.
44. not sure
45. Not aware of any resources
46. No. Course releases and honorarium to develop/write Open Educational Materials. I won't do it without offset of other responsibilities because I would rather just use books that exist, even though they require students to purchase them.
47. No. Very little support. This may be partially because we are on a satellite campus.
48. No. The office was super disorganized
49. No. Faculty are too distributed
50. No. We got a letter from the bookstore telling us that we should adopt OER, but I have no idea how.
51. No, The problem seems to be the scheduling of help sessions. There is little consideration for teaching obligations. In other words any time there is some sort of instructional meeting scheduled it during class schedules.
52. No, I have never seen any support for instructors from my institution

53. No earthly idea.
54. Never enough support, but I working with a great team!
55. My institution is not averse to my discipline, but overall its emphasis is STEM
56. More workshops on how to use material would be great. Especially information on how to edit existing material.
57. It was hard to figure out whom to contact and what the rules are.
58. Institutional support is there. Content for my courses isn't available in the current repositories I've seen.
59. If they do, it's not well marketed.
60. I think that once more individuals become more familiar with OER that there will be additional support and resources.
61. I routinely use free materials from a variety of sources but have never used formal OER. I cannot answer the question because I don't know if OER has content that is related to my classes.
62. I realize that OER sources exist. But, I have not been updated about the credibility, usefulness, and applicability of these sources for my class. I have very little time to determine what to use or how to use any source. So, I typically use the textbooks that others recommend or books that are provided quickly and easily. (e.g., provided by Norton)
63. I honestly do not know at this point.
64. I haven't honestly been looking into this as I have little time left in this job.
65. I haven't discussed this with my institution.
66. I have not looked into this enough to know. There may be many resources available that I am unaware of. I would like to learn more about this.
67. I have no idea.
68. I have no idea, which is a problem in itself
69. I have no idea
70. I had never heard of OER until I read the email asking me to participate in this survey.
71. I guess the UA does but I'm so busy, I haven't paused to take notice.
72. I feel as though my institution would prefer to generate revenue at its own bookstore through requiring textbook purchases. Though OER would significantly help students financially, it unfortunately seems as though

the institution is more invested in maintaining this revenue stream, especially as it encourages the adoption of the Infinite Access online textbook system.

73. I don't think it does for my discipline, but I am new to OER so I am not entirely sure what is out there.
74. I don't know of anyone in this department using OER. If they are, it has not been communicated to the faculty as a whole.
75. I don't know
76. I constantly receive up-to-date information about OER from TLT at Penn State Univ. They provide tremendous help to me, and my students, to take advantage of technology involved in OER.
77. I cannot assess accurately.
78. I believe they do. However, I have not pursued this option so I don't know the full extent of the support available.
79. I believe that there is sufficient support for adopting OER. I have had good experience with the OER working group in searching and finding existing OER materials. There are several initiatives for developing OERs as well, but I have not had the opportunity to participate.
80. I am very uncertain about all aspects of OER. I am not certain if this is because I am not paying attention to available resources or if the resources are missing.
81. I am unaware of what support is provided in OER
82. I am on a 9 month renewable contract, am not allowed to attend faculty meetings, and am treated as inferior because I only have a masters. Thus, it feels damn near impossible to introduce significant changes to the program. I have faced strong backlash in the past and find that it will be more worth while to wait until I have a more permanent position.
83. I am not sure
84. I am not aware of any support for adopting OER.
85. I am neutral on this as I have not had time to investigate. I find that NCSU usually has the resources and support necessary.
86. good initiative; I will definitely think about this the next time I'm scheduled to teach the introductory course where this would best fit, but OERs don't seem appropriate for the more specialized 300 and 400-level courses that I'm teaching this coming year
87. For those that receive support, the support is excellent. Unfortunately the support can be spread around relatively few individuals - so more support from higher administration would be helpful.

88. Don't know.
89. don't know about OER
90. As I am unsure of my institution's approach and acceptance of OER, it would seem to indicate that there is insufficient support in my discipline for OER use.
91. as far as I know they do not provide any but I am not in a field where there would be a lot, if any, OER material available.
92. Again, never heard of OER before today. And my PhD is in Education ... and I graduated in this decade. Have never heard of this.
93. Adopting, yes. Creating, no. The time commitment would be so much for creating OERs. Without a course buy-out, I don't think it would be possible for faculty in my department.
94. Adopting these sorts of materials usually requires some extra effort on the part of faculty which is not recognized or compensated.