**Abstract:**

Textbook prices have increased at three times the rate of inflation in the past 30 years, and many students have trouble affording them. Open Educational Resources (OER) can help address this problem -- textbooks, syllabi, activities, and course modules available without charge or access barriers. During this workshop, participants will learn the “what,” “why,” and “how” of OER, including an overview of OER and Creative Commons licensing, benefits to students, faculty, and institutions, and examples of courses that use OER. More than half of the session time will be devoted to small group work and/or discussions.

This discussion responds to the conference theme of “Sharing Best Teaching Practice, Building International Networks” by improving the lives of students, many of whom face difficult financial choices. Textbook prices have been increasing at triple the rate of inflation (Senack, 2014), and many students have difficulty paying for textbooks; they may opt not to purchase the book, or have to choose between buying a book and paying for food or car repairs. When students do not have a book, their performance suffers--and teaching is more difficult, too.

Compounding this problem, the students who can least afford to purchase expensive textbooks are also a growing segment of the student population. There are and will continue to be fewer people aged 18 every year. This means that schools are trying to attract more non-traditional students, including many who would not, in the past, have gone to college. In addition, there is a trend toward outcome-based funding for public institutions of higher education; some outcomes are graduation and retention rates of new students. If students fail a course because they cannot afford the textbook, then they will most likely take longer to graduate, or they might be more likely to drop out altogether. Both of these contribute to worse metrics.

Open Educational Resources (OER) is a relatively new movement that seeks to provide alternatives to expensive textbooks produced by traditional publishers, thereby addressing the problems described above. In addition, the authors have found that using open resources addressed many other problems and learning goals for our students, resulting in significantly better classroom experiences for both professors and students.

**Workshop Format**

We propose a 90-minute session; the first 30 minutes will be presenting information, and 60 minutes will be devoted to group discussions and/or work time.

Presentation Outline:

1. What is OER and Why Does it Matter? (10 minutes):
   1. The Textbook Problem (as described below)
   2. What are Open Educational Resources?
2. Why should you use OER? (10 minutes)
   1. OER as a social justice movement (part of a larger open source community)
   2. Benefits beyond lower cost to students, including to the institution and faculty.
3. How can you convert your course to OER? (15 minutes)
   1. “Adopt, Adapt, Create” model
   2. Descriptions of authors’ uses of OER in their classes; examples span the range from minimal use to 100% of materials.
   3. Brief introduction to existing resources (<http://libguides.worcester.edu/oeri>)
4. Small Group Work (30--45 minutes) Possible topics include:
   1. What problems do you have that OER might be able to address?
   2. How would you like to incorporate OER into your courses?
   3. How can we, within our academic organizations such as AOM,  
      encourage, support, and/or build an infrastructure for OER in our field?
5. Regroup and Debrief  (10--15 minutes)

**Workshop Overview**

The organizer and presenters of this proposal are a librarian and two faculty members. The proposal is based on work that the faculty members have been doing in conjunction with a library initiative to increase the amount of OER being developed and used at our institution. Versions of this workshop were submitted to the Eastern Academy of Management annual conference and the Academy of Management Annual Conference as Professional Development Workshops. This version is designed as more of a discussion, and the hope is to appeal to Management Educators in particular.

**The Textbook Problem**

The average annual cost for textbooks in the U.S. is $600 (Schaffhauser 2016). Further, there is a relationship between student success and textbook costs. A Florida study found that 65% of students do not purchase textbooks at some point due to cost, and that 35% take fewer courses because of textbook cost. (Florida Virtual Campus 2012). A U.S. Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG) study of 2,039 students from 150+ universities surveyed in 2014 found the following:

* 65% of students had skipped buying a textbook because of cost.
* 94% who had foregone purchasing a textbook were concerned their choice would hurt their grade. Of those 55% were “significantly concerned.”
* Nearly half said the cost of textbooks impacted how many/which classes they took each semester.
* 82% said they would do significantly better in a course if the textbook was available free online and buying a hard copy was optional. (Senack 2014)

**Why Use Open Educational Resources?**In this part of the workshop, we will discuss reasons to use OER that go beyond the obvious financial benefits to students, and related social justice implications. We will describe benefits to students, faculty and institutions. One of the most rewarding and surprising results of moving to open resources is that our classes have improved: our students are better prepared and engaged; they are learning in more complex ways; and the overall teaching experience has improved. For example, when students have all their materials from day one, not only is it is easier to teach when the whole class has done the reading, the start-of-term ritual of “who still needs to get the book?/I ordered it two weeks ago but it’s not here yet” entirely disappeared. Choosing our own materials allows us to find examples that “layer” concepts and demonstrate the complexity of organizations and interrelatedness of concepts, such as power + organizational culture + conflict-handling approaches.

**How To Move to Open Resources**

In this section, we will introduce the “Adopt, Adapt, Create” framework for moving to (more) open resources for a course. We will illustrate this continuum using examples of our own management courses (Organizational Behavior, Strategy, Negotiation, and other electives).

**Small Group Work**

More than half of the time will be devoted to small group work and discussions, depending on the needs and interests of attendees. Open source materials are developed and used as part of a community, so during this time we want participants to make connections and begin to develop their own community for this purpose. Finally, we recognize that there is a tremendous amount of information and a limited amount of time, so we will provide a set of handouts that include links to online resources as well as syllabi and materials lists for our courses.

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