HBCU Academic Librarians OER Summit

Open Educational Resources: Impact, Concerns and HBCUs

Keynote Address

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Introduction

- Impact

- Issues in the OER Arena

- Survey on OER conducted at SC State University

- Perceptions/Concerns about OER by SC State Faculty

- Retention

- My Musings: Why OER have not taken root at HBCUs

- Challenge

OER

Definition

"Open educational resources are "learning and teaching materials available online for anyone to use, repurpose, and share. Some of these materials might be entire textbooks, but they can also include lesson plans, lecture slides, classroom games, and videos. And most importantly, they are affordable—and often free.""

Source: Institute of Humane Studies at George Mason University

There has been a 90% rise in the cost of textbooks since 1998.

OER Impact

Increasing use of OER in Higher Ed

- 2018 survey by the Babson Survey Research Group
  - Over 4,000 faculty surveyed

"OER has made inroads: 22 percent of people who teach introductory courses … use it as required material, up from 15 percent" in the previous year.

Beth McMurtrie. "Professors Worry About the Cost of Textbooks .…" *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Vol. 65, Issue 18, 1/18/2019.

Foundation Investment

- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has invested over $40M in OER since 2001
  - MIT OpenCourseWare
  - Carnegie Mellon University's Open Learning Initiative
  - Creative Commons
  - African Virtual University

OER Impact (cont'd)

Investment by the Obama Administration

- $2B Labor-Education Project in 2010

"Community colleges that compete for federal money to serve students online will be obliged to make those materials – videos, text, assessments, curricula, diagnostic tools, and more – available to everyone in the world, free, under a Creative Commons license."

Kevin Carey. "The Quiet Revolution in Open Learning." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Vol. 57, Issue 37, 5/20/2011.

Efficacy and Perception.

A review of studies show that "students generally achieve the same learning outcomes when OER are utilized and simultaneously save significant amounts of money."

John Hilton. "Open educational resources and college textbook choices: a review of research on efficacy and perceptions." 19 February 2016, Springerlink.com.

OER Impact

- OER are not high on the agenda of faculty in Higher Ed

OER have not reached a "critical threshold" because of the focus on "simply expanding access to digital content. It has ignored how it is used within the educational setting or focused much on ensuring quality or even supporting new innovative methods of teaching and engaging student's learning."

Ulf-Daniel Ehlers. "From Open Educational Resources to Open Educational Practices." eLearning Papers, n 23.

The "OER explosion" hasn't decimated the iron walls of academia. We still have a long way to go in the "movement."

OER Issues

- Sustainability relating to
  - Gaining access to operational funding
  - Technical issues
  - Quality of content
- Legal/licensing
- Etc.

Stephen Downes. "Models for Sustainable Open Educational Resources."
Interdisciplinary Journal of E-Learning and Learning Objects. (2007).

Norm Friesen. "Open Educational Resources: New Possibilities for Change and Sustainability."
November 2009.

The SCSU Faculty Survey on OER

Extra, Extra, Read All About It!

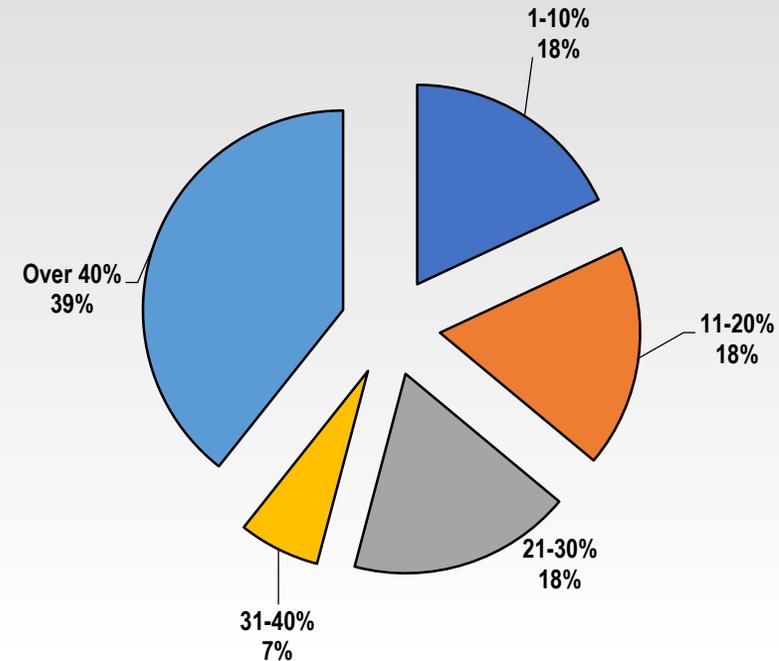**Hot Off the Press**

Survey Conducted February 2-7, 2020

Faculty are at the Center of OER

Student Acquisition of Textbooks at SCSU

During the last two academic years, including the current 2019-2020 academic year, what percentage of your students did not buy or obtain required textbooks for the courses you taught?

1-10%   =   11
11-20%   =   11
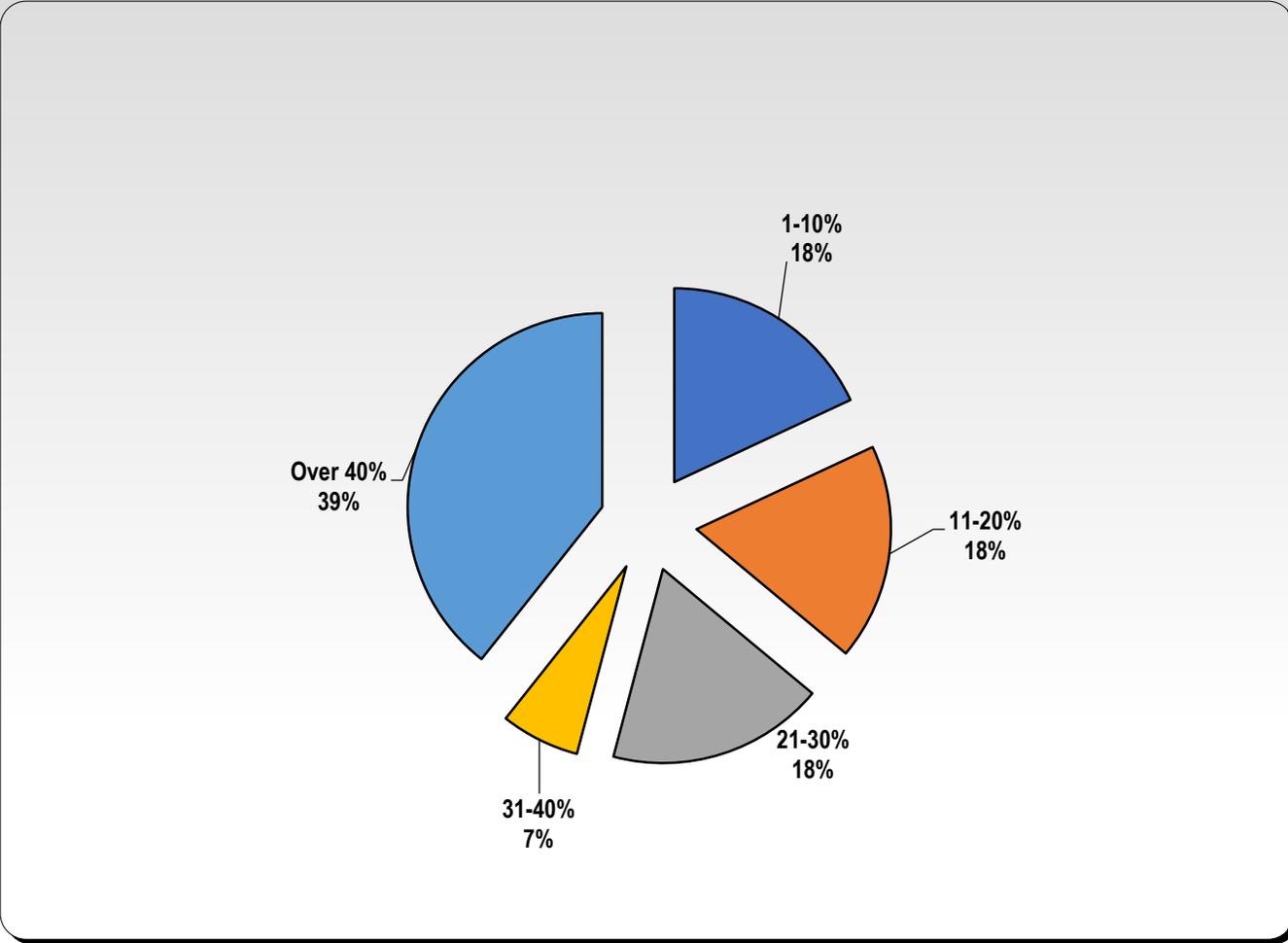21-30%   =   11
31-40%   =   4
Over 40%   =   24

- N=61 or 1/3 of SCSU Faculty
- Survey conducted February 2020

Student Acquisition of Textbooks at SCSU

- 36% or 22 faculty indicated that
- 1-20% of students did not buy textbooks.
- 18% or 11 faculty indicated that 21-30% of students did not buy textbooks.
- 46% or 28 faculty indicated that 31% or more students did not by textbooks.

Almost 50% of the faculty surveyed believe that approximately 1/3 of students do not purchase/acquire textbooks.

Pie chart labels:
- 1-10% 18%
- 11-20% 18%
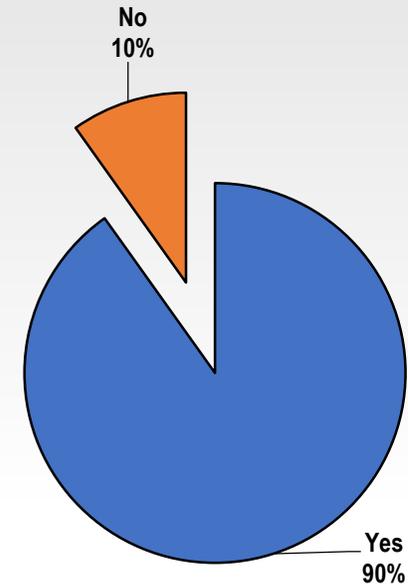- 21-30% 18%
- 31-40% 7%
- Over 40% 39%

Aptitude to Using OER by SCSU Faculty

Are you willing to explore the use of Open Educational Resources for your classes starting in Fall 2020?

N   =   61
Yes   =   55
No   =   6

90% of respondents are willing to consider using OER in Fall 2020.
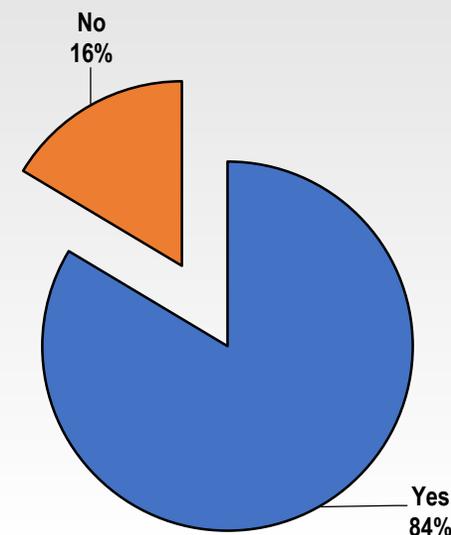

No
10%

Yes
90%

Commitment to OER Training by SCSU Faculty

If the Division of Academic Affairs offered workshops to help you find and use Open Educational Resources for your courses, will you commit to attending at least two of those workshops?

N   =   61
Yes   =   51
No   =   10

84% of respondents will commit to training on OER.
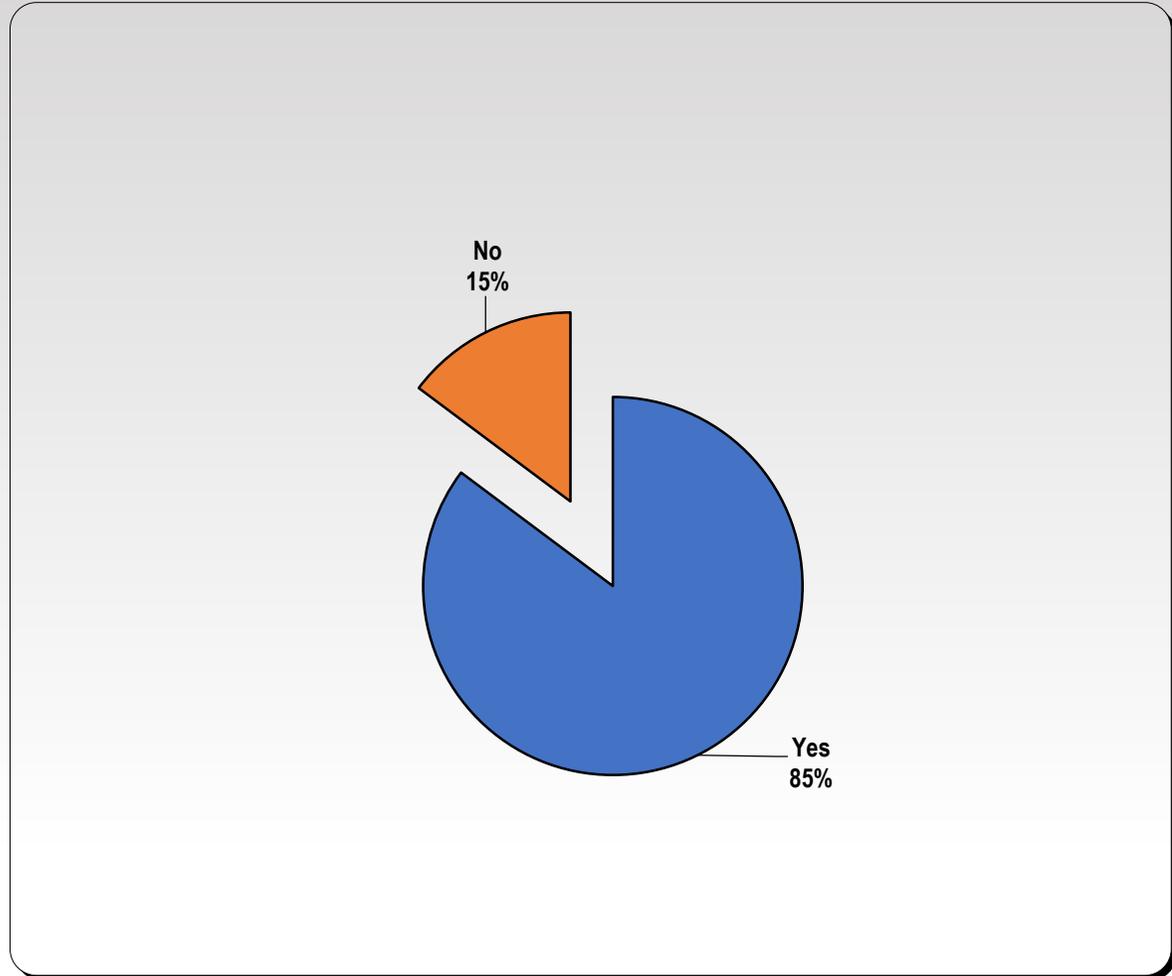
No
16%

Yes
84%

Confidence in the efficacy of OER by SCSU Faculty

Do you think if you used Open Educational Resources in most of your courses, especially in the General Education courses, that would help students access information you need them to read/explore from the first week of classes?

N = 61

Yes = 52

No = 9

85% of respondents believe OER will help students.

No
15%

Yes
85%

Takeaways from OER Survey at SCSU

- Approx. 50% of faculty believe that 1/3 of students do not purchase or acquire textbooks.

- 85% of SCSU Faculty

  - Believe OER will help students

  - Willing to use OER in Fall 2020

  - Willing to attend two training sessions to find and use OER

- Will 20-25% of SCSU Faculty Utilize OER in Fall 2020 and beyond?

  - It depends… on the faculty

14

Perceptions/Concerns about OER by SCSU Faculty

The Law Firm of Cash, Pinkston & Williams

- Students are not buying textbooks because they are financially strapped.

- OER save students money.

- Some faculty already use OER.

- OER are great for online courses.

- Let's adopt OER!

  - **Hoorah for early adopters, but what about the other faculty?**

Perceptions/Concerns about OER by SCSU Faculty (cont'd)

Reading Problem (won't make a difference!)

- Free or not, OER can't solve the critical problem, i.e. students aren't reading/don't want to read.

Time Constraints (not doing it!)

- Faculty don't have time to revamp courses based on OER due to other responsibilities.
  - summer grants
  - summer courses
  - regular semester duties

Perceptions/Concerns about OER by SCSU Faculty (cont'd)

Too Much Work (not doing it!)

- Too much work to revamp courses based on OER (course assignments already based on current textbooks).

Resources (must be very easy to adopt otherwise not doing it!)

- Need instructor resources bundled with OER.
  - Test banks, instructor manuals and outlines, editable slide presentations, clip art, etc.

Support issues (not doing it without support!)

- Need for support from professional staff to implement.

Perceptions/Concerns about OER by SCSU Faculty (cont'd)

- OER are great for online courses – I don't teach online.

- OER are unreliable – need constant updating.

- Few are peer-reviewed – not as good as textbooks.

- Coverage of topics or depth not guaranteed – not enough information for the course.

- More appropriate for some fields – I don't think it's good for my field.

Retention Alert!

OER Can Have a Positive Impact on Retention

SCSU Retention Data 2014 to 2019*

Retention/Attrition Fall to Fall 2014-2019

	Retention	Attrition
• Avg. rates for all students	71%	29%
• Avg. rates for Undergrads	72%	28%
• Avg. rates for Graduate students	81%	19%

Retention/Attrition Fall to Spring 2014-2019

• Avg. rates for all students	83%	17%
• Avg. rates for Undergrads	83%	17%
• Avg. rates for Graduate students	84%	16%

*This data does not include 207 special graduate re-certification students.

Major Causes of Low Retention at SCSU

- **Students do not have enough funds to pay for college**

- **Poor Academic Performance by students**

- **Poor Customer Service by employees contribute to negative student experience**

- **Students have Social and/or Personal Challenges (find it difficult to fit in or function optimally)**

- **Students have Health/Undeclared Disabilities/Counseling-Related Issues**

Retention Rates (%) at OER Summit Institutions

Institution	Rate
Allen University	37
Wilberforce University	39
Arkansas Baptist College	40
Jarvis Christian College	42
Shaw University	43
Denmark Technical College	44
Saint Augustine's University	45
Huston-Tillotson University	51
Lawson State Community	51
Langston University	52
Bennett College	53
Central State University	54
Edwards Waters College	54
Miles College	54
Texas Southern University	54
West Virginia State University	55
St. Phillip's College	56
Benedict College	57
Alabama State University	59
Trenholm State Community	61
Southern University and A&M	64
Tennessee State University	64

Institution	Rate
Bethune-Cookman University	65
Lincoln University	65
University of the Virgin Island	67
Kentucky State University	68
Paul Quinn College	68
Fayetteville State University	69
Johnson C. Smith University	69
Philander Smith College	69
South Carolina State University	69
Dillard University	70
Talladega College	70
Delaware State University	71
Prairie View A&M University	71
Grambling State University	72
Morgan State University	72
Simmons College of Kentucky	72
Xavier University of Louisiana	72

Institution	Rate
University District of Columbia	73
Hampton University	74
Fort Valley State University	75
Winston-Salem State University	77
Claflin University	78
Morehouse College	81
Fisk University	81
North Carolina Central University	82
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	83
Clinton College	89

Link to Retention

- Retention impacts enrollment, budgets and graduation rates.
  - Enrollment fell this year at SCSU

  - Every 100 students = $1M approx.

  - Currently enduring budget cuts.

  - Graduation rate is only 34%.

  - A 2016 Virginia Community College study showed
    - Students were less likely to withdraw from OER based courses
    - Success rate in those courses was 6% higher than in courses with traditional textbooks.

    Source: "OER: Best Practices." https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com

Link to Retention (cont'd)

- Implementing OER can help address low retention by

    - Reducing the cost of attendance (textbooks)

    - Improving academic performance (students who have course materials from the start of classes tend to perform better)

    - Providing funds for support services (every 100 students retained = $1M approx.)

- When students put off buying textbooks, "they fall behind academically." Economic issues become academic issues which can lead to the vicious cycle of losing financial aid eligibility due to failure to maintain "satisfactory academic progress."

    - Source: Matt Reed. "OER as Retention Initiative." *Inside Higher Education 25 February 2015.*

Why OER have Not Taken Root at HBCUs?

- ## <u>The Faculty</u>

"Full-time faculty [at SCSU] have academic appointments and ranks of instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. These include Department Chairs, Deans, library faculty, associate provosts, provosts, researchers, and directors."

Source: *SCSU Faculty Handbook* (2018)

Why OER have Not Taken Root at HBCUs? (cont'd)

- **The Faculty**
  - **Faculty Awareness and Education (limited)**
  - **Faculty Attitude (negative or non-supportive)**
  - **Faculty Champions (none or few or not-supported)**
  - **Faculty Learning Communities (need to establish)**
  - **Faculty Workshops (need to host and fund)**
  - **Faculty Senate Endorsement (not on agenda)**
  - **Faculty Incentives (little or none provided)**
  - **Faculty Head/CAO (not excited, hasn't used, hasn't connected the dots, hasn't championed the cause)**
  - **Faculty Concerns/Perceptions (not adequately addressed)**

Why OER have Not Taken Root at HBCUs? (cont'd)

- ## Faculty Concerns

  - Students won't read; implementation won't make a difference.

  - It takes too much time to implement.

  - It takes too much work to revamp my courses.

  - Resources may not be available to facilitate easy adoption.

  - Implementation requires professional support.

Faculty Concerns Must be Addressed

Remember: the Curriculum is in the hands of the Faculty!

Why OER have Not Taken Root at HBCUs? (cont'd)

- ## Faculty Concerns
  - OER are for online courses – I don't teach online.

  - OER are unreliable – need constant updating.

  - Few are peer-reviewed – not as good as textbooks.

  - OER do not provide the range of knowledge or depth for my course.

  - I don't think OER are suitable for my field.

Faculty Concerns Must be Addressed

Remember: the Curriculum is in the hands of the Faculty!

OER: The Challenge!

- Replicate what occurs at this summit at your institutions

  - Network and break down silos by working in interdisciplinary teams

  - Get the information from authoritative sources/experts

  - Form a Faculty Learning Community or Advocacy Group on campus

    - Develop and implement strategies to increase awareness and education about OER
    - Change faculty attitude from non-supportive to excited

OER: The Challenge! (cont'd)

- Serve as Faculty Champions for OER in your departments, colleges, and at University-wide faculty meetings.

- Insist on having faculty workshops on OER at Faculty Development Institutes and other forums.

- Lobby the Faculty Senate to endorse implementation of OER

- Press the Provost to support OER and provide faculty incentives

- Or get Provost to serve as keynote speaker at a summit so that s/he gets the point! ☺

(Bonus Slides with SCSU Faculty Comments from the February 2020 OER Survey Added After this Slide)

Thank You!!

Faculty Comments

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
OER's cost saving to students is a good thing. "Many of the students at the university are financially challenged!"	"I already use these and know what is best resource in my field."
Some OER do not have sufficient information to use as textbooks.	"I used OpenStax for one course last semester and it worked out ok."
I don't have time to write my own textbook.	"I already use OERs extensively in my courses."
Student don't buy textbooks because they don't feel they need them.	"I started implementing OER's last academic year and it has been very successful."
"Demanding that we use unreliable free resources even if they don't fit our field of study insults the work we are trying to do."	"I think it should be adopted."

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
OER works for some fields but for others they rely on 1) constantly updating information, 2) adaptation to changing software, and 3) usage of copyrighted material such as visual material, art, or music; OR OERs simply do not work at all.	"Implementing OER by fall 2020 will be a challenge mainly due to the all course content including lectures, exams , quizzes currently being used based on the textbook [that would] need to be overhauled. Some publishers offer digital versions or PDF versions of the textbook for [less] rates than hard print.
I have been using OpenStax College Physics textbook since Fall 2015. No student in P 250 or P 252 has had to purchase a textbook. We still do require purchase of a $42 per semester access card for online homework, but that is considerably less than the cost of a text book and the online access."	"Switching from the current Spanish textbook I use in my classes would create a lot of extra work; I wrote my own workbook for my students and I would most likely have to make lots of changes to it."

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"This could potentially have a huge positive impact on student success in online courses."	I would recommend the university get the licenses of some engineering software platform such as Matlab and Maple.
As an English prof., I think it would be great for my classes if they could access texts at no (or low) cost, and I would support OER because students aren't buying textbooks.	I believe the adoption of OER would be good for our students provided required resources are available in the public domain.
I believe that this will be very helpful for students and faculty and I am all for it. Students will be able to access textbooks even if they have a lack of funds.	One of the more important situations is that now a days students are not very interested in reading at all. If we ask or suggest them to read materials on line, they show interest in class, but don't really read them on their own.

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"OER resources are suboptimal. They tend to be short and lacking in scaffolding. A few are peer-reviewed, and they tend to be better, but not as good as the better (or even the mediocre) commercial textbooks."	, but the value in having materials that all students can read is significant. Lastly, they tend to be online, and even THIS generation of students usually agrees that paper is a better medium.
"My students MUST buy the text book since it is 20% of their grades including attendance. It is mandatory to purchase book or workbook for them. But I also recommend OER for our students."	"Many students don't read materials sent to them electronically either on blackboard or by email. I am not sure Open Educational Resources will be any different."

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"I have already adopted OER for the majority of my courses."	"This survey assumes I don't already use open access resources - which I do."
"I have investigated open educational resources for my area. While it is not bad, it does require a lot of supplementation as their (OpenStax in particular) explanations are not as in-depth as the costly textbook."	"Even though students know about the free textbook … the students STILL don't read. We have found a cheaper textbook that has more digital resources available for both faculty and students and will be switching to that company in the fall."
"With Open Educational Resources, faculty will need time to search and select the appropriate materials for the classes. It is a great idea."	"I think Fall 2020 is too soon to implement for all my classes or even one course. Keep in mind that some faculty teach and oversee grants during the semester and the summer.

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"Maybe, faculty can start with 1 course at a time. Also, the workshops will need to be offered when faculty [are] available and provide individual assistance to the faculty member."	"I think implementing the use of Open Educational Resources for the GEC courses at SCSU would be helpful for the students."
"The use of extended resources in the field of education is a standard practice. The textbook is [just] another resource."	"I think that this would more than likely be a good move for the University. However, some faculty members may not be as open because it would require you to possibly revamp an entire course based on the OERs that are used."
"Disadvantage: Open educational resources might not be up to date. Instructor resources might not be available."	"The only concern is how often these OER are updated. Are instructor resources available readily?"

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"I'm open to using OERs that will help my students to be successful in the courses I teach."	"Getting students to read is the problem, these resources may help, but they still need to read it."
"I am using OER in two of my classes this semester. I would be interested in finding resources for all of them. Thanks!"	The students don't want to purchase the Text Book. Anything that helps to solve this problem will go a long way to help them better understand the things they are taught in the class.
"It will be helpful to our students since most do not buy any textbooks."	Open educational resources is a good idea so long we have resources for all topics including instructor resources are available.

Faculty Comments vs Insight from Summit Attendees

Faculty Comments	Faculty Comments
"Workshop: Create a short video for faculty and instructional staff to watch. or make it both online and face to face workshop."	"OER: A list of websites and disciplines (if possible) that is updated every semester and shared with faculty and instructional staff will be very useful in my opinion."
"Ease financial burden on the students in buying textbooks."	