

Open Educational Resources

What are Open Educational Resources?

Open educational resources (OERs) are free and openly-licensed educational materials that are used for teaching, learning, research, and other purposes. These materials are made available on a website for unlimited student, faculty, and public use. OERs can include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and other similar teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under a Creative Commons license.

The Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology

[PA 00-187](#) created the Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology (CET). The commission oversees the management and integration of technology in the state's schools, libraries, colleges, and universities. It is comprised of 20 appointed members that represent the interests of the CET's constituents in K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and libraries.

The responsibilities of the commission include designing and managing the State Educational Technology Goals and Plan. One of the focuses of this state plan is digital learning and OERs.

Why Do Many OERs have a Creative Commons license?

Creative Commons (CC) is a nonprofit organization that provides licensing structures that the public can use to license copyrighted work and give others permission to use it, if they abide by the licensing terms.

A CC license is a public copyright license that allows for the free distribution of otherwise copyrighted work. A CC license permits the author or creator of the work to give other people the right to use, share, and build upon the author's original work. OERs often have a CC license to let you know how the material can be used.

GoOpen CT

In 2019, the CET launched the GoOpen CT campaign, and Connecticut became one of 20 states to take the U.S. Department of Education's "Go Open" pledge. This campaign is an effort which includes social media outreach to raise awareness of OERs promise, development of OER resources, and a survey to gather data on K-12 and higher education educators' use of OERs. Respondents answered questions about current use and perceived benefits of OERs, barriers to adoption, and needs around training and support. The commission also works collaboratively with the other participating states to share best practices.



OERs and Higher Education

Recent Connecticut Legislation

[PA 19-117](#), § 147 established the Connecticut OER Coordinating Council, and required the council to establish an OER program to lower the cost of textbooks and course materials for high-impact courses at state higher education institutions. "High-impact" courses are defined as instruction courses for which OERs would make a significant positive financial impact on the students taking the course due to the number of students taking the course or the market value of the course's required printed textbook or other resources.

The Office of Higher Education (OHE) executive director appoints the council's 17 members, including (1) a state-wide coordinator; (2) faculty members, administrators, and staff members from the state's public and independent higher education institutions; and (3) a student from any public or independent education institution in the state.

The council's responsibilities include, among other things, identifying high-impact courses for which OERs will be developed and establishing a competitive grant program for state higher education institutions for the development of OERs for high impact courses.

The Rise in College Textbook Prices

The price of college textbooks has increased 135% since the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics began keeping track of college textbook costs in 2001. The chart below shows the increase over the past 10 years.

Year	Cost of College Textbooks*
2010	168.77
2011	177.35
2012	189.64
2013	201.70
2014	209.59
2015	221.99
2016	234.25
2017	240.34
2018	242.63
2019	236.90

Source: [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

*Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

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