

About...

Open Textbooks and Open Educational Resources (OER)

Discovering Quality Open Textbooks

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A Faculty Perspective on Open Textbooks

- Faculty have the ability to adapt and remix the textbook to suit their needs...In other words, an *increase* in academic freedom!
- ...the looks on your students' faces when you tell them that you have adopted an open textbook. *You have them at hello.*
- Open textbooks are an extension of the (open research) philosophy and permit faculty to live more closely in concert with their values.

Excerpted from Rajiv Jhangaini, Ph.D.
thatpsycprof.com/blog/4/23/2014

Why Use an OER or Open Textbooks?

OER and Open Textbooks provide easy, early student access to course materials, allow instructors to revise or remix content to align with their learning outcomes, and reduce the financial burden of textbook and other course materials costs for students.

High textbook and course materials costs can negatively impact a student's academic success, course load and time to graduation. Recent U.S. and Student PIRGS research has shown that:

- 65% of students skipped buying or renting some of their required textbooks due to cost. Of those students who did not purchase their textbook, 94% said this choice made them concerned about their grade.
- Nearly 50% of students said that textbook prices had impacted which courses and how many courses they were able to take.
- When students are required to purchase a bundled a textbook with an access code for courseware, it often eliminates less costly alternatives such as purchasing on the used book market.

U.S. PIRG Education Fund and Student PIRGS, January 27, 2014, [Fixing the Broken Textbook Market](#), The Student PIRGs, February 2016, [Covering the Cost: Why We Can No Longer Afford to Ignore High Textbook Prices](#), The Student PIRGS, January 25, 2018, [Open 101: An Action Plan for Affordable Textbooks](#),



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About...

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What is an open textbook?

An open textbook is an instructional textbook publication in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, readable on computers or other electronic devices, made freely available through a host or online organizational service. Open textbooks authors assign open licenses, which stipulate how the material may be reused.

What about quality?

Open textbooks that result from grant funded initiatives are often written by professors and other scholars in their fields of expertise. They understand concerns about quality, and generally use the same editorial rigor as commercial textbooks. Additionally, projects such as the University of Minnesota's [Open Textbook Library](#) solicits independent quality review of its catalog of free, peer-reviewed and openly-licensed textbooks. As with any textbook, you are the final judge of whether an open textbook meets the needs of your course.

What makes a textbook “open”?

A textbook published under the “open” model provides for the following:

1. **Retain** - the right to make, own, and control copies of the content (e.g., download, duplicate, store, and manage)
2. **Reuse** - the right to use the content in a wide range of ways (e.g., in a class, in a study group, on a website, in a video)
3. **Revise** - the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language)
4. **Remix** - the right to combine the original or revised content with other material to create something new (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup)
5. **Redistribute** - the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend)

Are all online textbooks open?

No. Other online models include commercial electronic textbooks, or e-textbooks. Access is restricted to a single purchaser, and may expire at the end of the semester. Other forms of restricted access include *Bundling*, which require purchase of *Access Codes*. Commercial publisher Digital Rights Management (DRM) usually prevents libraries from providing multiple student access to e-textbooks. These commercial models do not allow the ability to retain, reuse, revise, remix or redistribute, so they are not considered “open”.

Who pays open educational material authors?

Open publishing models are still evolving, so author payment varies. Some are paid royalties on print sales, some receive grant support, and others choose to write on their own time and receive no financial compensation.

Who owns the copyright for an open educational material? The textbook authors generally own the copyright to their materials. Authors select an open license, usually Creative Commons, that stipulates how their OER published materials may be reused. A CC-BY license assures the OER meets the 5 R criteria to truly be considered an OER.

What if my student wants a print version of the textbook?

Many open textbooks have affordably priced print options. For example, all OpenStax textbooks have a full-color print option available, and prices run from \$38.50 to \$75.00. Students can even purchase print versions through the bookstore using financial aid, if the bookstore is notified an open text is being used.



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