

CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY

Open Educational Resources | Feature

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16 OER Sites Every Educator Should Know

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Open educational resources not only save students from triple-digit (or more!) textbook costs, but they also allow instructors to mix-and-match content for a more personalized, engaging learning experience. Here are 16 resources that offer a wide range of content and tools to help implement OER in just about any course.

1) [College Open Textbooks](#)

This site lists open textbooks organized by subject area, many of which have been peer reviewed for their suitability at community colleges.

2) [Learningpod](#)

Pegged as the "largest library of free, online practice questions in the world, this [Kaplan](#) division teamed up with OpenStax to create questions sets specifically for its open textbooks.

3) [Lumen Learning](#)

This nonprofit provides open courses with "zero textbook cost." Their curriculum comes with all the OER students will require.

4) [MERLOT II](#)

The [California State University System](#)'s collection of slightly more than 45,000 resources is rated, peer-reviewed and tallied by how many "personal collections" each resides in. It lists more than 3,000 open textbooks, some of which have accessibility information for students with disabilities.

5) [MIT Open Courseware Online Textbooks](#)

[MIT](#)'s library of online textbooks is one of the few sources for OER on aeronautics, civil engineering and material science, among many other disciplines.

6) [OER Commons](#)

This digital hub created by the [Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education](#) offers 73,000 kinds of OER, along with tools for creating OER, training on how to use OER and the ability to create OER "Commons" — groups that share resources for a given purpose.

7) [Open Course Library](#)

Managed by the [Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges](#), this content is organized by course.

8) [Open Education Consortium](#)

The Open Education Consortium is a community of 240-plus schools as well as organizations and people who want to advance the idea of "open education." It features an OER resource toolkit, webinars, in-person events and links to open textbooks.

9) [Open Learning Initiative](#)

[Carnegie Mellon](#)'s (PA) open courses (and associated content) denote a marked emphasis on STEM, including computing.

10) [OpenStax CNX](#)

This is [Rice University](#)'s (TX) "open space," where educators have stashed thousands of learning objects that can be or are already organized into books. It is also the parent of OpenStax College.

11) [OpenStax College](#)

The basics are here: [College Physics](#), [Biology](#), [Introductory Statistics](#), along with six other textbooks and more on the way.

12) [OpenTextBookStore](#)

This site offers a catalog of OER textbooks focusing on math.

13) [Saylor.org](#)

Saylor Academy's resources cover content from art history to sociology with search filters that can help you locate just the right book, recording, presentation, video, chapter or image. For example, Melissa Barlett, instructor in biology for the Center for Life and Health Sciences at [Mohawk Valley Community College](#) (NY), uses [this 535-page PDF curriculum in her college success class](#).

14) [Spiral Physics](#)

[Monroe Community College](#) (NY) professor Paul D'Alessandris' calculus- and algebra-based introductory physics texts were written under an NSF grant, but when mainstream publishers expressed no interest, he placed it online for the entire English-reading world to grab.

15) [Teach Astronomy](#)

This online resource provides learning materials for introductory astronomy courses. At [South Florida State College](#), Natural Science Department Chair Erik Christensen did a mashup with Teach Astronomy's textbook and [astronomy simulations and animations from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln](#) to eliminate the need for his students to buy a \$165 textbook.

16) [The Orange Grove](#)

Plenty of state departments of education host digital repositories where their teachers can share content they've created. This one belongs to Florida, which has mandated that by 2015-2016 half of a K-12 district's textbook budget has to be spent for digital content and schools need to adopt digital-only curriculum. The state's colleges are already feeling the impact of those practices.

Editor's note: Stay tuned for our Complete Guide to Open Educational Resources, coming in our August issue.

About the Author

Dian Schaffhauser is a writer who covers technology and business for a number of publications. Contact her at dian@dischaffhauser.com.

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