

# UCW OER Committee Annual Report

April 1, 2022- March 31, 2023

## Executive Summary

### OER Committee Mandate

The mandate of the Open Educational Resources Committee (OER) is to support open educational resource initiatives at University Canada West (UCW) through the development of guidelines, support resources and services, and assistance with logistics. The committee works to enhance access to course materials and encourage the adoption of OER and Open Access resources.

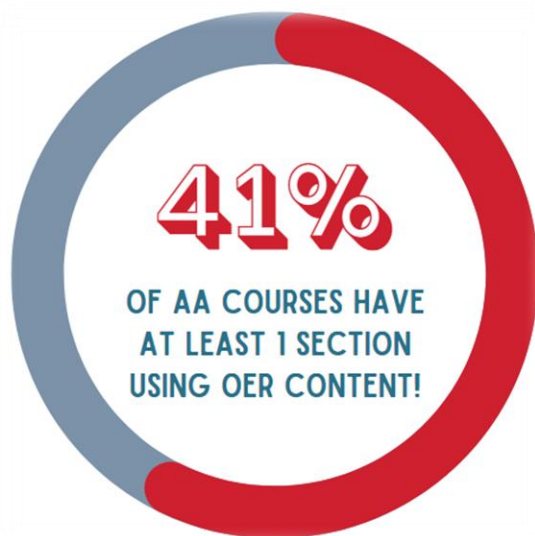
### Successes

Over the past year, the committee has continued to work with stakeholders to establish initiatives that educate faculty on the benefits of OER adoption and incentivize the use of these resources across departments. A focus on introductory courses with high enrollment and topics that have comprehensive OER coverage remain the priority. The OER Committee was also able to make progress on past objectives set in last year's annual report by partnering with the Associates of Arts program. This partnership created a more sustainable OER presence at the program level and increased the number of courses incorporating OER content. The Committee also invested in expanding OER outreach through the creation of new learning objects, the development of a faculty module for CTE's Productive Beginnings, and the partnership with UCW Wise development.

### A Review of the Year:

#### 1. Update to the Committee's Terms of Reference

In December 2022, the OER Committee reviewed and published an update to the committee's Terms of Reference (ToR). This update provided an opportunity to better articulate committee member responsibilities and open the committee to new roles allowing for greater institutional representation. The updated version is available through the portal on the [OER webpage](#).



#### 2. Expansion of the Zero Cost Textbook (ZCT) Initiative

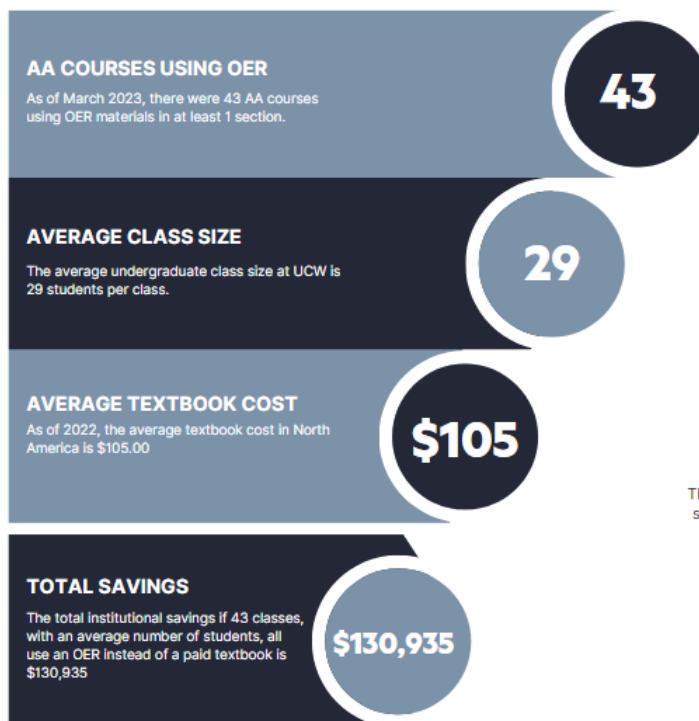
The OER Committee began working with the Associate of Arts (AA) program in 2022 to both support OER course development and help transition existing courses from using paid textbooks to OER resources. This collaboration has led to **41% of AA courses using OER content in at least one or more sections**, and a growing interest in the adoption and use of OERs more broadly as well. This is an **increase of 104% from last year's OER use** and adoption in the program.

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As of Spring 2023, 43 classes in the Associates of Arts program have at least one section using OER content. For each student in these classes, this translates into an average savings of \$105 per class<sup>1</sup>. Collectively, the 43 courses, with an average of 29 students in each section, would see a cumulative savings of \$130,935. This conservative estimate assumes only 1 section of each AA course is using OERs.

The data is currently limited as we do not yet have a sustainable and comprehensive method for documenting how many sections of each course use the standardized course syllabus. As a result, the OER Committee is only able to capture and calculate a conservative estimate of savings for 1 section of each class. If the approved OER text was standardized for all sections, we would see more equitable savings distributed across all sections of the course and more uniformity across the department as well. This would lead to more substantial and consistent savings across the program as some courses have over 44 sections.



**\$130,935 is the estimated student body savings**

This is a conservative estimate based on a single section converting materials to OER. We expect the savings to be significantly higher as many sections rely on the Load shell for content.

### 3. Creation of faculty OER workshops

Another way the OER Committee expanded its reach over the last year is through the creation and delivery of educational workshops and materials for faculty. The Committee developed an OER section for the Productive Beginnings workshop series offered by the CTE. This module will help to provide faculty with a foundational understanding of Open Access resources and contact information to learn more. The OER Committee will continue to work with the CTE to ensure the course meets the needs of its users and is frequently updated.

### 4. Partnership with UCW Wise

UCW’s new institutional repository, UCW Wise, amplifies the shared goal of making knowledge and information more accessible for all. The repository, which will house the work produced by UCW

<sup>1</sup> Hanson, M. (2022, July 15). *Average cost of college textbooks*. Education Data Initiative. <https://educationdata.org/average-cost-of-college-textbooks>

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students, faculty, and the surrounding community, will serve as both an accessible space for knowledge translation and the preservation of institutional memory. This allows us to share and promote UCW scholarly achievements more widely with the post-secondary community and demonstrates our commitment to the values of Open Access.

UCW Wise is scheduled to launch in Summer 2023.

## Goals for the future:

Using the data gathered from this past reporting year and an environmental scan of other OER programs, the Committee has identified several goals moving forward to support our existence and continued use on campus.



### Promotions and Marketing

The Committee has been working with MARCOM to develop a new OER committee logo to more fully capture the ethos of open education. We are also expanding our communications and outreach plan to inspire increased engagement, interest, and commitment to openly accessible resources.



### Streamlined application process

The Committee is working to automate the application process to increase efficiency and speed up the approval process and allow for more effective communication lines between faculty and Committee members as well.



### Tiered Payment System

The Committee plans to propose a new tiered payment system to replace the current ZCT single payment structure. This new model is designed to better reflect, recognize, and reward faculty who invest considerable time and effort in transitioning their courses to using OERs.

Note: this payment structure will not fund the creation or development of OER textbooks – that will fall under ORSA. But we are funding those who publish articles or book chapters in an Open Access journal.



### AI and Chat GPT fluency

The Committee commits to participating in AI institutional conversations and development including joining committees, department meetings, and lunch and learns. We will also review external developments within peer institutions to reflect and implement post-secondary changes.