Affordable Course Materials through Open Educational Resources (OER) Project Update

OER Defined
OER is defined as any electronic resource that can be freely or easily made available to students as an alternative to traditional course materials. OER may include licensed content from the library; primary sources and other published materials made available online via museums, archives, scholarly organizations; materials created and shared by faculty at other colleges or materials created by the faculty member him/herself.

Project Objective
The objective of this project is to increase the awareness and usage of OER textbooks and other freely available materials in courses offered at UMD. This awareness and usage of OER will ultimately create a measurable cost savings for students at UMD.

Project Outcomes
After this project there will be:
- A recognized awareness of OER at UMD
- A demonstrated increase in the usage of OER in courses offered at UMD
- A demonstrated increase in usage of library resources in courses offered at UMD
- A measured materials cost savings for students at UMD

Activities to Date
1. Team formed in July 2017
2. Created an online resources guide here: http://guides.umd.umich.edu/OER_at_the_Mardigian_Library
3. Student and faculty surveys were conducted in September - November
   a. Student textbook usage survey results are here: http://guides.umd.umich.edu/ld.php?content_id=37875699
      - 131 responses, 75% have elected to not purchase a textbook for a class due to its cost, 23% have elected to not take a course due to the high cost of materials, 69%+ say that textbook costs influence selection of courses, 80%+ have experienced hardship due to materials costs
   b. Faculty survey results are here: http://guides.umd.umich.edu/ld.php?content_id=37875694
      - 24 responses, 50% unfamiliar with OERs, 87% have never used OERs, 67% might want to use OERs, Mainly want to use OERs in the form of textbooks, supplemental readings, and videos, and the main obstacles to
using OERs is time constraints, too hard to find resources, lack of resources, and lack of knowledge of OERs

4. Starting a dialog...
   a. Based on the faculty survey results librarians are beginning to make contact with interested faculty
   b. To date 13 faculty have expressed an interest and we have made contact with them
      • Have met with Gabriella Scarlatta as an interested party
      • Other meetings have been set up or are in the works

5. Workshop planning is ongoing
   a. Targeted workshops for disciplines
      • A toolkit is being prepared for foreign languages presently as we will potentially be meeting with the M & CL to discuss OERs specifically for them
      • This may be something we will do for other disciplines going forward
   b. Informal informational events
   c. Using the library resources to save students money
      • Highlight faculty that have used library owned ebooks and articles instead of costly print books and course packs
   d. Digital Education Day
      • Maybe more hands-on
      • Highlight faculty who have used OERs previously
   e. Meeting of the Minds event in May 2018
      • While late on our timeline this still may be a good marketing opportunity

6. Collaborators will be identified January – May 2018
   a. Possibilities
      • Nitya Sethuraman – Psychology
      • Gabriella Scarlatta – French

7. Initiate pilot May – August 2018
   a. Work with faculty to locate OER, freely available materials, or library resources

8. Implement pilot in class – September – November 2018

9. Project review December 2018
   a. Conduct assessment
      i. Survey faculty about new attitudes
      ii. Determine cost savings of students
      iii. Determine increased usage of library resources
   b. Update all stakeholders on the initial success of the project

10. Best practices and procedures will be established for going forward
    a. Based on any assessment of the project procedures for going forward need to be set like application forms to initiate collaborations