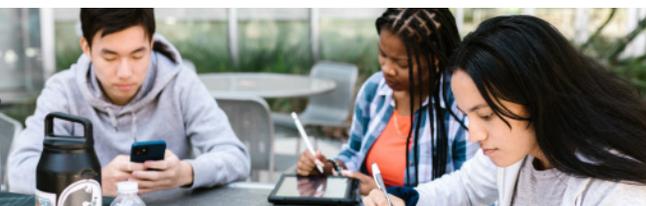
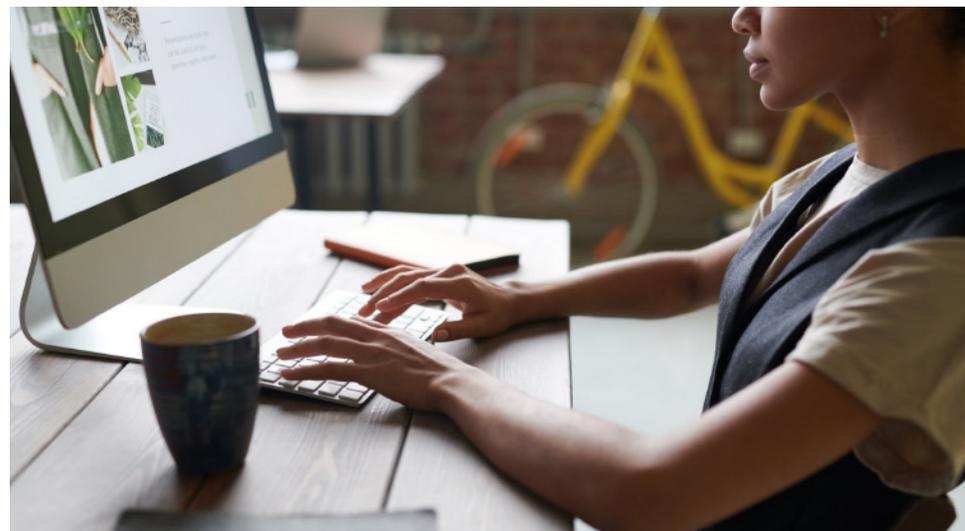
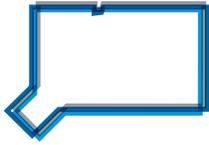


# Connecticut Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council 2022 Legislative Report



January 31, 2023



**CT OER Coordinating Council**  
2022 Legislative Report

**"If every class I took used OER,  
I would save about one month's rent  
per semester."**

—Student from 2022 OER Survey



# Grant Program Impact



The state's investment last year resulted in a considerable impact on students:

## 2022 Grant Awards

# 5x

**Return on Investment Last Year**

To tackle the incredible rise in textbook costs, the CT legislature created the Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council, which launched a grant program in 2020.

In 2022, its third year, the Council awarded **\$59,365**, which helped **2,583** students from **136** course sections at **16** institutions avoid more than **\$325,000** in text book costs.

# \$1 million+

## Cumulative Savings 2020-2022

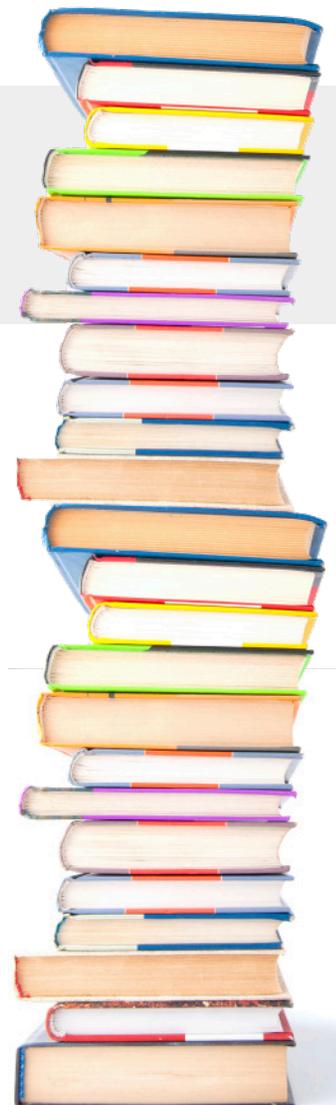
Cumulatively over the last three years, the state's investment helped **8,322** CT students avoid more than **\$1,031,000** in text book costs.

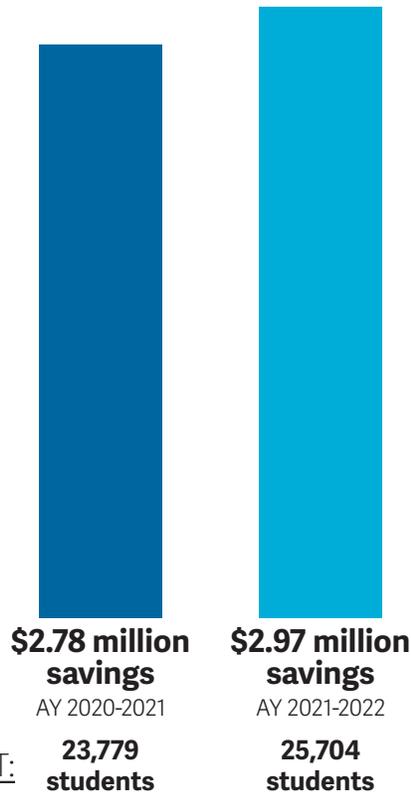
### BIG PICTURE IMPACT

- 92 awards — \$159,915
- 8,322 students
- 132 faculty
- 25 institutions
- 305 course sections

**\$1,031,000**  
Benefits to Students

**\$159,915**  
State Funding





## Two-Year Survey Results

The 2021 Connecticut General Assembly's bill HB 6405 charged the Council to survey Connecticut's higher education institutions on their annual OER usage.

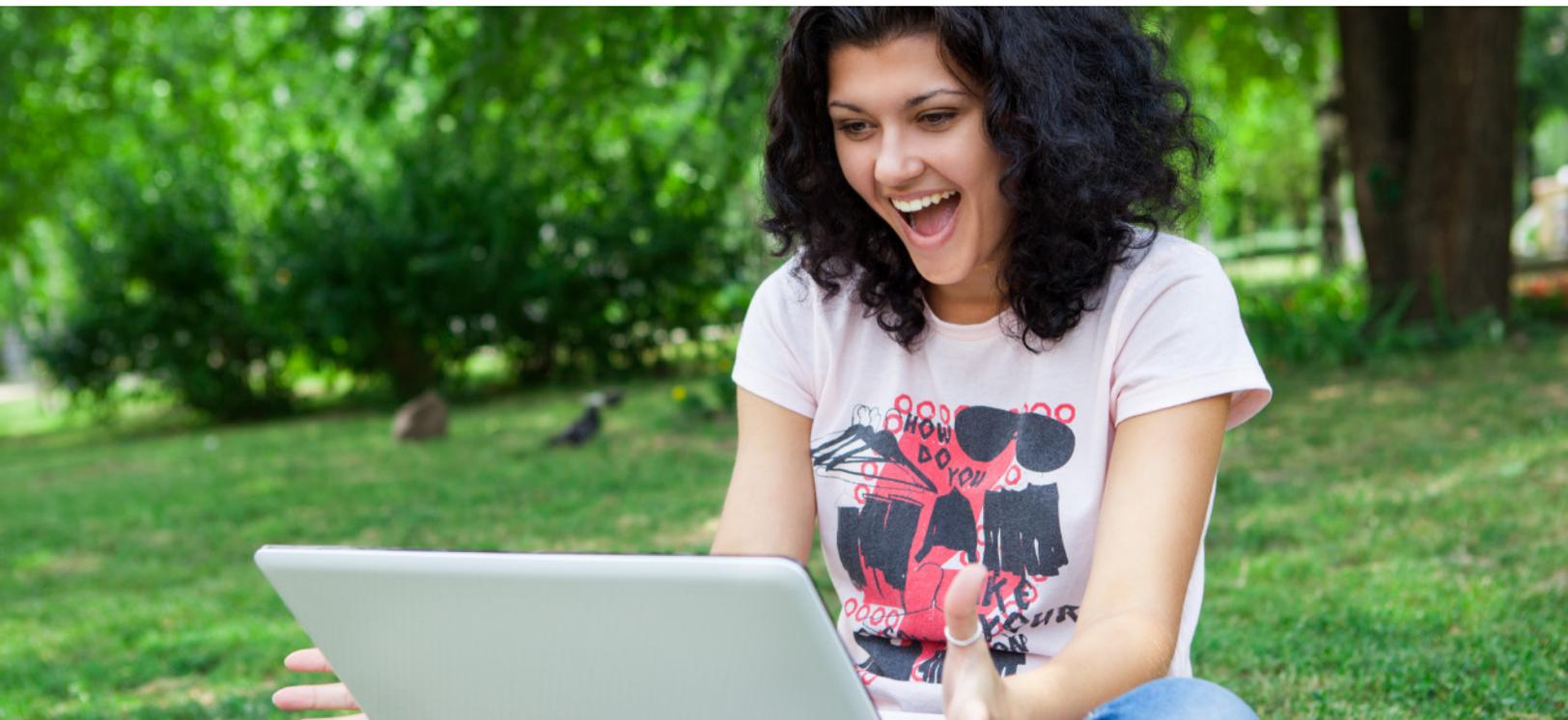
Our surveys in 2021 and 2022 included 33 unique institutions that responded OER is saving 50k students more than \$5.7 million. **For context, this is just a fraction of the total institutions with students utilizing OER.** Connecticut has 48 total 2-year, 4-year, public, & private institutions.

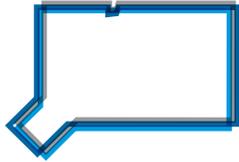
IMPACT:

**23,779**  
students

**25,704**  
students

# OER saved students at least \$5.7million since 2020





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# OER & Equity

Of primary importance in moving towards a more equitable society is to build equity in our classrooms. One of the ways we can work to accomplish this in higher education is through eliminating barriers to accessing needed instructional materials. The cost burden for students can be detrimental, because of the often-hidden nature of these expenses. Students register for classes largely without knowing the extra costs they may incur in procuring required materials, such as textbooks, for their classes. This often forces students to make uncomfortable decisions between paying for core expenses, like food and housing, and/or for

required materials for class(es). The growth in housing and food insecurity on college campuses in Connecticut and across the country speaks to the precarious financial circumstances many students contend with on a day-in, day-out basis. A [recent report by the Public Interest Research Group \(PIRG\)](#) estimated that as much as 65% of students at colleges and universities

***"65% of students at colleges and universities across the United States skip purchasing required instructional materials for classes due to cost."***

across the United States skip purchasing required instructional materials for classes due to cost. This leaves these students less prepared for their class(es) and can drastically impact their success in their coursework. When adding on the costs of required online homework programs that require access codes, students can also suffer because they can't afford to pay to do their homework, which is often factored into their final grades.

While the commercial textbook industry and college and university bookstores have worked to provide lower-cost solutions to alleviate some of the burden on students, these options often fall short pedagogically in areas such as student engagement and in reflecting the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals of academic disciplines and institutions of higher education. Also troubling is the inclusion of free open educational resources (OER) and open-access (OA) materials in commercial publisher and bookstore flat-rate, inclusive



access programs. These programs are one of the lower-cost options touted by companies in the textbook market that are being adopted by many institutions, which leads to some students paying for bundled access to content that is openly and freely available to them outside of these bundled access programs.

The best deal moving forward for students, instructors, and colleges and universities is greater adoption of free, openly licensed OER. OER not only eliminates the costs associated with purchasing required course materials, but it also offers the potential for a rich and engaging student experience that includes diverse perspectives. We can see OER building diversity and inclusion in projects like the Remixing Open Textbooks through an Equity Lens (ROTEL) grant program through the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education where they are focused on making OER that is culturally relevant and better serves underrepresented students in Massachusetts higher education and beyond. Additionally, OER also invites a diversity of people (including students) to contribute and create instructional content through open pedagogical practices. Open pedagogy provides students the opportunity to engage in applied learning that has the potential to not just enrich their learning experience, but also can enrich the experiences of future students who will access, learn from, and build upon the knowledge generated. Our regional compact, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), is currently focused on promoting open pedagogical practices and bringing student contributions to the forefront.



Open education has a significant role to play in educating students in Connecticut and across the globe. Open educational resources are free, flexible, and can be optimized to fit the learning needs of a diversity of students. Open pedagogical practices can empower learners to create knowledge and apply their learning for current and future students. And, most importantly, open education builds equity. It brings diverse voices to the table. It promotes engaged learning. It seeks to create an environment where student success is not contingent upon the ability to purchase access to instructional content.

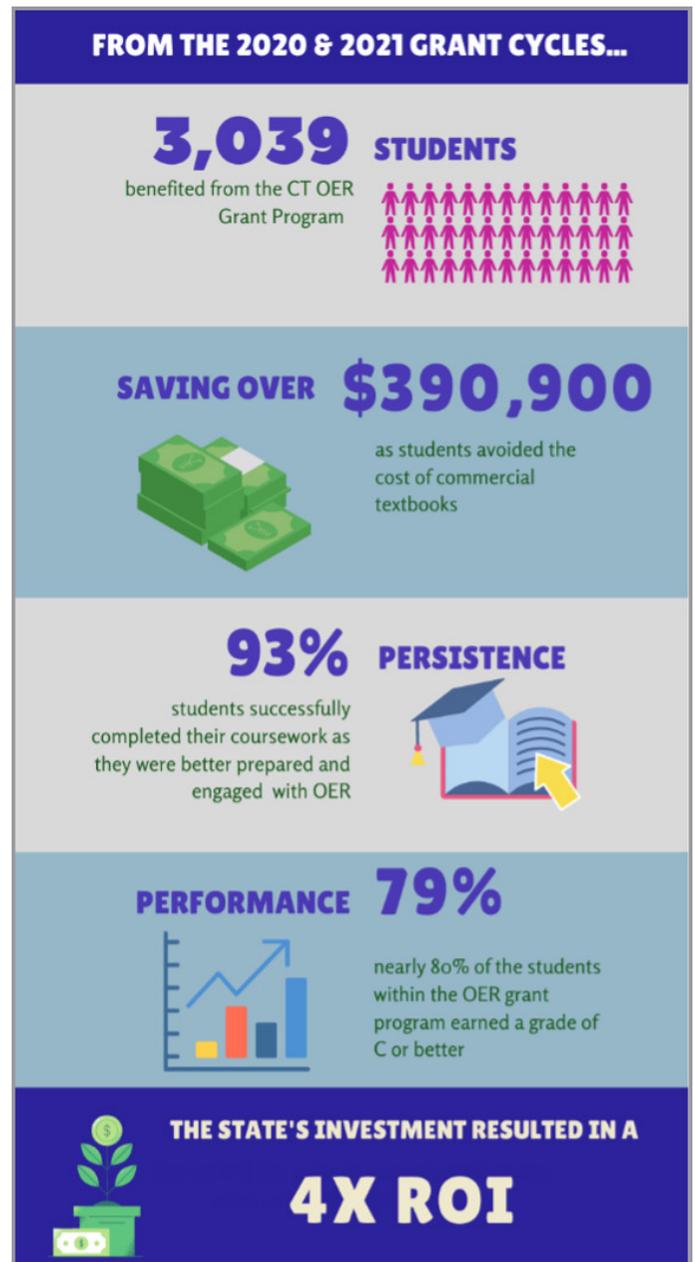
# Connecticut Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council

Public Act Number 19-117 established the **Connecticut Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council**, a 17-member standing body representing faculty, staff, administrators, and students from the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU), the University of Connecticut (UConn) and Connecticut's independent institutions along with ongoing administrative support from the Connecticut Office of Higher Education.

The statewide body was charged to develop a plan for Open Educational Resources to benefit college students throughout Connecticut. In response, the Council crafted an OER Grant Program to provide funding opportunities to faculty for the review, adoption, and/or creation of OER materials.

Since its inception in 2019, the council has established a statewide grant program, held an annual OER summit, and administered multiple statewide surveys.

During the first two years of the Connecticut OER Grant Program, \$100,550 was awarded to 64 proposals. That funding supported 3,039 students avoid over \$390,900 in commercial textbook costs. This represents a 4x return on the state's investment. As will be presented below, these savings will continue to be realized each semester that the courses are taught. Beyond savings, student performance and persistence had positive outcomes. On average, 93% of those students completed their coursework with 79% of those students receiving a letter grade of 'C' or better.



# 2020-21 Grantee Survey

In September 2022, the council issued a survey to both the 2020 and 2021 CT OER Grant Program awardees to measure the continued impact of their collective grant work. Of the 88 awardees contacted, 12 responded to the survey. Those individuals represented 2-year, 4-year, public, and private institutions.

92% of the respondents indicated that they continued to use the funded OER in subsequent terms; 58% shared their OER works with other instructors teaching the same course; 42% reported that they revised/expanded/improved the adopted OER; 42% reported that they adopted different OER for other courses that they teach; and lastly 17% evaluated different OER for courses that they teach.

*Nearly 1,900 additional students benefited from the 2020 and 2021 CT OER Grant Program work, estimated to have saved over \$221,000 across the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2022 semesters.*

Most respondents continued to utilize the OER selected for their previous grant work in Spring 2022 (83%) and Fall 2022 (75%) while some ran Winter 2021 (25%) and Summer 2022 (33%) sections, suggesting an ongoing return on investment for the grant program's funded work.

Based on the data provided by 12 of 88 faculty invited to respond, nearly 1,900 additional students benefited from the continued use of OER from our 2020 and 2021 awardees. Using the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) OER Savings Calculation Method which presents the average cost savings/avoidance for student usage of OER at \$117 per course/section, we conservatively project the direct cost savings/avoidance to be over \$221,000. If a greater response rate was realized, the savings projection could potentially have been 2x-5x higher.



"College WisCEL: students collaborating" by college.library is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

# 2022 CT OER Grant Program

## Program Improvements

After the completion of each grant round, the council reviews all aspects of the program as part of its continuous improvement cycle. Based on feedback gathered from council members, previous applicants, and institutional support staff, the council made improvements to the grant criteria, timeline, supporting information, and quality assurance process.

Specific enhancements made to the 2022 CT OER Grant Program were:

- **Council Website ([www.ctoer.org](http://www.ctoer.org))** – a dedicated website for the display of information related to the council’s efforts including the grant program, summit, and reports. The website contains a full description of the council’s grant program as well as answers to a variety of Frequently Asked Questions.
- **Expanded Timeline** – the grant timeline was extended from October 2021 to February 2022 to allow faculty teaching Spring semester courses to submit grant proposals.
- **Expanded Criteria** – the Impact grant category was expanded to include the development of stand-alone OER works. Along with the expanded grant timeline, faculty are now able to propose larger bodies of work that may expand across Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters.
- **Quality Assurance Review & Template** – a new review requirement has been added to the Impact and Supplemental grant categories to help ensure that the final submitted OER works are relevant to the discipline and are of high quality. Grantees are required to seek out a colleague within the discipline to provide feedback using a review rubric provided by the council.
- **Grant Information Webinars** – the multiple grant information sessions provided were enhanced to provide additional process information as well as address frequently asked questions.
- **Grant Application** - improvements to the grant application process including an enhanced method to list co-applicants.



## Submissions & Awards

To attract and accommodate faculty who teach Spring semester courses, the council altered the grant schedule for Year 3 of the CT OER Grant Program. The grant announcement was pushed back from January 11th, 2022, to October 18th, 2021, to allow faculty time to consider Spring course proposals. The grant proposal submission deadline was also pushed back from March 15th, 2022, to January 3rd, 2022, to provide the council an opportunity to review and award Spring semester proposals prior to the start of the semester. To support faculty teaching Summer and Fall courses, the grant deadline was later extended to February 18th, 2022.

In total, 38 proposals were received. 33 proposals were initially selected for a total of \$66,340. A Year 2 grant recipient was grandfathered into the Year 3 awards, as their course suffered a last-minute cancellation during the Year 2 grant period.

Unfortunately, two awardees had to withdraw due to section cancellations and four more awardees withdrew to attend to personal matters resulting in a total of \$59,365 being awarded across 28 proposals.

**\$59,365**  
State  
Funding



## 2022 Grant Impact



**\$325,000**  
Benefits to  
Students

In Year 3, the council received proposals from 17 different institutions with 18 of those being first-time institutional applicants. Of the 12 supplemental awards, 4 proposals expanded upon the previously funded work of reviews and adoptions.

The table on the following page provides a summary of the grants awarded, receiving institutions, and which academic disciplines were covered.

## 2022 CT OER Grant Program

# Awards by Category

10 adoptions  
8 impacts  
12 supplementals  
4 reviews

## Receiving Institutions

Charter Oak State College  
Eastern Connecticut State University  
Gateway Community College  
Manchester Community College  
Middlesex Community College  
Naugatuck Valley Community College  
Quinebaug Valley Community College  
Quinnipiac University  
Sacred Heart University  
Southern Connecticut State University  
Tunxis Community College  
University of Connecticut  
University of Bridgeport  
University of Connecticut  
University of Hartford  
University of New Haven  
Western Connecticut State University

## Disciplines

Art  
Biology  
Communications  
Criminal Justice  
Early Childhood Education  
English  
First Year Studies  
History  
Human Development  
Interdisciplinary  
Law  
Mathematics  
Music  
Physical Sciences  
Physics  
Psychology  
Social Work  
Sociology

28 Awards Accepted = **\$59,365**

**2,583** students in 136 course sections  
avoided \$325,814 in textbook costs

## Results

Based on the reported data, 2,583 students across 136 different course sections have avoided over \$325,000 in textbook costs, which represents an estimated 5x return on the investment of \$60,840. These savings will continue to be realized each semester that the courses are taught. Beyond savings, student performance and persistence had positive outcomes. On average, 94% of those students completed their coursework with 86% of those students receiving a letter grade of 'C' or better..

Students	Sections	Persistence	Performance	Avoidance	ROI
2,583	136	94%	86%	\$325,814	5.5x

In addition to the positive impact OER adoption has had, 75% of the Review grantees have indicated that the evaluation of their selected OER will lead to full and/or partial adoption of those works. Supplemental grantees have curated and developed resources that not only aid their adoption of OER but will also enable other faculty to adopt those primary and supplemental OER resources. More and more of these supplemental efforts feature Open Pedagogy efforts where students contribute to the development of the OER resources. The Impact grantees have reported on large-scale collaborations across their institutions with one effort positively impacting over 1,000 students across 36 sections of the course.

## Select Grant Highlights:

- Large-scale adoption across 36 sections serving 1,000+ students
- Creation of culturally responsive OER to better support student success within online programs
- Adaptation and conversion of an OpenStax textbook to a web format with local context
- Student contributions to the development of new OER

*Cost Avoidance calculations are a combination of actual cost savings and projected cost avoidance as not all students purchase the legacy textbook or the replacement OER. Additionally, some students may opt for other textbook options such as used, rental or digital delivery. Based on the data provided, the average legacy textbook cost was \$121.87 per course per student.*

## Insights

Grantees were required to collect qualitative data from the students enrolled in their OER courses as part of grant reporting requirements. The council provided sample questions but did not mandate a single uniform student survey to allow faculty to use survey instruments that best fit their situations and needs. Due to the diverse data collection formats, it was not possible to compare the results of the student responses in a statistical form.

In addition to collecting student survey data, faculty shared their own insights and perspectives. Although the awarded grant projects reflect diverse institutions, academic disciplines, programs and student populations, the following noteworthy themes and insights emerged from the reported qualitative faculty and student data.

## Student Perspectives

### Avoiding Financial Barriers:

*"...using OER had a significant positive impact on me financially. When I transferred to [my current institution], I had very few social ties [there] and the housing rental market was in shambles from COVID-19 and the economic recession. Consequently, I was temporarily experiencing homelessness and couch-surfing. While I now have an apartment, this experience has left me with a sense of precarity. OER significantly eases my financial stress. If every class I took used OER, I would save about one month's rent per semester. Every class that uses OER allows me to work fewer hours so I can concentrate more on my education."*

*"...making the textbook and homework free to access was very beneficial to students as they don't have to worry about not being able to purchase the required materials"*



### Quality of Materials:

*"I thought it was nice to be able to access a textbook that was universal for all students. I actually used the text more often than I thought I would simply because I was able to access it easier."*

"The information in OER text was straight to the point while avoiding unnecessary text while the commercial textbooks that I have used in other classes have a lot of unnecessary information that makes remembering and understanding harder than what it should be."

"Unlimited attempts are amazing, different questions every time. My Open Math is so beautiful. I wish all math classes used MoM."

### Engagement & Open Pedagogy:

"I feel that I walked away from the class with a deeper understanding of the material than usual because creating quizzes forced me to consider what was actually important about each text. While the work was not easy, I approached it with more enthusiasm than other assignments because it felt like I was creating something valuable, rather than disposable."

### Digitally Available Content:

"It helped my learning because if I had time between classes, I could pull it up on my phone, so it was always at my fingertips rather than having to plan to bring it and use it."

"It was helpful since I use my iPad [...] and it allowed me to use it interactively with my notes."

"I was able to use the resource anywhere as long as I had Wi-Fi."



## Faculty Perspectives

### Student Engagement:

"I am seeing such a difference in performance with the materials embedded from what I have found in previous semesters that I see the real value of OER and am happy to attest to the impact."

"Because students had a hand in developing a number of the activities and assignments – a function of our commitment to Open Pedagogy -- their attention was as focused on how they wanted to learn as it was on the specific material itself."

### Quality of OER:

"In the past, I have found research methods textbooks to be encyclopedic as they strive to be exhaustive. A major benefit of the OER is that the chapters are short, and the text

does not attempt to be exhaustive but focuses on the most fundamental issues. I greatly benefited from being able to revise and customize the chapters for my class, so they were always in synch with classroom activities."

### Ability to Customize OER:

"The main benefit of creating a custom version of OpenStax Calculus to use for our class was that we could update it to match the needs of our students and our course. We added the sections we needed and were able to focus the material in other sections to meet the needs of our students. As we taught from the textbook

this semester, we noticed some sections where we could improve the book. Because we have the book in an easy to edit format, we can make those changes before next semester. We will be able to continuously make improvements to the book to meet the needs of our students. It is great to not be locked into a static book."

**"I greatly benefited from being able to revise and customize the chapters for my class, so they were always in synch with classroom activities."**

### Evaluation of Current Processes:

"...the process of reviewing and discussing the book opened a productive and fruitful discussion about what type of resources would support our pedagogical goals. This conversation set a process into motion wherein we removed the required textbook from our Introduction to Social Work syllabus and replaced it with peer-reviewed journal articles, website, podcasts, and online videos."

## Challenges

### Faculty Challenges

While faculty clearly saw the benefit of OER, some challenges were reported. Faculty expressed that the discovery, adoption, adaptation, and/or creation of OER required a major time commitment. Some stated that the adopted OER didn't align perfectly to their learning objectives and needed some re-organization.

"The main challenge concerned sections of the text that were incomplete, and I spent considerable time adding to them. I believe the result was far better than a traditional textbook, but this was something I had not anticipated. Going forward this will not be

*a challenge as I have now done the work. A lack of examples illustrating concepts was overcome by assigning supplemental materials. There were some typos and grammatical errors (although not many)-I was able to correct these as I read. I also learned that I could rearrange the order material was presented and this was a great benefit."*

## Grant Program Challenges

Awareness of the CT OER Grant Program continues to be a major challenge for the council. While steps taken to address this concern are presented in the Program Improvements section, the council still does not have the ability to communicate directly with the target audience: faculty. The council has implemented a new communications platform for the 2023 grant cycle (detailed below under the 2023 OER Grant Program section) but outreach is still heavily dependent on institutional leaders circulating the grant opportunity to their faculty.

The funding cycle also continues to be a challenge area. While the council has expanded the window for grant proposals to accommodate Spring and Summer semester works as well as larger-scale efforts, all grant works must be completed by the close of the same calendar year to meet funding restrictions. With the current funding cycle and reporting deadlines, large scale OER works such as textbooks cannot be completed. Those works generally take 2-3 years and may not produce tangible student savings until Year 3 of the effort. The council, however, would like to explore OER textbook creation grants that would span across multiple years. These textbook creation grants would specifically target 'high impact' areas where no suitable OER currently exists.

Support for faculty efforts is another challenge area as not all institutions have robust support structures in place to assist faculty in the adoption and/or creation of OER. The council would like to not only promote the benefits of OER more widely, but also facilitate collaborative

approaches to professional development and OER creation opportunities as well as provide greater guidance through the grant process but lacks the administrative staffing and funding to grow these supports. The council is currently piloting a volunteer OER Mentor Program (detailed under the 2023 CT OER Grant Program section) for the 2023 grant cycle, but initial

feedback strongly suggests that a structured training and support program is needed.

***Awareness of the CT OER Grant Program continues to be a major challenge for the council.***

***The council would like to explore OER textbook creation grants that ... specifically target 'high impact' areas where no suitable OER currently exists.***

Support for the council is not only tied to the support of faculty, but reflective of the additional efforts the council has taken on since its inception (annual summit, statewide surveying, and overlapping grant cycles as well as the addition of a new mentor program and expanded communication efforts). As the grant program evolves and grows, greater staffing support is needed to manage administrative aspects such as dissemination, correspondence, and technical support.

Looking forward, one growing area of concern is institutional eligibility of the CT OER Grant Program. In order to be eligible for funding, students of the institution must be able to realize direct savings from the state funded OER work. Some institutions have adopted automatic billing programs, also known as

'Inclusive Access' or 'Equitable Access', that charge students either a per course fee or a semester fee to cover the cost of learning materials. In these automatic billing programs, students may be charged regardless of the adoption of OER. In these cases, students are being forced to pay for free materials. If more institutions adopt this publisher model, the grant program will realize fewer and fewer participants.

***Support for faculty efforts is another challenge area as not all institutions have robust support structures in place to assist faculty in the adoption and/or creation of OER.***

## 2022 Virtual CT OER Summit

The [2022 CT OER Summit](#) attracted 263 attendees from over 80 different institutions across 22 states and Australia. (California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota,

New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin). The event was held virtually March 1st through March 4th, 2022 to once again correspond with [Open Ed Week](#), the annual celebration of open education achievements and innovations. Due to the virtual nature of the event and the success of the previous year,

***The 2022 CT OER Summit attracted 263 attendees from over 80 different institutions across 22 states and Australia.***

this year's summit saw an 150% increase in attendees.

The event featured daily spotlight sessions that included the work of the 2021 CT OER Grant Awardees along with a student-led panel on the benefits and importance of open educational

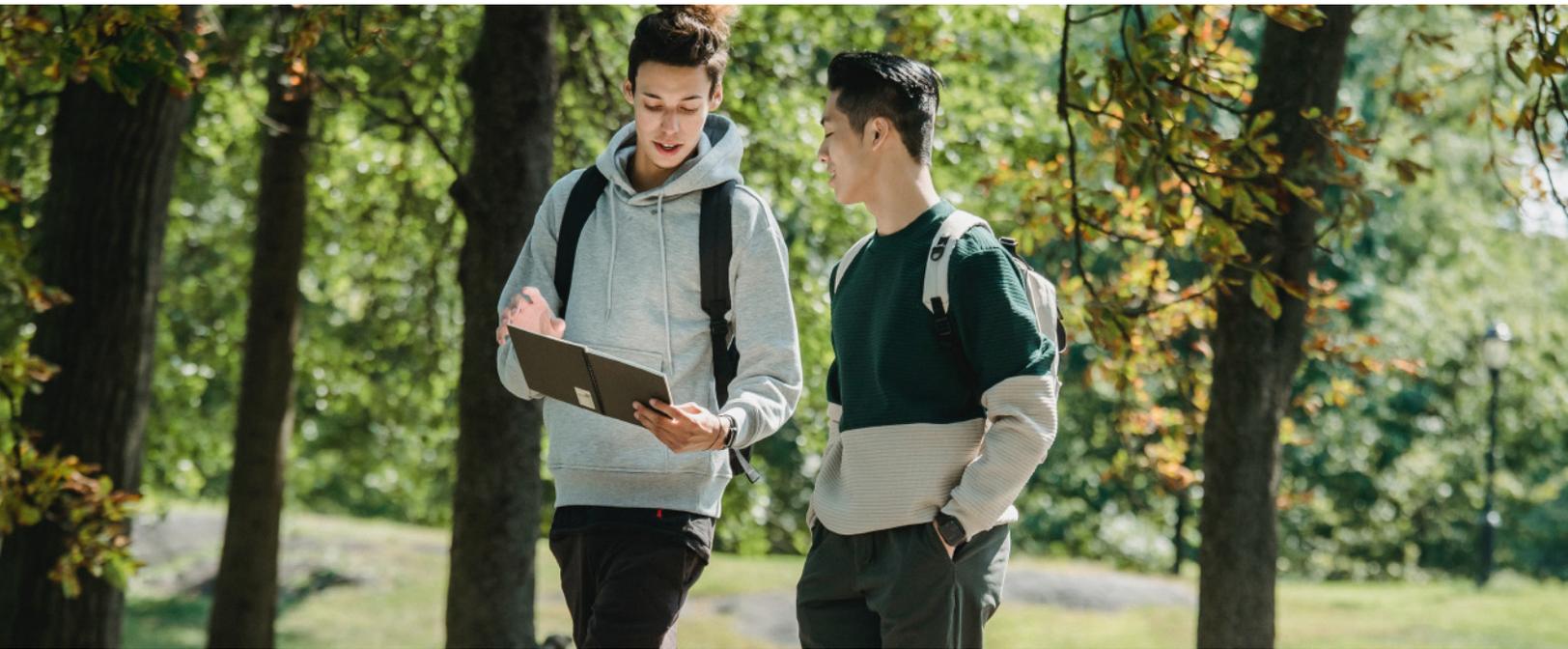
resources and open practices such as open pedagogy which invites student to contribute and/or co-create openly licensed educational materials.

The council was also fortunate to secure two guest speakers from outside of the state. Dr. Shinta Hernandez from Montgomery College in Maryland led a session entitled “Leading and Transforming with Innovation, Equity, and Inclusion through Open Education.” Clint Lalonde from BCcampus in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada led a session entitled “Open Technologies: The 3rd Pillar of Open Education.”

## Survey Results

27 attendees responded to the post-event survey and rated the event 8.25 out of 10 with 8.25 out of 10 rating for improved knowledge. The student-led panel discussion was the highest rated session with 80+% of the session attendees rating the session as either “Very Valuable” or “Extremely Valuable”.

*The students on the "Student Perspectives on Open Pedagogy Panel" really made me think about using Open Pedagogy and OER in my future classes. They were great! - 2022 CT OER Summit attendee*



# 2022 Statewide OER Survey

## Legislation

The 2021 Connecticut General Assembly’s bill [HB 6405](#) extended the council’s charge to survey Connecticut’s higher education institutions on their annual OER usage and promotion efforts. Specifically, the bill called for the reporting of “(1) the number and percentage of high-impact courses for which open educational resources have been developed, (2) the degree to which institutions of higher education promote the use of and access to open educational resources”.

## Results

A [24-question survey](#) has been designed and delivered in partnership between the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities and the University of Connecticut. The survey requests that institutions report on the OER awareness and promotion efforts that have been occurring, as well as quantify the OER being used during the 2021-2022 academic year in “high impact” areas as defined by the 2019 statewide survey. These “high impact” subject areas have the highest reported enrollments and generally have higher cost textbooks associated.

The request for completion was issued by the Connecticut Office of Higher Education’s Executive Director, Timothy Larson, and was distributed to all Connecticut Higher Education Chief Executive Officers and Chief Academic Officers on October 19, 2022. Reminders were issued on November 15, 2022, and December 2, 2022. The original due date of December 1, 2022 was extended to December 9, 2022.

## Participating Institutions

Asnuntuck Community College  
 Capital Community College  
 Charter Oak State College  
 Eastern Connecticut State University  
 Fairfield University  
 Housatonic Community College  
 Legion of Christ College of Humanities  
 Manchester Community College  
 Middlesex Community College  
 Naugatuck Valley Community College  
 Northwestern Connecticut Community College  
 Norwalk Community College  
 Quinebaug Valley Community College

Southern Connecticut State University  
 Three Rivers Community College  
 Tunxis Community College  
 University of Connecticut  
 University of New Haven  
 Western Connecticut State University

## OER Usage & Data Collection

19 institutions (listed on the previous page) in total responded to the survey (vs. 28 respondents in 2021). Based on those respondents, 95% indicated that they have some reported OER engagement occurring at their institution. The strong majority of those OER initiatives have been in place for three years or longer (79% in 2022 vs. 56% in 2021) while some have been established within the last two years (16%).

When asked to describe the institution’s overall direction with OER, 42% reported Building/Supporting current OER efforts, while 11% were Scaling OER efforts and 6% were Sustaining Scale or implementing Systematic Change. For those just beginning, 16% were Piloting OER initiatives while 11% were either Researching or Evaluating OER.

When asked to expand on current institutional efforts regarding OER, most institutions reported that they were engaged in some level of evaluation or pilot across the spectrum of OER activities (review, adoption, adaptation, supplemental or new creation, and open pedagogy). 32% of the respondents did indicate that their institutions were scaling OER adoption efforts.

### Overall OER Direction

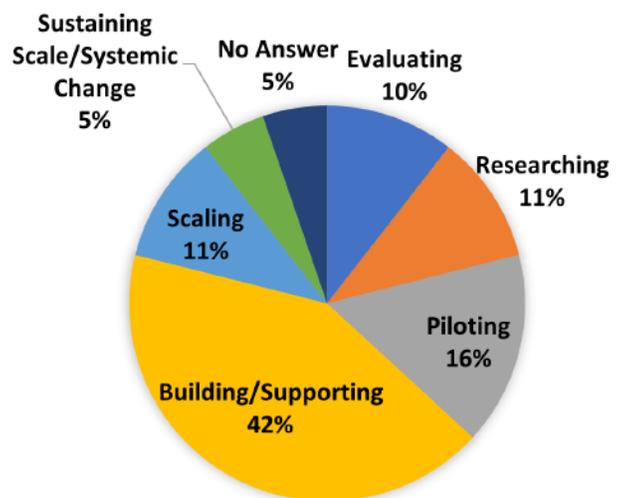


Figure 1: Overall Direction of Institutional OER Efforts

## OER Activity

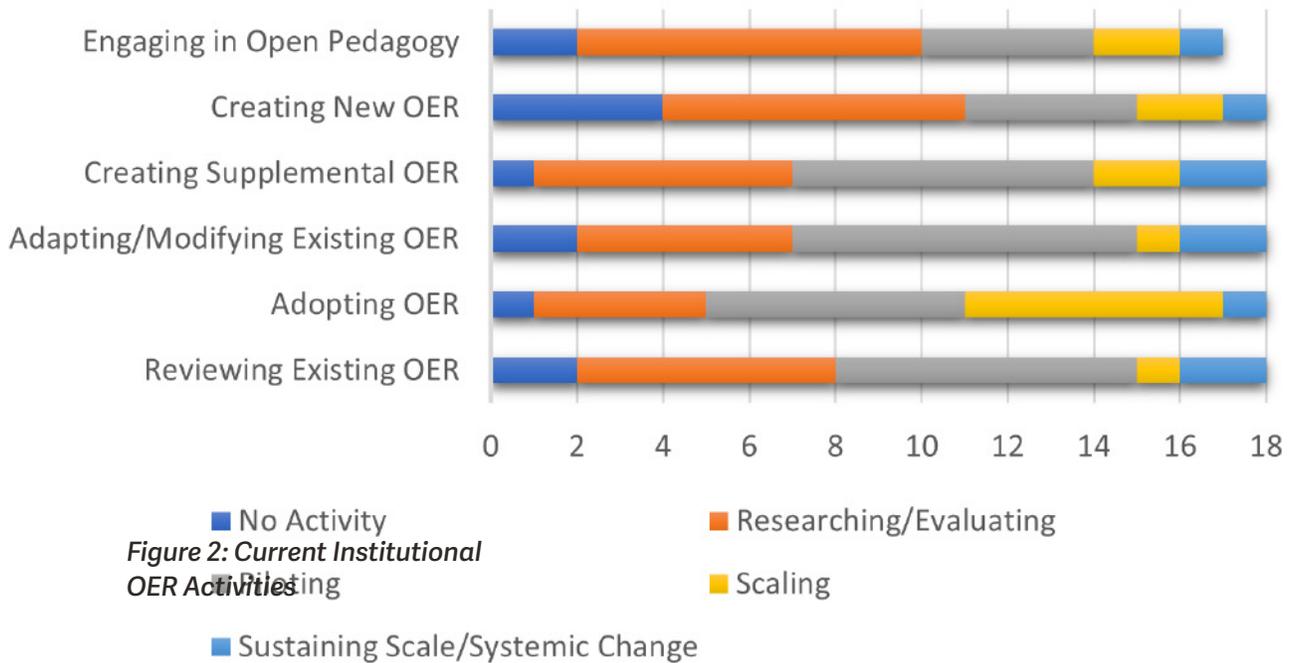


Figure 2: Current Institutional OER Activities

Figure 2: Current Institutional OER Activities

In response to questions about institutional data collection on OER usage and impact, many institutions continue to note a lack of set data standards and collection processes. One respondent noted confusion regarding the definition of OER utilization and whether all resources or just the primary resources must be OER. Collection primarily consisted of retroactively self-reported and manually tabulated data from academic departments, and library and instructional design staffs. The few institutions with defined reporting structures tended to have grant programs (internal or external) that required some data standards and reporting. Only 11% of the respondents indicated that they were capturing OER usage, student savings, and/or student success rates such as completion rates and GPA. While most institutions do not have formal data collection processes in place, some respondents positively noted that the annual survey request does spark conversation and action regarding OER usage.

## OER Awareness and Promotion Efforts

Based on the responses from the 19 institutions, much of the reported OER awareness and promotion efforts have been focused on faculty and administration. Faculty (89%), faculty senate/governance (37%), and department chairs (47%) represent the most targeted cluster with administration (53%) also gaining attention.

Library staff (74%) and Instructional Design staff (37%) are reported as high target areas, but these roles historically have supported, if not run, OER efforts on campuses and may be misidentified. Centers for Teaching and Learning (53%) have also played a supporting role for OER efforts. The survey did not capture which role(s) currently promote and support institutional OER efforts.

For students, the General Student Body (42%) was the primary outreach method. Student Government Associations (16%) and Student Organizations/Clubs (11%) were contacted far less frequently.

Most non-academic staff (Student Support – 11% and Enrollment Management – 0%) are not included in awareness efforts. These departments encompass student support areas such as admissions, advising, financial aid, and tutoring. This may be a key area to focus on as these roles tend to advise and support students and their course selection.

### Awareness Audiences

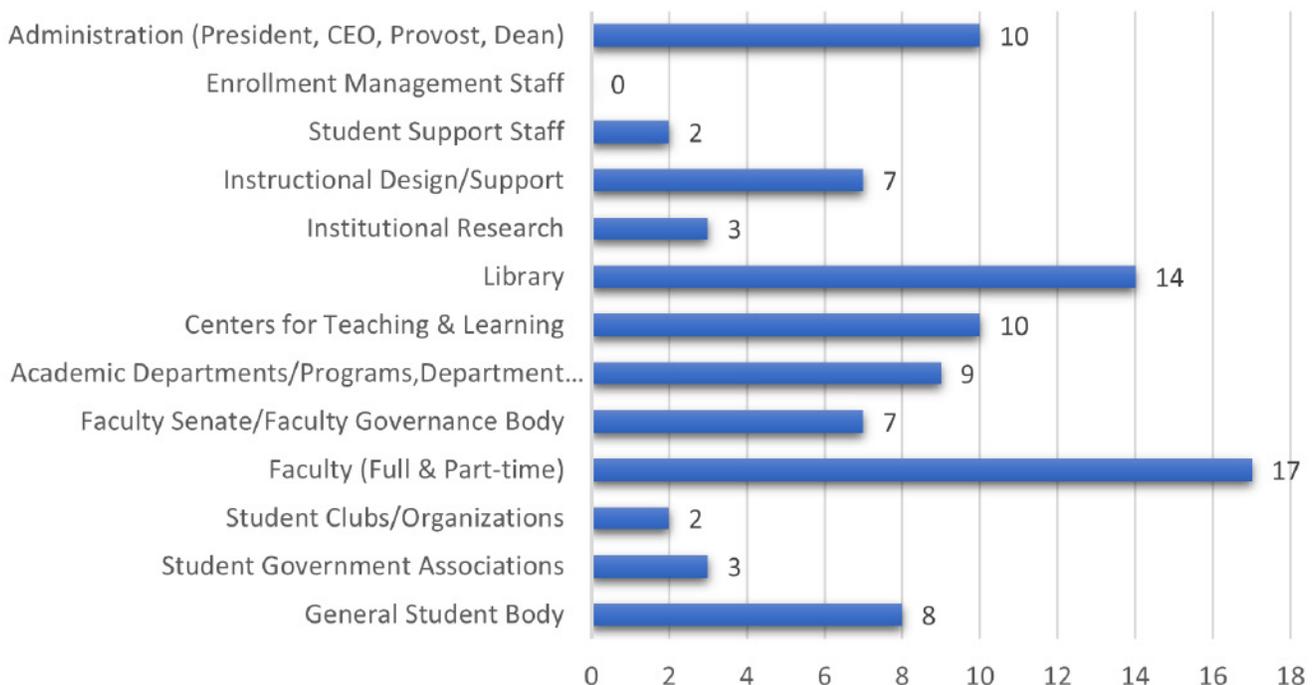


Figure 3: Targeted audiences for OER Awareness & Promotion efforts with institutional effort frequency

Most OER framing efforts focus on Access (68%) and Affordability (89%) of course materials impacting Student Success (53%) and Retention (42%). Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts (47%) as well as Accessibility efforts (32%) may be tied to equitable access to course materials as well as diverse representation depicted within the materials. Areas continuing to trend upwards are Student Engagement (37%) and Collaboration (42%) that may be tied to Open Pedagogy efforts where students collaborate with faculty to revise, supplement, or create OER works. The recognition of OER towards faculty Tenure and Promotion (5%) is starting to emerge as a discussion topic.

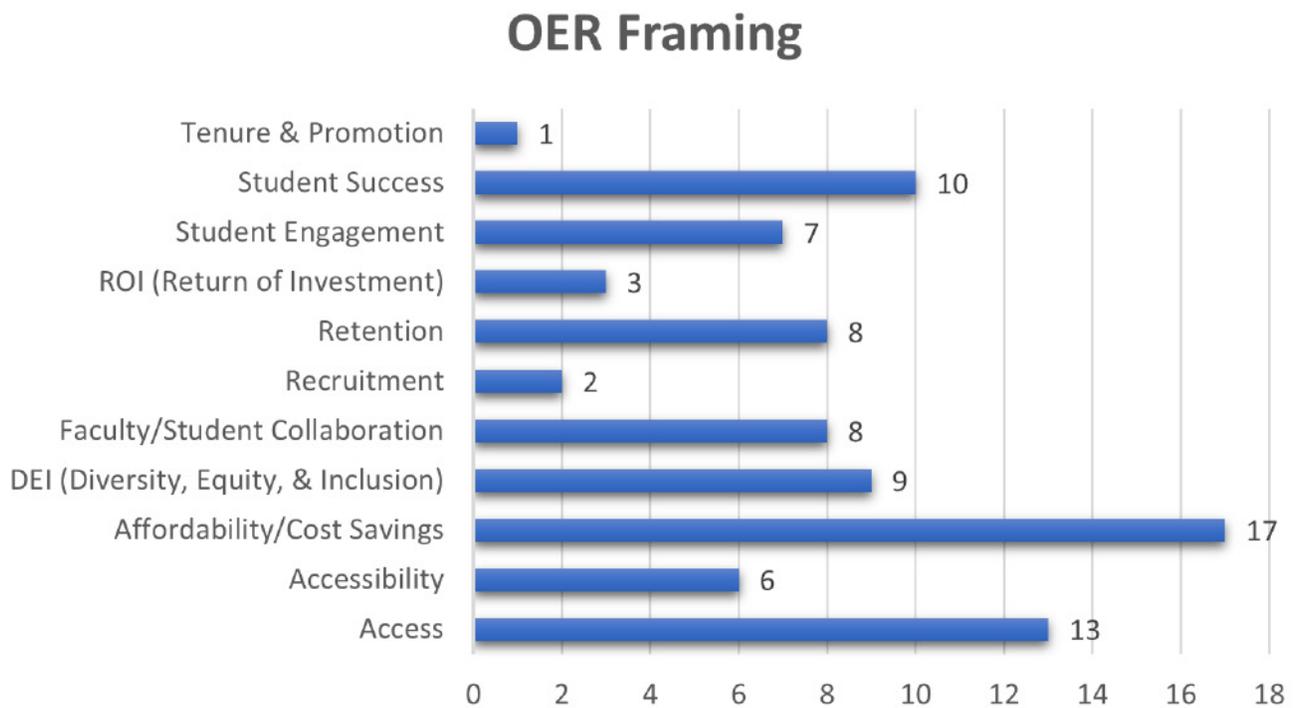


Figure 4: Framing for OER Awareness & Promotion efforts with institutional effort frequency

## OER Supports

Respondents were asked to share details regarding any institutional funds utilized to support local OER efforts as well as address any supports needed for greater OER awareness and adoption. Most institutions (63%) reported having no funding related to OER initiatives in the past three years. Some institutions did allocate funds for awareness (5%), training (5%), and faculty support (5%) as well as the curation of existing OER (11%) and the creation of new OER (16%).

Some respondents noted that their institutions prioritized state and external OER grant opportunities over local funding. Others noted that institutional support may have been realized through alternate means such as faculty release time and/or attendance of meetings, committees, and/or conferences.

### OER Funding

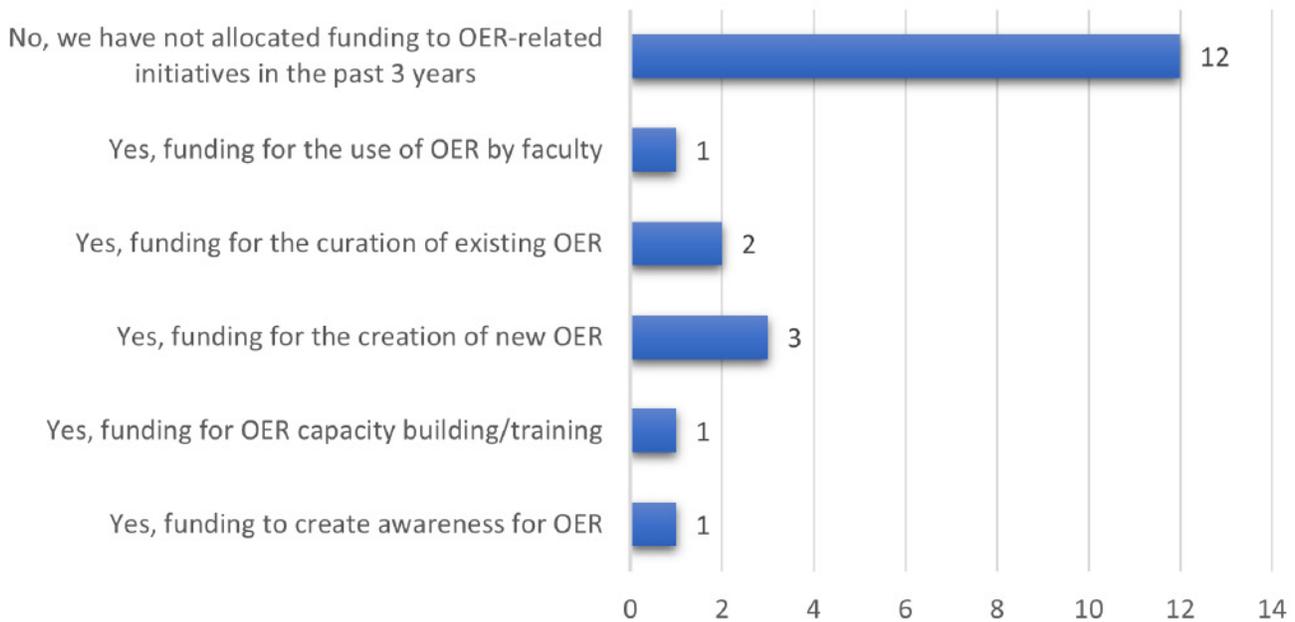


Figure 5: Funding of Local OER Efforts

When asked to rank factors and supports from most to least needed that would increase OER adoption and use at institutions, respondents identified Reward-Based Incentives (such as stipends and recognition) as the highest area of need. Recognition of OER efforts within the Tenure & Promotion process and Release Time could also fall within a broader incentives category. Many respondents reported Faculty Awareness/Buy-In still as an area of great need. Support structures such as OER Training and Dedicate Support Staff were also identified as higher areas of need. Interestingly, Quality of OER and Availability of OER were among the lowest ranked areas of need.

## Supports Needed for Greater OER Usage

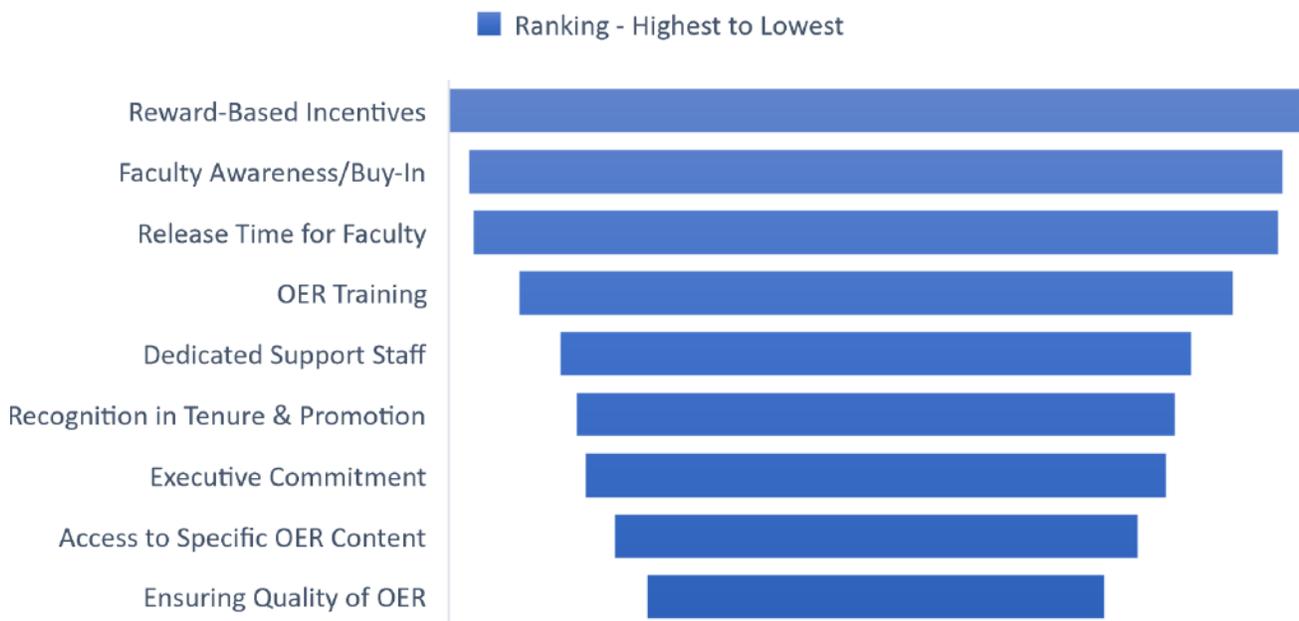


Figure 6: Institutional Supports Needed for Greater OER Usage - ranked highest to lowest need

Respondents also noted some other factors/challenges in increasing OER usage, including the (lack of) availability of a full suite of connected materials and tools (such as online homework platforms); equity gaps in the content; concerns regarding the transferability of courses utilizing OER; (lack of) institutional coordination of OER efforts; and other institutional priorities removing time from OER adoption.

## OER Utilization in High Impact Course Areas

Recognizing the data collection and reporting challenges institutions continued to face, the results for Questions 11 through 13 can be best presented as a conservative estimate of the OER being utilized within ‘high impact’ course areas statewide. Using the reported enrollment numbers for the identified OER course sections, the council projected student savings numbers utilizing the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) OER Savings Calculation Method to estimate student savings/avoidance. This method presents the average cost savings/avoidance for student usage of OER at \$117 per course/section.

The tables below present summary data on the ‘high impact’ courses utilizing OER.

### High Impact Areas by Discipline

Discipline	Subject	Total	OER	% OER	Enrollments	Savings
<b>Business</b>	Accounting	191	0	0%	0	-
<b>Business</b>	Business	213	45	6%	850	\$99,450
<b>Business</b>	Communications	441	111	21%	1992	\$233,064
<b>Business</b>	Economics	168	33	14%	674	\$78,858
<b>Business</b>	Management	161	21	8%	469	\$54,873
<b>Business</b>	Marketing	112	6	3%	100	\$11,700
<b>Humanities</b>	Art	473	122	15%	2207	\$258,219
<b>Humanities</b>	Composition	620	147	19%	2374	\$277,758
<b>Humanities</b>	History	274	59	10%	1250	\$146,250
<b>Humanities</b>	Literature	259	79	18%	1422	\$166,374
<b>Humanities</b>	Writing	265	52	13%	794	\$92,898
<b>Math</b>	Algebra	198	32	16%	640	\$74,880
<b>Math</b>	Calculus	94	21	14%	399	\$46,683
<b>Math</b>	Statistics	188	42	14%	621	\$72,657
<b>Orientation</b>	First Year	340	154	18%	2498	\$292,266
<b>Sciences</b>	Anatomy	157	12	3%	288	\$33,696
<b>Sciences</b>	Biology	551	93	14%	1751	\$204,867
<b>Sciences</b>	Chemistry	369	77	17%	1916	\$224,172
<b>Sciences</b>	Psychology	528	34	9%	1296	\$151,632
<b>Sciences</b>	Sociology	248	66	20%	1407	\$164,619
	<b>AY 21-22 Totals</b>	<b>5,850</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>22,948</b>	<b>\$2,684,916</b>

Based on the SPARC calculation method and the reported data, the survey presents those 22,948 students across 1,206 OER sections during the 2021-2022 academic year saved or avoided \$2,684,916 in course materials fees. This is an increase of over 3,600 enrollments from 2021 to 2022, netting an additional \$428,000 in savings.

## Top 5 Subjects By Enrollment

Discipline	Subject	Enrollments	Savings
<b>Orientation</b>	First Year	2498	\$ 292,266
<b>Humanities</b>	Composition	2374	\$ 277,758
<b>Humanities</b>	Art	2207	\$ 258,219
<b>Business</b>	Communications	1992	\$ 233,064
<b>Sciences</b>	Chemistry	1916	\$ 224,172

## Top 5 Subjects By Adoption

Discipline	Subject	Total	OER	% OER
<b>Business</b>	Communications	441	111	21%
<b>Sciences</b>	Sociology	248	66	20%
<b>Humanities</b>	Composition	620	147	19%
<b>Humanities</b>	Literature	259	79	18%
<b>Orientation</b>	First Year	340	154	18%

Communications, Composition/Writing, and First Year Seminar are consistently the highest enrolled and adopted OER courses. This was true in the 2021 survey results as well. Algebra, Biology, and Business dropped from the Top 5 from 2021 to 2022 while Art and Chemistry gained. Sociology has been a strong Top 10 for both years.

## Bottom 5 Subjects By Adoption

Discipline	Subject	Total	OER	% OER	Enrollments	Savings
<b>Business</b>	Accounting	191	0	0%	0	-
<b>Sciences</b>	Anatomy	157	12	3%	288	\$33,696
<b>Business</b>	Marketing	112	6	3%	100	\$11,700
<b>Business</b>	Business	213	45	6%	850	\$99,450
<b>Business</b>	Management	161	21	8%	469	\$54,873

Areas of Business and Science continue to represent the lowest “High Impact” areas to implement OER. While Communications (Business) and Sociology (Sciences) generally rank high in OER adoption, Sciences such as Anatomy & Physiology and Psychology as well as Business courses such as Accounting and Marketing did not realize the same success. According to the 2021 results, Accounting had reported 165 enrollments with \$19,000 in savings vs. no reported OER sections in 2022. Business and Marketing courses as well as Psychology courses did realize a net improvement from their 2021 results.

## Top 10 Institutions by OER Enrollments

Institution	Total Sections	Total OER	OER Enrollments	Total
<b>Housatonic Community College</b>	611	245	4069	\$476,073
<b>Naugatuck Valley Community College</b>	693	188	3871	\$452,907
<b>Middlesex Community College</b>	473	133	2433	\$284,661
<b>Charter Oak State College</b>	154	154	2220	\$259,740
<b>Manchester Community College</b>	448	98	1959	\$229,203
<b>Northwestern Connecticut Community College</b>	232	97	1626	\$190,242
<b>University of Connecticut</b>	81	26	1526	\$178,542
<b>Tunxis Community College</b>	775	77	1404	\$164,268
<b>Eastern Connecticut State University</b>	265	51	1330	\$155,610
<b>Southern Connecticut State University</b>	146	74	1320	\$154,440

The institutions listed above consistently reported the highest OER adoptions and enrollments across the identified “High Impact” areas. Housatonic Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Charter Oak State College, Manchester Community College, Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Tunxis Community College, and Eastern Connecticut State University all are returning Top 10 institutions while Middlesex Community College, Southern Connecticut State University, and University of Connecticut are new additions to the list.

## OER Utilization Outside of High Impact Course Areas

47% of the respondents indicated that their institution offered additional courses outside of the 'high impact' areas that utilized OER. For those 9 institutions, they reported an additional 2,756 students avoided \$282,452 (based on the SPARC calculation method). Institutions indicated that they offered courses for both undergraduate and graduate levels and included subjects such as Allied Health, Criminal Justice, Education (Early Childhood Education, Educational Technology), Geography, Management, Sciences (Anthropology, Astronomy, Sociology, Physics) and Workforce (Benchmark, Manufacturing, Blueprint, Metrology, and Software Engineering).

## Respondents' Feedback

Respondents were asked again to provide general commentary and feedback on the survey. Some responses called for greater advanced notice for the survey and improved question structure, but much of the feedback still centered around the difficulty in obtaining the required information without standardized data definitions and collection processes. One institution detailed the painstaking efforts undertaken to manually review each and every course section syllabus to determine what materials were utilized. Another institution shared the challenges in surveying faculty for the course materials utilized one year removed from the adoption cycle. One respondent shared the following:

*"The data presented in the survey is limited, due to the lack of standardized reporting of OER. While this data represents what we were able to gather and verify to contribute to the survey, we believe that OER usage is more widespread."*

Another area of discussion was related to the definition and categorization of OER course sections. Some respondents expressed confusion on which courses could be included in the institutional reporting as some courses use a mix of OER, free resources (such as library resources and websites), and paid materials. The core question was whether the primary resources or all resources must be OER. It was also noted that some courses, such as Modern Literature, have no-cost or low-cost materials options but very few OER options.

## Insights

While the statewide OER survey realized a dip in institutional participation (19 respondents in 2022 vs. 28 in 2021), the number of institutions providing data on OER usage in high impact courses remained the same (18 institutions). Of those 18 institutions sharing usage data in 2022, 5 were first time respondents.

Most respondents (79% in 2022 vs. 56% in 2021) reported OER efforts being in place for three years or more. 42% of the respondents indicated that their institutions were building or supporting OER efforts, with 32% reporting that they were scaling their OER adoption efforts. Interestingly, 79% reported some involvement with Open Pedagogy – faculty/student collaboration on the development of OER.

Open Pedagogy also appeared as a growing approach in framing OER efforts as 42% respondents indicated that faculty/student collaboration was a means of promoting OER efforts. Access (68%) and Affordability (89%) are still the main drivers of OER awareness along with increased attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (47%) and accessibility (32%).

Most awareness efforts still primarily focus on faculty (89%) vs. students (42%). Critical support areas such as the library (74%), centers for teaching and learning (53%), and instructional design staff (37%) all had awareness efforts, but student-facing roles such as admissions, advising, financial aid, and tutoring continue to have low to no OER awareness efforts underway. If the state explores price transparency efforts through OER course markings, enrollment management staff will be critical in advising and supporting students

*If the state explores price transparency efforts through OER course markings, enrollment management staff will be critical in advising and supporting students with affordable course selection.*

with affordable course selection.

**23,000 students across 1,200+ sections estimated to have saved over \$2.65 million in academic year 2021-2022 alone.**

While many institutional respondents commented on the challenges of collecting and reporting OER usage data (with most of the data retroactively self-reported and manually tabulated), the reported student impact realized nearly 23,000 students across 1,200+

sections estimated to have saved over \$2.65 million in academic year 2021-2022 alone. The highest OER adoptions reported were for the following subject areas: Art, Biology, Chemistry,

Communications, Composition/Writing, and First Year Studies. Business and Math areas tended to have the lowest adoption rates (excluding Communications). In comparison to the 2021 survey results, Business courses continue to realize low adoption rates, but Sciences (outside of Anatomy) saw increased OER usage in 2022. Surprisingly, Math saw a considerable drop in reported usage this year across multiple titles (Algebra, Calculus, and Statistics).

## Challenges

### Data Collection

Most of the responding institutions indicated that they do not have formal data collection and reporting processes established and are not actively capturing OER usage and student impact. For those who do capture information, it tends to be isolated to grant-related activities. The lack of formal data collection and reporting standards may impact not only future surveying but long-term reporting of the impact of grant funded work. Standards related to data collection and reporting also aid in any future price transparency efforts to denote courses utilizing OER learning materials.

*The lack of formal data collection and reporting standards may impact not only future surveying but long-term reporting of the impact of grant funded work.*

### Definitions

In addition to the collection challenges, there was also some confusion related to the definition and categorization of OER course sections. Some respondents were unsure whether to include courses and enrollments where the primary learning resource may have been OER, but supplemental materials were not. It was stated that courses may utilize a mix of resources OER, library resources, free resources from websites, and/or paid materials. The question to the council was whether all learning materials must be OER to be included in the survey, or just the primary textbook.

### Supports

This year, respondents were asked to rank order areas of support needed to advance their OER initiatives. While the state provides a robust OER grant program, respondents still identified incentives as a major need. Most institutions indicated that they do not have local funding allocated for open education and some indicated the reliance on state and external funding to support current efforts. Beyond direct funding, respondents also identified release time and recognition programs as needed incentives. Release time does have a financial and

operational impact on the institution as a replacement faculty would need to be secured and paid to teach the released course. The council could explore institutional funding for faculty release.

Expanding on the discussion of incentives, recognition of faculty OER efforts within the Tenure & Promotion process is an emerging topic. The [DOERS3 higher education collaborative](#) recently developed an [OER Contributions Matrix](#) as a means to guide faculty as they attempt to include their OER work in their tenure and promotion portfolios. The collaborative also notes that tenure and promotion processes may be unique to each institution and its guidelines. Factors such as collective bargaining agreements may also shape how these processes are executed.

Lastly, respondents identified training and the availability of skilled support staff as other high priority needs. The council will explore specific role-based training needs as well as attempt to identify local institutional support contacts. The council has already begun outreach to identify institutional OER leads.

## Budget & Expenses

The Connecticut Office of Higher Education (OHE) continues to serve as the funding agency of the statewide OER grant program and summit. The state has allocated \$100,000 annually to OHE to support these efforts. The table below details the use of those funds.

Expense Category	Amount
Grant Awards	\$59,365
Grant Management Software	\$5,000
Communication Platform	\$380
Closed Captioning Services	\$352
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$65,097</b>
<b>Amount Returned to the State</b>	<b>\$34,903</b>

Over \$90,000 of the funding was held in reserve for grant awards. The remaining funds were projected for supporting products and services, including a platform to manage the grant cycle and a communications platform. With the 2022 CT OER Summit being held virtually and web conferencing tools being provided by CSCU, the only event costs were related to providing closed captioning to the recorded sessions.

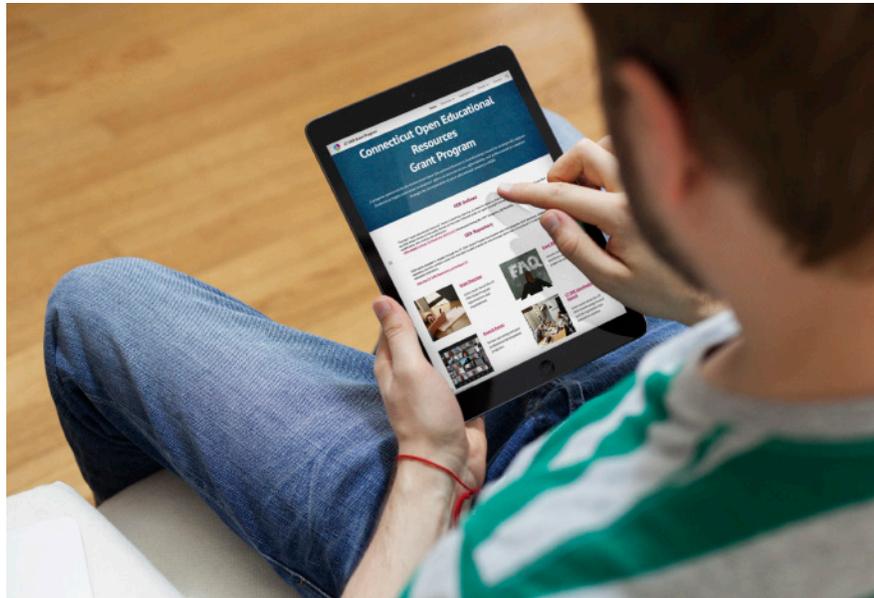
# 2022 CT OER Coordinating Council Actions

## 2023 CT OER Grant Program – Year 4

At the conclusion of each academic year, the council reviews all aspects of the CT OER program for areas of improvement. During Summer 2022, the council studied internal and external feedback regarding the grant program, the statewide survey, and the annual summit and implemented enhancements to each.

The council focused on two primary areas for improvement within the CT OER Grant program: communication and support. A new website, [www.ctoer.org](http://www.ctoer.org), was launched in 2022 to provide greater visibility to the state’s grant program as well as other council efforts. Visitors to the website can find information related to applying for a state grant as well as view information on past awardees.

In addition, the council implemented a new communications platform, Constant Contact, to better distribute and track information sent on behalf of the council. The platform not only allows for targeted outreach, but also allows interested parties to subscribe to updates and notices. This self-subscribe feature has also been embedded into the council’s website. To enhance our institutional outreach, the council has attempted to identify the lead OER contact for each campus.



To better support faculty interested or engaged in the grant program, the council has increased the number of information webinars provided. For those interested in applying for a grant, sessions were offered in October 2022 and January 2023 with additional sessions planned for February 2023. Additionally, information sessions for current grantees were provided in November 2022 to aid their efforts in successfully completing their required grant work.

Lastly, the council launched a new [OER Mentor](#) program designed to match volunteer experts to specific areas of need identified by participating faculty. In our inaugural year, we had 12 individuals volunteer their time to support current and potential grantees. The council would like to recognize and thank the following individuals for volunteering:

- Moira Adams, Housatonic Community College
- Sharon Clapp, Central Connecticut State University
- Nicole Colter, Three Rivers Community College
- Vivienne Friday, Goodwin University
- Elizabeth Kendall, Manchester Community College
- Suzanne Marmo, Sacred Heart University
- Jillian Maynard, Central Connecticut State University
- Karrie Morin, Goodwin University
- MaryAnn Murtha, Western Connecticut State University
- Nicolas Simon, Eastern Connecticut State University
- Dana Wilkie, Charter Oak State College
- Robert Wyckoff, Housatonic Community College

In the coming months, the council will explore additional training and supports needed to improve the quantity and quality of grant proposals and completions.

## Year 4 Summit Planning

The council is currently preparing for a 4th annual CT OER Summit which will be held virtually from March 6th – 10th, 2023. The Summit will feature daily presentations featuring:

- 1.) [Michael Thomas](#), President of NEBHE discussing the importance of OER efforts within the region
- 2.) [Nicole Allen](#), Director of Open Education of SPARC, discussing the importance of OER efforts against the introduction of automatic billing textbook options
- 3.) Andrew McKinney, OER Coordinator at City University of New York and chair for the Capacity Building Team for [DOERS3](#), discussing the role of OER contributions to the Tenure & Promotion process
- 4.) Jillian Maynard, Reference & Instruction Librarian at Central Connecticut State University, discussing the skills and resources needed to be a successful OER Advocate
- 5.) a Spotlight on the 2022 OER Grantees

This year's summit will be supplemented by themed 'office hours' that will follow each featured presentation. The purpose of these sessions is to provide an opportunity to attendees to seek answers to specific questions related to their OER needs.

## Year 4 Survey Planning

The council will continue to explore possible improvements within the statewide OER survey. Some areas under considerations are expanding the timeline for completion; launching the survey during Summer 2023 to align more closely with the end of the academic year; providing templates and best practices to support better data capture; and enhancing the question set.

With the data standards and collection challenges documented in the 2022 Statewide OER Survey section, the council may need assistance in establishing statewide standards and collection methods as well as refining the current legislative definition of Open Educational Resources (OER).

# Council Recommendations

## Defining OER

Within the 2021 Statewide OER Survey, institutions expressed some confusion regarding the legislative definition of OER specific to the language of “at a cost lower than the market value” being combined with the phrase “permits the free use”. The council recognizes that some costs may be incurred by the student for either print versions of an OER text or technology fees to support the internet-delivery of digital OER materials, but the materials must be made freely available in some medium.

Last year, the council recommended adopting the OER definition from the federal [Affordable College Textbook Act \(H.R.2107\)](#) introduced during the 116th Congress (2019-2020):

*“The term “open educational resource” means a teaching, learning, or research resource that is offered freely to users in at least one form and that either resides in the public domain or has been released under an open copyright license that allows for its free use, reuse, modification, and sharing with attribution.”*

In addition to a revised definition of OER, the council would like to propose guidance on categorizing a course section that utilizes OER for all or some of the required learning materials. During the 2022 Statewide OER Survey, some respondents expressed confusion whether to include courses and enrollments where the primary learning resource may have been OER, but other required materials were not. It was suggested that courses may utilize a mix of OER resources, library resources, free resources from websites, and/or paid materials.

The council recommends that all required learning materials should be openly licensed for a course section to be considered OER for reporting purposes.

**Recommendation #1:** The council would like to propose the adoption of the federal Affordable College Textbook Act (H.R.2107) OER definition introduced during the 116th Congress (2019-2020). Additionally, the council proposes that an OER Course Section is defined as having “all required materials openly licensed and available for free in at least one form.”

## Data Standards & Collection

As revealed in both the 2021 and 2022 statewide surveys, many institutions find it challenging to respond to the Statewide OER Survey as most do not have established processes to capture and report out on OER usage. Additionally, some colleges that are collecting information on courses using low-cost or no-cost courses are not specifically capturing OER usage.

According to the [SPARC State Policy Tracker](#), some states (California, Maryland, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Washington) have passed legislation that calls for common definitions, collection methods, and/or student display of courses that utilize OER. For example, Maryland's [HB 318](#) (2020) calls for institutions "to develop a method to clearly and conspicuously show students in the online course catalog which courses use free digital materials and may provide access to certain low-cost print materials."

**Recommendation #2:** The council would like to propose the exploration of state legislation that would establish price transparency measures that would establish common data definitions, collection methods, and/or student display of course sections that utilize OER.

### CT Statewide OER Survey

The 2021 Connecticut General Assembly's bill [HB 6405](#) extended the council's charge to survey Connecticut's higher education institutions on their annual OER usage and promotion efforts. Specifically, the bill called for the reporting of "(1) the number and percentage of high-impact courses for which open educational resources have been developed, (2) the degree to which institutions of higher education promote the use of and access to open educational resources". As detailed in Recommendation #1, most institutions do not have formal data standards and collection processes implemented related to the reporting of OER usage. Further, Recommendation #1 addresses the specifications of which courses utilizing OER should be included in the annual data reporting. Additional feedback received from respondents raises concerns with the primary focus on "High Impact" courses as well as the frequency of reporting.

To capture the expanding use of OER across all disciplines and levels of an institution, the council would like to expand institutional reporting to any and all course sections utilizing OER as required learning materials. Also, recognizing the current effort in gathering the requested data, the council would like to propose that the survey be delivered biennially vs. yearly.

**Recommendation #3:** The council proposes the expanded scope of the statewide OER survey to include any and all OER usage vs. a focus solely on "high impact" courses. Additionally, the council proposes a biennial delivery schedule (until statewide data standards and collection processes have been implemented).

## Staffing Support

Over the past three years, the council has been able to develop and establish a statewide grant program and highly attended summit. In addition, the council designed and deployed a statewide survey this year. To accommodate the various needs of faculty, the council accelerated this year's grant cycle timeline causing overlapping work streams for the volunteer members. Council members concurrently supported 2021 awardees towards completion of their grant work while supporting interested applicants for the 2022 grant cycle. Additionally, council members were supporting the completion of the statewide survey and then its analysis for inclusion in the annual legislative report. The council split into two working groups to address the simultaneous review of 2021 grant reports and the review of 2022 grant proposals. All this work overlaps with the drafting of the annual report.

To better support current council efforts and provide an opportunity to expand, a dedicated resource with experience supporting open initiatives is needed. The council identified specific areas of support requested, including marketing and communications, grant support, survey management, event management, and report writing.

**Recommendation #4:** The council is proposing a half-time position, to be housed within the Connecticut Office of Higher Education, be dedicated to the support of the Connecticut Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council. This resource would allow for the expansion of support and scaling of grant opportunities to better support faculty and their institutions serve Connecticut students and improve affordability and persistence.

With the success of the CT OER Grant Program and the emerging interest in OER across Connecticut, this resource would support the council's efforts in expanding the usage and creation of Open Educational Resources for the betterment of Connecticut's students.

# Summary

For the 2022 CT OER Grant Program, 2,583 students across 136 different course sections were reported to have avoided over \$325,000 in textbook costs, resulting in a 5x return on the state's investment. On average, 94% of those students completed their coursework with 86% of those students receiving a letter grade of 'C' or better.

In addition to the 2022 grant program results, nearly 1,900 additional students saved an estimated \$221,000+ from continued usage of previously grant-funded work in Academic Year 2021-2022.

Across the three years of the CT OER Grant program, over 5,622 students (from Fall 2020 through Fall 2022) have directly benefited from the grant funded OER efforts across a minimum of 305 course sections resulting in over \$716,000 in savings. When factoring in the continued usage of OER beyond the grant period by our previous grantees, the three-year totals represent over 8,322 students avoiding over \$1,031,000.

In addition to the state funded OER adoptions, many colleges have established OER initiatives. To measure current OER awareness and adoption efforts across Connecticut's institutions of higher education, the council designed and delivered the CT Open Educational Resources (OER) Awareness & High Impact Survey in Fall 2022. Most respondents (79%) reported OER efforts being in place for three years or more. 42% of the respondents indicated that their institutions were building or supporting OER efforts, with 32% reporting that they were scaling their OER adoption efforts.

***"...students across 136 different course sections were reported to have avoided over \$325,000 in textbook costs, resulting in a 5x return on the state's investment."***

***"22,948 students across 1,200+ high impact course sections saved over \$2.684 million in AY 2021-2022 alone."***

course sections saved over \$2.684 million in AY 2021-2022 alone. An additional 2,756 students realized estimated savings of \$282,452 for non-high impact subjects. In total, 25,704 students saved \$2,967,368 in one academic year.

Institutions reported that 22,948 students across 1,200+ high impact

Of the 19 institutional respondents, 11 institutions reported 1,000 OER enrollments or more for Academic Year 2021-2022. Those institutions were: Housatonic Community College (reported

over 4,000 enrollments); Naugatuck Valley Community College; Middlesex Community College; Charter Oak State College; Manchester Community College; Northwestern Connecticut Community College; University of Connecticut; Tunxis Community College; Eastern Connecticut State University; and Southern Connecticut State University.

With over \$1 million in total student savings reported from the CT OER Grant Program (against a total expense of \$161,000) and over \$5.7 million in total savings reported across the two years of statewide surveying, there is substantial support for OER within the state and a request for greater support. In order to achieve even greater results statewide and provide the requested guidance, the council is requesting supports in establishing 1.) common definitions and data collection standards 2.) a revised scope for surveying and 3.) staffing support to help support and expand council initiatives.

*"With this generation of students, having course resources that meet students where they are and in a modality that they utilize is extremely important. I believe movement away from a traditional textbook to OER materials that increase access to all students is a positive step forward for higher education."*

**—Quote from 2022 Grantee**



# Thank You / Acknowledgements

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## Appendix: Council Resources

- [Connecticut Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council Website](#)
- [2022 CT Open Educational Resources \(OER\) Awareness & High Impact Survey](#)
- [CT OER Grant Program – Colleague Review Rubric Template](#)



OER works adopted or created through the CT OER Grant Program are housed within the state repository not only contains works from the state funded projects but also includes works from education institutions.

[Visit the CT OER Repository at GoOpen CT](#)



### Grant Overview

Learn more about the CT OER Grant Program opportunities and requirements.



### Council Events

Review upcoming and past professional development programs.

