

Open Education Initiatives in KBOR Institutions



Open Up Learning Kansas

https://www.kansasregents.gov/academic_affairs/open-educational-resources

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Introduction

Open Up Learning Kansas, formerly the KBOR OER Committee, aims to increase access in education by scaling the awareness and support of open education, including open educational resources (OER) and associated practices and pedagogies, across the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) system. Open Up Learning Kansas is made up of representatives from each KBOR institution.

According to the UNESCO definition, “Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others” (*Open Educational Resources*, n.d.) Open licenses allow instructors to retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute course materials at no cost to students (Wiley, 2025).

Because of their high cost, many students forgo the purchase of textbooks due to limited funds, putting them at a disadvantage. In 2019, the Kansas Board of Regents Student Advisory Committee conducted a survey to demonstrate the burden of textbook costs on students at Regent Institutions. 48 percent of 6,474 regent institutions’ students indicated they did not purchase or rent a required textbook in the spring semester. Sixteen percent said they did not buy or rent three or more required textbooks (KBOR Student Advisory Committee, 2019). With OER, all students get equal and immediate access to educational materials.

The cost of textbooks is having a more profound impact on college students. In a 2023 Bay View Analytics Survey, 57% of students reported that the cost of textbooks caused them to take fewer courses, 53% reported that it prevented them from registering for a specific course, 41% said it caused them to earn a poor grade, 35% to drop a course, 31% to fail a course, and 14% to go without course materials (Mowreader, 2024).

There is also evidence that student success is positively impacted by replacing commercial textbooks and materials with OER. A recent analysis showed a 29 percent decrease in the risk of college students withdrawing from open textbook courses (78,593 students) compared to commercial textbook courses (100,012 students). Learning outcomes were equal between the courses (Clinton & Khan, 2019). In a study at the University of Georgia system (sample of 21,822 students), students in courses using OER had a final GPA that was significantly higher than students in courses using traditional textbooks, and DFW rates (students earning a grade of D, F, or withdrawing from a course) decreased compared to non-OER courses. Further, they found that OER course student improvements in GPA and DFW rates were more significant among Pell recipients, part-time, and non-white students, who traditionally had lower student success (Colvard et al., 2018). Content tailored to a course by the instructor is a contributor to student success. After financial savings and easy access, customization was the third most cited benefit by K-State students (Delimont et al., 2016). Several other states, like Colorado, Georgia, Oregon, California, and New York, have been pushing OER implementation for years, and students in their systems are reaping the benefits.

Methods and Executive Summary

The annual Kansas OER survey has been sent out to all KBOR institutions every year since 2021. [Previous years' reports](#) are available on the KBOR OER website. The survey was sent to the Chief Academic Officers to be directed to the most knowledgeable respondent about OER programs at each institution. We received responses from all KBOR institutions, including the University of Kansas Medical Center.

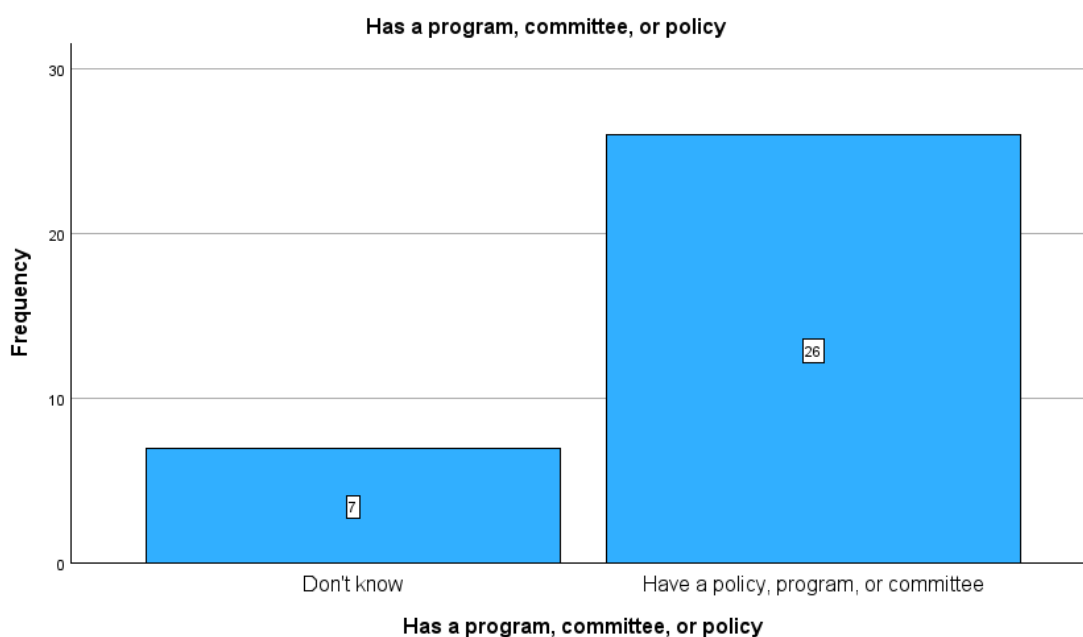
Executive Summary

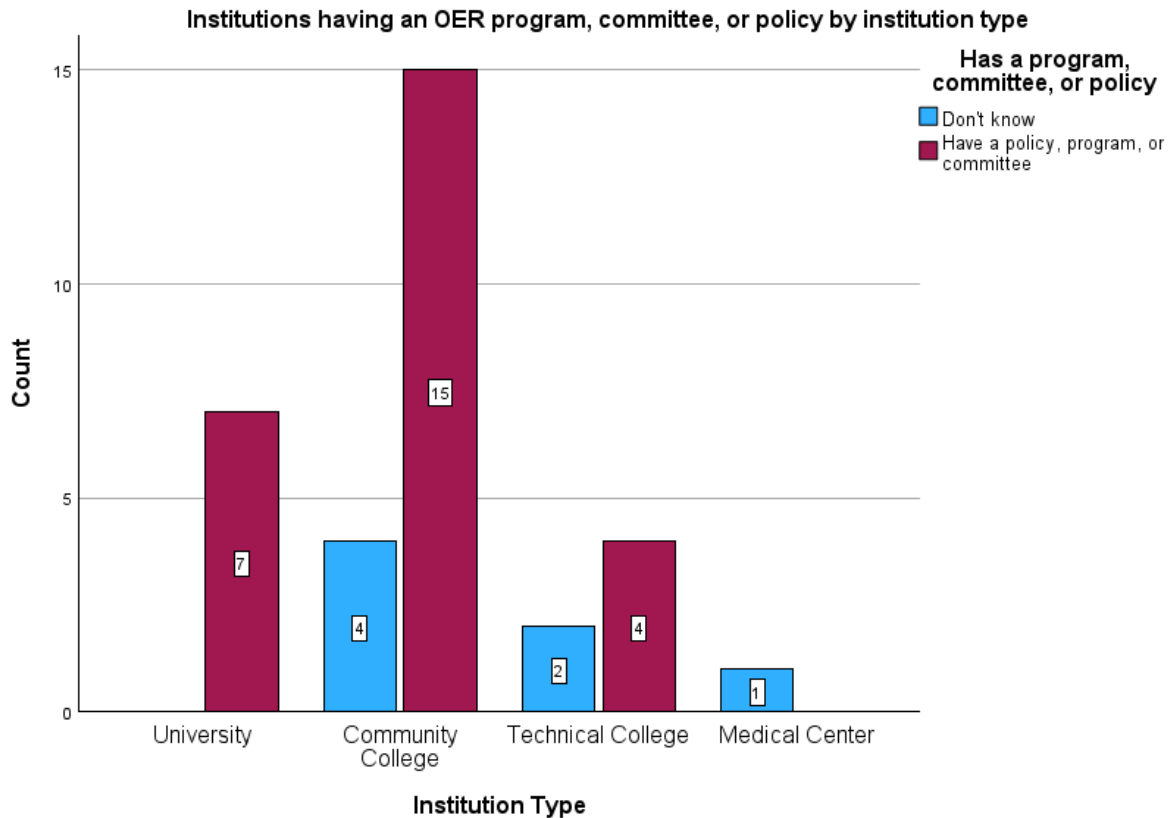
- There has been a large increase in the number of institutions reporting that they have an OER program, committee, or policy, from 17 last year to 26 this year.
- The largest need for support related to OER is additional professional development.
- The largest barrier to adopting OER is a lack of faculty time. If we can make it faster and easier to adopt, and/or compensate faculty for the time they spend switching to OER, they will be more likely to buy in to OER initiatives.

Results

Institutions having a program, committee, or policy

Twenty-six of 33 respondents (7 of 7 universities, 15 of 19 community colleges, and 4 of 6 technical colleges) indicated that their institution had a program, committee, or policy related to OER. Three of the remaining institutions indicated that they were exploring a program, committee, or policy. This is a large increase from last year, when only 17 of 30 responding institutions indicated having an OER program, committee, or policy and nine were exploring.





Summary and links by institution

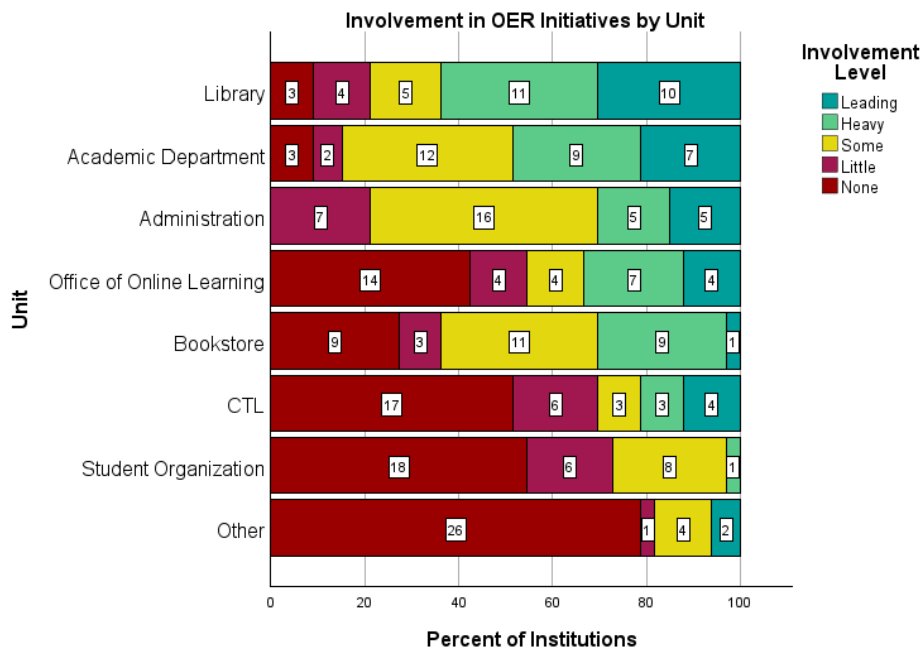
Universities				
Institution	Policy	Program	Committee	Memberships
Emporia State University	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Fort Hays State University	No/Don't Know	Yes	Yes	OEN, SPARC
Kansas State University	No/Don't Know	Yes	Yes	OEN, SPARC, Library Purchasing Coalition, LibreNet
Pittsburg State University	Yes	Yes	Yes	
University of Kansas	No/Don't Know	Yes	Yes	SPARC, OEN, OpenStax
Washburn University	No/Don't Know	Yes	Exploring	
Wichita State University	No/Don't Know	Yes	Yes	

Community Colleges				
Institution	Policy	Program	Committee	
Allen Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Barton Community College	No/Don't Know	Yes	Yes	
Butler Community College	Yes	Yes	Yes	CCCOER
Cloud County Community College	No/Don't Know	Exploring	Exploring	
Coffeyville Community College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	Yes	OpenStax
Colby Community College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	Yes	OpenStax
Cowley College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	
Dodge City Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Fort Scott Community College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Garden City Community College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Highland Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Exploring	
Hutchinson Community College	No/Don't Know	Exploring	Yes	
Independence Community College	Yes	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	
Johnson County Community College	Yes	Yes	Exploring	CCCOER, SPARC
Kansas City Kansas Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Labette Community College	Yes	Yes	No/Don't Know	CCCOER, OER Commons, OpenStax
Neosho County Community College	No/Don't Know	Yes	No/Don't Know	
Pratt Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	
Seward County Community College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Yes	

Technical Colleges				
Institution	Policy	Program	Committee	
Flint Hills Technical College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	Yes	
Fort Hays Tech North Central	No/Don't Know	Yes	No/Don't Know	
Fort Hays Tech Northwest	No/Don't Know	Yes	No/Don't Know	
Manhattan Area Technical College	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	
Salina Area Technical College	Exploring	No/Don't Know	Yes	OpenStax
WSU Tech	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	
Medical Center				
Institution	Policy	Program	Committee	
University of Kansas Medical Center	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	No/Don't Know	

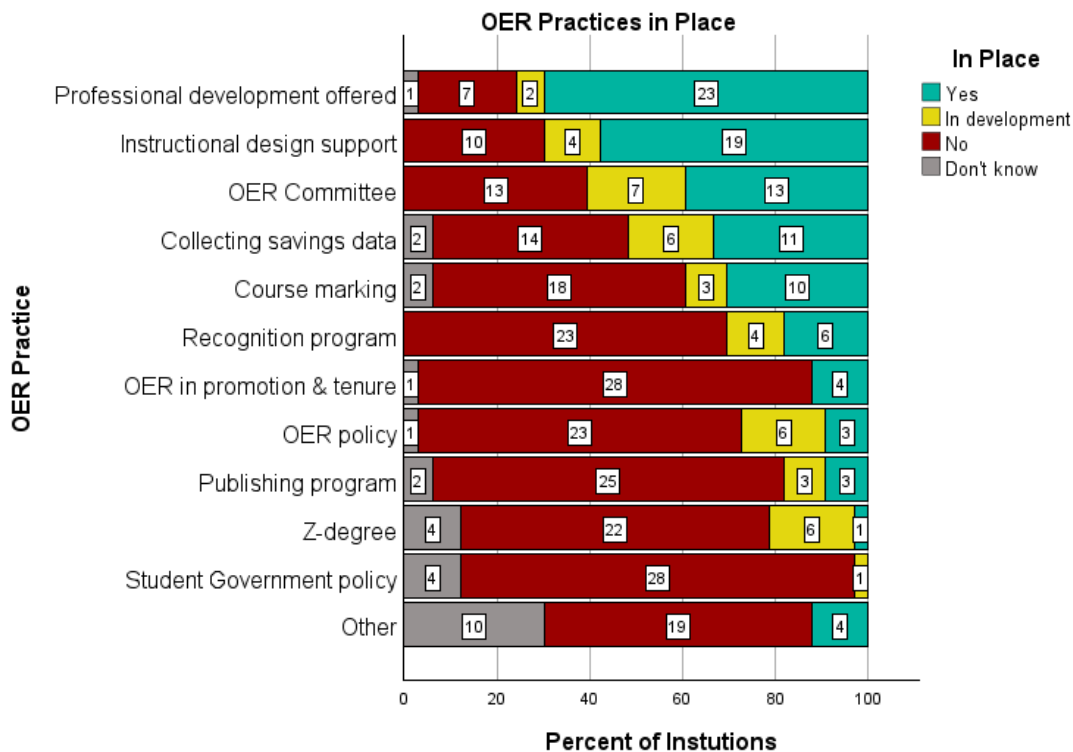
Unit involvement in OER initiatives

In ranking different institutional units' involvements in OER initiatives, respondents said that libraries and academic departments were most likely to lead OER initiatives. (In an open-ended comments section related to this question, there was no disciplinary trend as to which departments were most likely to lead OER initiatives.) There is room for growth in the involvement of other units, especially student organizations and centers for teaching and learning (CTLs).



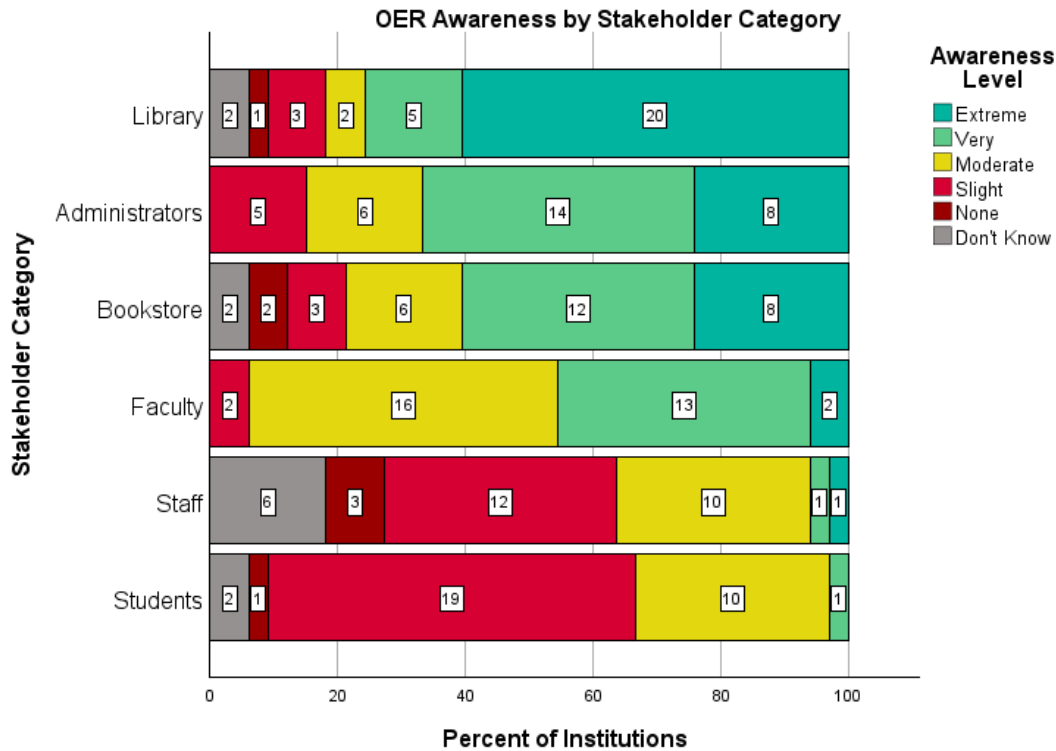
OER Practices in Place

Respondents were asked about the OER-related practices in place at their institutions. The most common practice was professional development, with the majority of institutions (23) reporting offering professional development related to OER. However, a sizeable minority of institutions is still relying on Open Up Learning Kansas for OER-related professional development. More than half of institutions (19) reported that instructional design support was offered for using OER. Other practices were less common, and there is room for growth in all areas listed in the chart below.



Stakeholder Awareness of OER

When respondents were asked about stakeholder awareness, the library, administration, and the bookstore were most likely to be “very” or “extremely” aware of OER. Community colleges reported higher faculty awareness of OER (mode: very aware) than universities or technical colleges (mode: moderately aware).



Desired Support for OER

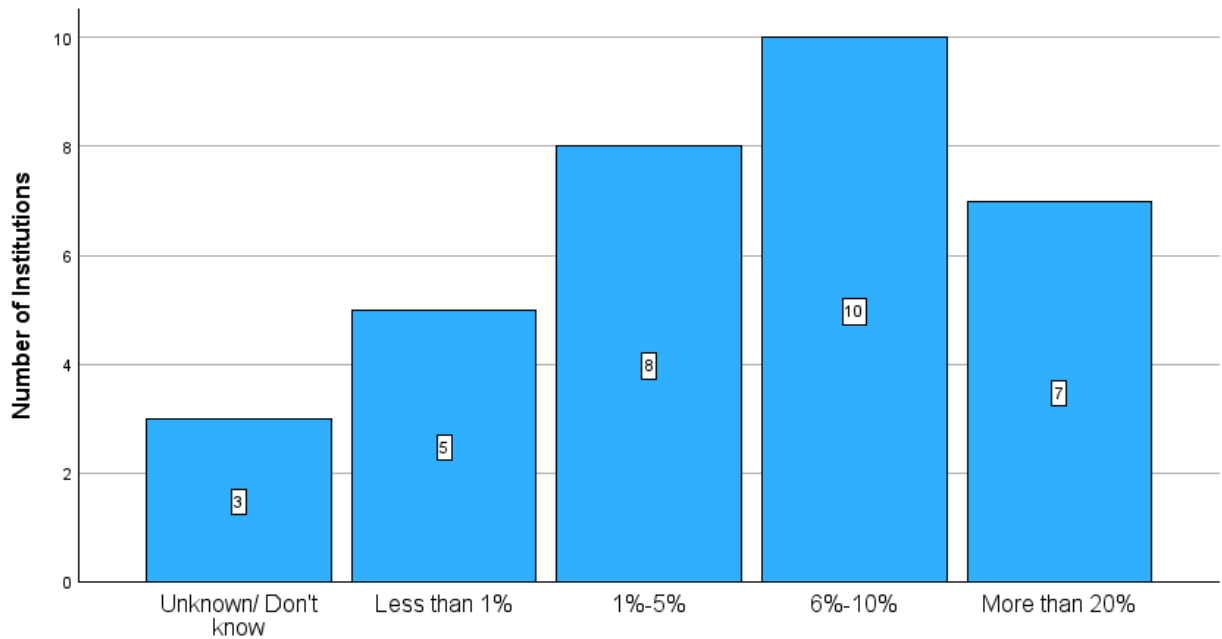
In an open-ended question, respondents requested the following types of support for OER:

- Professional development (6)
- Support for publishing OER (3)
- Additional funding to incentivize the adoption/adaptation/creation of OER (2)
- Information on marketing OER programs (2)
- Examples of OER policies (2)
- Information on using AI to create OER (1)
- A list of most-used OER (1)
- Guidance on course marking (1)
- Information on creating ZTC pathways (1)
- Resources on STEM subjects (1)

Utilization of OER

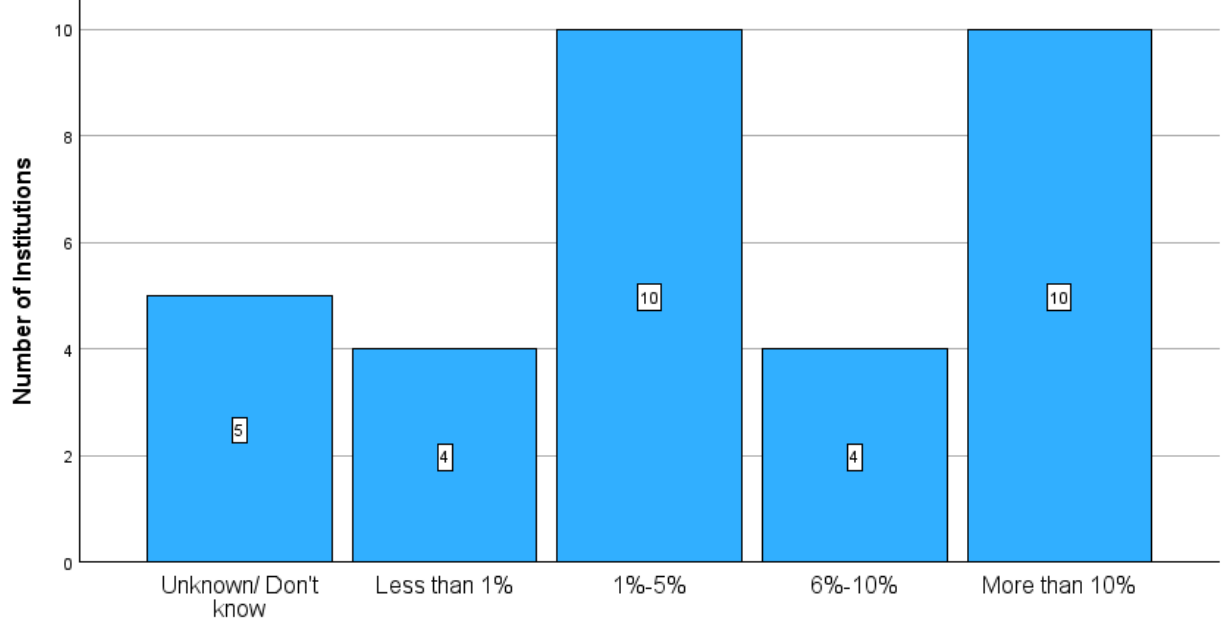
Respondents were asked what percentage of faculty and what percentage of systemwide transfer courses (SWTs) were using OERs as the main textbook or other course material.

Percentage of Faculty Using OER as a Primary Resource in at least One Class



Percentage of Faculty Using OER

Percentage of SWT Courses Using OER as a Primary Resource



Percentage of SWT Courses Using OER

Challenges to Adopting OER

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked about barriers to adopting OER on their campuses. The challenges reported were:

- Lack of faculty time (10)
- Lack of existing OER for certain topics (8)
- Faculty resistance/misconceptions about OER (7)
- Lack of training/awareness (6)
- Lack of financial incentives for faculty (6)
- Lack of faculty interest (4)
- Ease of using traditionally published resources (4)
- Lack of staff/staff time (3)
- Lack of ancillary materials (3)
- Difficulty of finding OER (2)
- Lack of open homework platforms (1)
- Quality of existing OER (1)
- Difficulty finding OER (1)
- Lack of clarity on how time spent on OER “counts” for promotion and tenure (1)
- Accreditation requirements (1)

OER Grants

Respondents were asked whether their institutions had applied for or received grants related to OER. One university reported receiving an external grant related to OER, and one community college reported applying for but not receiving a grant. The barriers that were listed were:

- Lack of time (13)
- Lack of personnel (9)
- Lack of knowledge/information (7)
- Lack of interest in OER from faculty (5)
- Lack of need for funds to support OER (4)
- Mismatch between institution and scope of grants available (2)
- Strenuous application/reporting requirements (2)
- Lack of partners (1)
- Not a priority (1)

References

Clinton, V., & Khan, S. (2019). Efficacy of open textbook adoption on learning performance and course withdrawal rates: A meta-analysis. *AERA Open*, 5(3).

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Colvard, N. B., Watson, C. E., & Park, H. (2018). The impact of open educational resources on various student success metrics. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 30*(2), 262–276.

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KBOR Student Advisory Committee. (2019). *Textbook Affordability Survey*. Kansas Board of Regents.

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Mowreader, A. (2024, August 26). *Cost of Course Materials Impacts Student Success*. Inside Higher Ed. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/student-success/health-wellness/2024/08/26/college-students-avoid-courses-high-textbook-costs>

Open Educational Resources. (n.d.). UNESCO. Retrieved October 22, 2025, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/open-educational-resources>

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Appendix A: Survey Questions



2025 Institutional OER Initiatives Survey

The Kansas Board of Regents OER Steering Committee is conducting our 4th annual survey in order to gather updated information on how these resources are currently being implemented across various organizations in the state.

Note: By participating in this survey, you agree to share the information you provide with the other academic institutions on this list. Further, you will receive a copy of the results of this survey and insight on how your institution compares to others in the state.

Due Date: Friday, June 27, 2025

Directions: This survey is going to the chief academic officer at each institution but can be forwarded to the appropriate respondent. One response per institution should be submitted, though input from multiple sources may be required to locate all pertinent information.

Important definitions: This institutional survey is about Open Educational Resources (OER) which for the purposes of this survey are: teaching, learning, and research resources that are free of cost and access barriers, and which also carry legal permission for open use. Generally, this permission is granted by the use of an open license (for example, Creative Commons licenses) which allows anyone to freely use, adapt and share the resource—anytime, anywhere.

This survey is based on:

The Iowa Department of Education survey:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/160BR2vdA90LI3csyDVUO6FBukQtJ9H1/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs>

Texas OER Survey:

<http://reportcenter.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/reports-and-studies-non-fiscal/oer-texas/>

By completing this survey, you consent to the following informed consent

form: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YvCiPUIUNpHWJbyHlflYjfj7ndHBFoB2/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=118317766508095632556&rtpof=true&sd=true>

* Required

1. Respondent's Name *

Enter your answer

2. Respondent's Email *


Enter your answer

3. Respondent's Phone Number *


Enter your answer

4. What is your title at your institution? *

Enter your answer

5. Is there a person or team that directs OER initiatives at your school? (if yes share individual names or team) * 

Enter your answer

6. What is the name of your college/university/institution? * 

Enter your answer

7. Does your institution have a policy, program, or committee to support OER use on campus? *




Policy

Programs

Committees

I don't know


8. Is your institution exploring the possibility of adding a policy, program, or committee to support OER on campus? * 

Policy

Program

Committee

I don't know

9. Rank departments/units on your campus that play a role in coordinating your campus's OER Initiatives * 

	Leading OER Initiatives	Heavy OER Involvement	Some OER Involvement	Little OER Involvement	None
Student Organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bookstore	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	~	~	~	~	~
Office of Online/Blended Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Center for Learning/Teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic Department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. (if "other" or "academic department" was selected) List any other departments involved with OER Initiatives on your campus

Enter your answer

11. If applicable: Please share any links to OER relevant sites or institutional documents below

Enter your answer

12. Which of the following practices are currently in place at your institution to support OER? *

	Yes	No	In Development/Planning Phase	I don't know
OER Committee/Working Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Institutional OER Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Government OER Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Z-Degree (zero textbook-cost degree program)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
OER Recognition program (badges/certificates/awards/etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructional Design Support for OER Use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional Development Support for OER Use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collection of Data on Student Savinas form OER Use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Please list any OER partnership/institution memberships that you currently have (ex. OpenStax Institutional Partnership, Open Education Network Institutional membership, CCCOER, SPARC) *



Enter your answer

18. Approximately what percentage of instructors at your institution are utilizing OER as their primary course resource (A textbook, lab book, or textbook replacement) in at least one of their courses?



	More than 20%	11%-20%	6%-10%	1%-5%	Less than 1%	None	Unknown/Don't know
Number of Faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Approximately what percentage of General Education/Kansas Systemwide Transfer Courses (https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/transfer-articulation, https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/transfer-articulation/institutional-transfer-information) are utilizing OER as their primary course resource (a textbook, lab book, or textbook replacement)? *



	More than 10%	6%-10%	1%-5%	Less than 1%	None	Unknown/Don't know
Number of Courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


20. Has your institution applied for grants to fund OER initiatives? *




- No
- Yes, but have never received a grant
- Yes, and at least one grant was funded

21. (if you answered Yes, to applying and/or receiving grants) Please list the grants and year(s) applied which you did not receive.


Enter your answer

22. (if you answered "Yes, and at least one grant was funded") Please list the grants you applied for that were funded, the names of the grant proposals, and the amount which was funded. 


Enter your answer

23. What are some barriers to pursuing external grants to fund OER initiatives? * 


Enter your answer

24. Has your institution directly benefited from another institution's OER-focused grant? * 


- Yes
- No
- I don't know

25. (If you answered "Yes") Please indicate the institution(s) who received grants your institution benefitted from, and a brief description of how your institution benefitted. 


Enter your answer

26. Are there any new OER initiatives your institution specifically being implemented this academic year? 

Enter your answer


27. What are the biggest challenges that hinder Open Educational Resource (OER) adoption and use at your institution? * 

Enter your answer


28. Is there anything else you would like to add about the use of Open Educational Resources on your campus and its effect on student savings, learning and success? * 

Enter your answer

Enter your answer

29. Please list individuals, positions, or departments within your organization who were consulted in the completion of this form. * 

Enter your answer

30. I would be interested in contact for follow up regarding my responses to this survey 

Please contact me

Submit

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