Improving Access, Affordability, and Achievement with OER

MJ Bishop, Associate Vice Chancellor and Director
William E. Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation
University System of Maryland

MARYLAND OPEN SOURCE TEXTBOOK Initiative
Kirwan Center Mission

The Center leverages the power of multi-institutional collaboration to increase access, affordability, and achievement for Maryland students.

Informed by the diversity of Maryland’s postsecondary institutions, findings from the learning sciences, and capabilities of emerging technologies, the Center leads statewide efforts to implement, evaluate, and scale and sustain innovations aimed at student success.
“It is possible to teach every branch of human knowledge with the motion picture. Books will be completely obsolete and scholars will be instructed with the eye.”

Thomas Edison

The New York Dramatic Mirror (July 1913)
“...Our school system will be completely changed inside of ten years.”
“Undreamed of possibilities for education...”

Farrand, 1931
“Will resurrect the aural instructional techniques employed so successfully by famous teachers of the past like Socrates!”

Tyson, 1931
“There will be vast universities of the air, with courses taught by the national leaders of their fields...”

Waller, 1934
“...television is an efficient and inexpensive way to satisfy the nation’s instructional needs.”

Jones, 1957
“...will provide students access to the personal services of a tutor as well-informed and responsive as Aristotle.”

Suppes, 1976
Big claims

The greatest thing since sliced bread!
Rush to adoption

With no foundation in existing research.
Implementation difficulties

Is it even practical?
Then the research trickles in...

No significant differences.
communication strategies differ in terms of clarity & politeness
Baumol’s “Cost Disease”

Technological Innovation

- Productivity increase in industry group A
- Rise in nominal wages in industry group A
- Decrease in costs per unit of output in industry group A
- Little or no effect on productivity in industry group B
- Rise in nominal wages in industry group B
- Increase in costs per unit of output in industry group B

Baumol’s "Cost Disease" refers to the phenomenon where innovations in one industry lead to increased costs in other industries, leading to a relative decline in that industry's competitiveness.
That’s depressing.

How do we break this cycle?
The application of our knowledge about tools, techniques, or systems to solve practical problems.
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What is the practical problem?

How to do more with less.
“Non-traditional” student?

- Over 25.
- Dependents.
- First generation.
- Financially independent.
- Took time off before college.
- Went to a community college.
- Attends part time/works full time.
What do we know about the tools?

Understanding the actions made possible.
How do we *use* the tools?

No more business as usual.
TO-DAY'S AERIAL
Geography LESSON.

A Modern Classroom is a lofty and airy platform for the instruction of young minds. The teacher, well-dressed, stands at the front of the room, pointing to a map spread out on the table in front of her. The students are seated at their desks, engaged in their studies, with books and notebooks open before them. The atmosphere is one of concentration and learning.
cMOOC
Virtual, international & "massive" space where students and faculty share & critique each other's projects, build community around doing.

F2F
Part-physical space where a teacher helps guide students in authentic, project-based applications of the skills and concepts introduced in the xMOOC.

xMOOC
Space where students are introduced to core skills/concepts and can do light application.
IN 2015-16 THE U. OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GOT RID OF THESE-- COURSE MATERIALS ARE NOW ONLINE & FREE
Mmm. Free stuff...

Did someone say “free stuff?”

OE-whats?
A Cengage Buffet

In a shift away from traditional publishing models, Cengage is offering a "Cengage buffet," where most of the publisher's digital catalog is available at no charge.

By Lindsay McKenzie // December 5, 2017

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‘Inclusive Access’ Takes Off

Hundreds of colleges are signing on to publishers’ programs, with apparent appeal while others are skeptical.

By Lindsay McKenzie // November 7, 2017

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Are Etextbooks Affordable Now?

In a bid to gain market share, publishers have slashed the cost of digital textbooks.

By Lindsay McKenzie // May 1, 2018
The application of our knowledge about tools, techniques, or systems to solve practical problems.
Open educational resources (OER) are resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their **free use and repurposing by others.**
Open is Not Just Free

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Student Success

Access

Affordability

Achievement
Achievement
Access
Affordability
We need...

• Digital rights and accessibility compliance services.
• Support for curation/discoverability.
• More OER materials at higher levels.
• Support for teaching and learning with OER.
• A transition plan (bookstores closing!).
• OER quality review.
• Faculty incentives.
“Improvement in post secondary education will require converting teaching from a solo sport to a community-based research activity.”

-- Herb Simon
Nobel Laureate and Professor
Carnegie Mellon University
MISSION

M.O.S.T. supports long-term, statewide scaling and sustainability of fully accessible, openly licensed course materials by providing the collaborative infrastructure Maryland’s public higher education institutions need to support effective and efficient OER adoption, adaptation, and creation.

M.O.S.T. is dedicated to empowering and rewarding faculty who capitalize on the opportunities afforded by openly licensed materials to optimize student learning through continuous quality improvement.
GOAL

To achieve its mission, M.O.S.T. will support statewide scaling and sustainable use of OER, leveraging the affordances of openly licensed materials to increase access, affordability and achievement for all students’ success by...

• shifting the conversation about OER from being just about affordability to, more holistically, being about student success;

• supporting effective and efficient adoption, creation, and adaptation of OER to optimize student achievement;

• developing processes, models, and reward structures for sustaining the work over time.
Parting thoughts.

It’s not really about OER...
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