

UG Statement to encourage the use of OER

The university recognizes the importance of ensuring that all students have equitable access to the learning supports they need. Open educational resources (OER) help to bridge this gap, removing barriers to student learning and enhancing the overall student experience. OER are educational materials that are openly licensed and freely available for anyone to use and re-use.

The university's [Inclusion Framework](#) asserts that providing each member of the campus community with all of the supports necessary to thrive is imperative. Despite this, we know that [57% of surveyed undergraduates at Guelph](#) did not purchase some or all of their required course materials. Using OER ensures that all students have access to the materials they need to be successful from day one.

The adoption, adaptation, and creation of OER is encouraged in the university's Teaching and Learning Plan as part of its goal of enhancing access and inclusion in teaching and learning practices. Since OER can be customized to address the unique structure and learning objectives of a course, students are able to engage more meaningfully with the content. Research shows that students perform as well, and sometimes even better, when they use OER rather than traditional textbooks¹.

For these reasons, the university encourages faculty members and instructors to explore using OER in their courses. Support for transitioning courses to more open alternatives is available from the [Open and Affordable Course Content Task Force](#) and from the library's Research and Scholarship team at liboer@uoguelph.ca. Assistance includes finding and evaluating openly licensed course materials, explaining and interpreting license options, and migrating self-created content to open formats.

20 April 2021

¹ [Allen et al., 2015](#), [Colvard, Watson, and Park, 2018](#), [Jhangiani et al., 2018](#).