

Policy on Open Educational Resources Being Considered by the University

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Subsequent to the passing of New Jersey [P.L. 2019, c.77 \(C.18A:3B-81 et seq.\)](#), the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) directed that institutions of higher education in the state prepare and submit a plan for the use of open textbooks and digital learning materials. In response to [this request](#), The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs charged a university-wide task force with representatives from each college and the Cheng Library to study the matter and prepare recommendations. The plan that emerged from that work, completed in April 2020, can be [found here](#).

In Fall 2021, the Provost requested that the Faculty Senate Technology Council, the Technology Across the Curriculum Committee, and the Library collaborate to facilitate the expansion of faculty use of OER materials, particularly in freshmen courses, and to offer recommendations to the Administration on what would accelerate such adoption. Such materials are now widely available, and the Cheng Library has been a leader in support of the OER visibility and adoption movement at the University, with [extensive resources available](#). Such materials are also available [statewide](#).

As an expansion of this work, and in the primary interest of materials affordability for students, the Administration wishes to receive recommendations **on a formalized policy for the required integration of OER materials, or other free to students' materials, across all 1000 level courses** that the Administration wishes to execute starting with the Fall 2022 semester, with full implementation beginning Spring 2023. Materials should be common ones across course sections to the fullest extent reasonable. Furthermore, in alignment with the [Creative Commons](#), a world leader in the advancement of OER, it also seeks expanded adoption by faculty of high quality educational materials and learning objects that faculty can embed into lesson plans and that are highly engaging to students.

Recommendations to the Provost are requested by April 1. The Provost will make a recommendation to the President shortly thereafter. The Library, in consultation with the colleges, will be charged with supporting faculty in the execution of this policy, with Deans and Chairs responsible for ensuring faculty understand this expectation and are enabled to deliver on it. The Center for Teaching Excellence will also support the effort by providing workshops and resources on teaching pedagogy using OER materials. What is ultimately adopted will also consider University contractual obligations to the University Bookstore. They have a new initiative, for example, by which students could receive digital textbooks at substantially reduced cost.