

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 6 – H (4)

DATE: October 3-5, 2017

SUBJECT

Open Education Resource Initiatives

PERTINENT HISTORY

One of the primary goals for the Board of Regents in their strategic plan has been to explore strategies that increase affordability for students in the Regental system. At the request of the Joint Appropriations Committee, a presentation was developed to highlight areas of efficiencies over the past decade, and part of the discussion with the committee in July 2017 focused on other initiatives worthy of exploration. A number of these were discussed with the Board during the [August 2017](#) retreat. In particular, campus level efforts to utilized open source materials as an alternative to published textbooks was identified as an area where system level engagement may assist in moving efforts forward in high enrolled General Education courses.

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 1:11 – Academic Freedom and Responsibility](#)

[BOR Policy 4:38 – Statement Concerning Faculty Expectations](#)

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Universities and governing bodies around the nation have begun to participate in Open Education Resource (OER) library consortiums, and the [Open Textbook Network](#) established at the University of Minnesota highlights the potential success of strategic investments in this area. This particular network, consists of more than 500 campuses around the country (most recently the North Dakota University System), houses a collection of free textbooks that are openly-licensed and peer-reviewed. The estimated cost savings ranges from \$500,000-\$3.1M at participating institutions. Regardless of membership, the [Open Textbook Library](#) is accessible to anyone and system-wide memberships also seem to be an option. Membership grants faculty members to modify and submit textbooks which are then peer-reviewed. Members are also encouraged to maintain and promote training for faculty and staff, as well as gather and report the adoption of open textbook numbers.

(Continued)

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

This item is for informational purposes only. Any action will be at the Board’s discretion.

The Open Textbook Network also issued a [report](#) intended for faculty members and decision makers to support the adoption of open educational resources. Most recently, North Dakota University System requested \$110,000 one-time funds during 2015-2017 to pay for the Open Educational Resources Initiative. Currently, NDUS has conducted statewide meetings, developed a task force, and worked to address course redesign with regard to the use of OER materials. Other in-progress goals NDUS is trying to accomplish are: surveying participation, improving adoption of OER by faculty, and the development of transferrable courses that use these materials. The lead for the NDUS system is now also working with Colorado officials to explore the viability for the states involvement in the initiative.

As additional background, the term “open source” is routinely use to reflect a wide range of activities related to cost-free options for students or researchers. The following terms are operationalized here to reflect the interaction of open source activities underway in higher education.

- **Open Access:** Free, immediate, online availability of research articles coupled with the rights to use these articles fully in the digital environment. Open Access ensures that anyone can access and use these results—to turn ideas into industries and breakthroughs into better lives.
- **Open Education:** Resources, tools and practices that are free of legal, financial and technical barriers and can be fully used, shared and adapted in the digital environment. Open Education maximizes the power of the Internet to make education more affordable, accessible and effective.
- **Open Data:** Research data that is freely available on the internet permitting any user to download, copy, analyses, re-process, pass to software or use for any other purpose without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.”
- **Public Access:** Digital access to Scholarly or Creative Works that is made readily available without hardship to the reader.
- **Gold Open Access:** Publications available directly from the publisher; there are multiple business models (i.e., the journal may or may not charge a publishing fee).
- **E-textbook Initiative:** Single platform to integrate publisher provided e-material with Desire2Learn the common SDBOR Learning Management System.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

During their August 2017 meeting, the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) discussed campus level success in expanding OER use by faculty, and determined that there would be benefit from targeting key disciplines at the system level. A taskforce of faculty and library representatives is being developed for the system to evaluate system level options.

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The NDUS lead has indicated a willingness to attend the November 1 AAC meeting in Pierre to provide an overview of activities in North Dakota and Colorado and provide technical assistance with initiating first steps for the Regental system.

ATTACHMENTS

None