Student and Faculty Research Days

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Opening Up: Why Are We not Using More Open Education Resources?

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Opening Up: Why are we not using more Open Educational Resources (OERs)?

Daniel A. Sabol

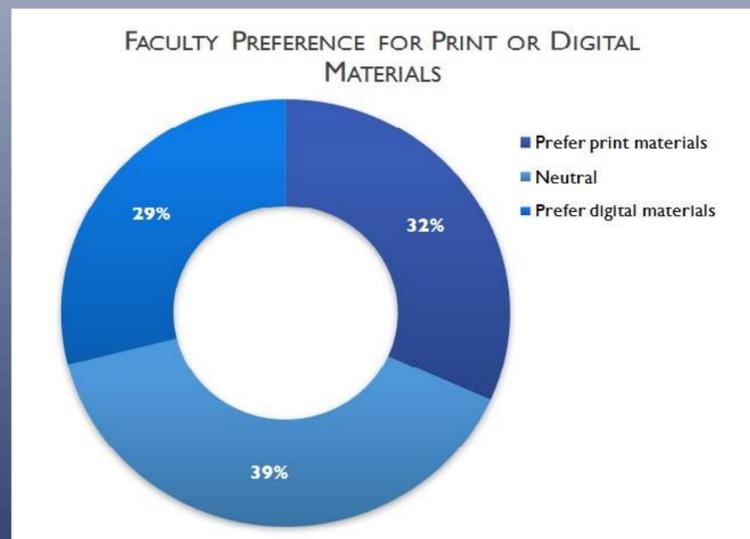### Pace University – Seidenberg School of Computer Science / Bronx Community College – CUNY
Pace University Research Day – May 2, 2018
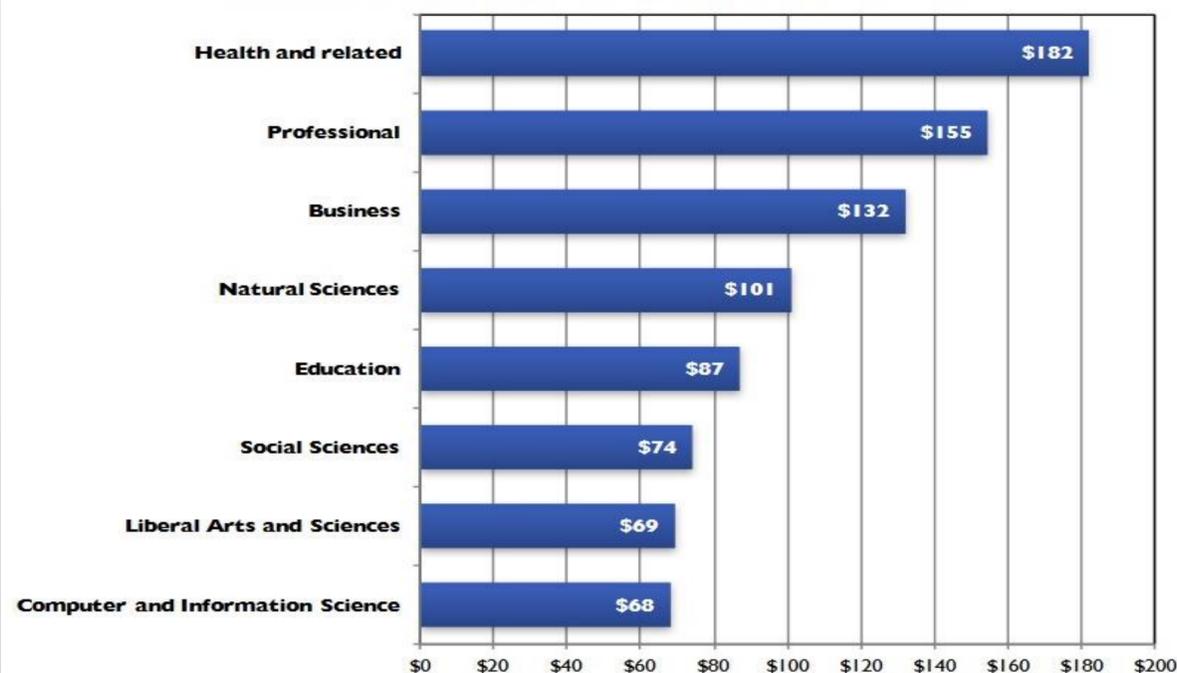
Abstract:

With the cost of text books on the rise and the decrease in academic affordability by many students falling; how can we further help those in need? Using Open Educational Resources (OER's.) This research was done after taking a hard look at the momentum of courses presently being taught in addition to a survey sent out to teaching faculty. It has been noted that students will purchase a textbook and never open it, or they will drop a course because they cannot afford to purchase the textbook. In addition, when using tangible textbooks we forget about the ADA compliance we should be meeting. Most open source books and other materials are digital which allows a text to speech reader to be embedded. This alleviates a great deal of pressure put on the students with disabilities. It is hypothesized that faculty are unwilling to use OER's due to the trust worthiness of OER's.

What are OER's?

OER are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

AVERAGE COST OF REQUIRED TEXTBOOK BY DISCIPLINE

- Health and related: $182
- Professional: $155
- Business: $132
- Natural Sciences: $101
- Education: $87
- Social Sciences: $74
- Liberal Arts and Sciences: $69
- Computer and Information Science: $68

FACULTY PREFERENCE FOR PRINT OR DIGITAL MATERIALS

- Prefer print materials: 32%
- Neutral: 29%
- Prefer digital materials: 39%

Outcomes:

n=144   SD ± 4.5

- Faculty want to use them, but fear the trustworthiness of the open text.

- The average age of those using OER's in their classroom were 45+.

- 80% Of faculty consider their students when designing a course.

- 45% Felt they were advanced technology users.

- Most felt pressure from major publishing houses to use the text they provide.

- Faculty were comfortable with the way their course was designed, but have not changed any materials for the course in 5(± 3) years.

- Most faculty members would be willing to try to design an OER course. In addition, It has been found that universities are setting up a whole degree based on OER's to help students who are struggling financially. This could save the student over $2,000 in textbook fees over the course of their academic studies.

Methods:

A questioner was first approved by the Bronx Community College IRB. It was than sent to numerous faculty by way of list-serves and email. Eight questions were posed based upon the research which was needed to answer the question of why more faculty object to using OER's.

Conclusion:

It was found that faculty were open to using OER's in their courses, but the major fear was the idea that the books and materials were not trustworthy or peer reviewed. Rightly so, this is a problem, but it has not been discovered thus far as other faculty tend to publish the open work themselves. To over come this idea it is believed that if more faculty contribute to OER's we would have more trust. In addition, faculty members being subject specialist should be able to tell if a source is credible. Last, we are eliminating ADA issues with OER's and cutting cost for our students. We want retention and learning going on in the classroom, not worry about getting money for a textbook or the faculty member only using the text three or four time.

Resources:

https://www.lumenlearning.com/
https://www.oercommons.org/