

## Open@WRLC Faculty Course Transformation Awardees



In January 2024, the WRLC launched the second year of a two-year pilot Open Educational Resource (OER) Faculty Course Transformation program. Across the WRLC, 16 faculty members will receive a \$2,000 Open@WRLC Faculty Course Transformation award to provide support as they work to adopt OER courseware into their curriculum and provide low to no-cost courses to their campus community. Learn more here at [Open@WRLC.org](https://open@wrlc.org). For the second pilot year, the combined proposals are projected to yield a total estimated textbook cost savings of \$294,703.00 for the 2024- 2025 Academic Year alone. This is approximately three times the textbooks savings from the first pilot year and part of the credit goes to at least two institutions that will be using OER to update all sections within a single course. Other exciting updates include entire OER courseware websites that have been created by faculty to replace traditionally published commercial textbooks and AI enhanced functionality. Please join us in welcoming this year's newest OER campus advocates and program awardees:

### George Washington University

#### Dr. Alexa Alice Joubin

Open-access web-based textbooks for

- Shakespeare on Film
- Shakespeare, Race and Gender
- Introduction to Critical Theory
- AI and the Humanities



#### What has inspired your interest in OER?

*“My OER project is driven by and inspired by my passion for public interest technology, open pedagogies, and social justice in terms of equal access to education. My interactive modules will teach students how to analyze films, particularly the themes of race and gender in Shakespeare films. Adaptations, by virtue of their intertextuality, can help students develop radical listening skills. Adaptations invite multiple, sometimes conflicting, perspectives on the same stories. Radical listening is a set of proactive communication strategies to listen for the roots of stories that give voice to the tale. Instead of looking for the what in the plot of Shakespeare, students, using this strategy, can examine the why in characters’ motivation and behaviors.”*



## American University

**Dr. David Jacobs**

PHIL 296 AI and the Future of Work

### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“I have watched as textbook prices have reached ridiculous levels. Without careful planning, a reading-intensive course becomes prohibitively expensive or inconvenient for students. I would like to support low cost and free platforms to augment teaching in my field and bring students into a larger virtual community.”*

## The Catholic University of America

**Dr. Cybele Arnaud**

FREN 101 Elementary French



### **Why did you select this specific course for OER adoption?**

*“The French 101 textbook is the most expensive one in the French program, costing from \$179.95 to \$302.95 depending on the bundle. Language courses are also the most expensive classes in the required classes of the Liberal Arts Curriculum. Substituting it with OER materials, which are free to access and download, would allow students to save money on expensive textbooks and course materials, channeling these savings toward experiences that will broaden their worldview and increase their language proficiency.”*

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### **The Catholic University of America**

#### **Dr. Gunnar Lucko**

CEE 241 Introduction to Construction Engineering and Management

### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“I have long formed the opinion that 'no textbook is perfect' (given the slow publishing cycle and editorial requirement to have a broad appeal to sell). This includes my own experience at being 3rd author of the 5th edition of 'Construction Management' by Wiley (with Dr. Halpin and Dr. Senior). Therefore, I have been telling my students that learning is a multiple-input process, wherein the instructor, handouts, textbook(s), homeworks, and own study all form building blocks of the educational attainment of the engineering knowledge...”*

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# The Catholic University of America

## **Dr. Rebecca Kiriazes**

HSEV 101 Environmental Science and Sustainability



### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“Honors Environmental Science and Sustainability (HSEV 101) has historically been taught by a faculty in the chemistry department but as of Fall 2025, the course will be taught by two engineering faculty - Dr. Rebecca Kiriazes and Dr. Jason Davison in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. When starting to develop and update curriculum Environmental Science and Sustainability, the team came across a number of OERs that were preferred over the “original” textbook. In addition to providing excellent content, an OER would reduce the student financial burden and provide further access to content.”*



# University of the District of Columbia

## **Dr. John Martin**

AETC 122C Intro to History of Architecture

### **Why did you select this specific course for OER adoption?**

*“This is an intro survey course with a wide focus, so many types of media resources are online. The class also has research assignments in which a diverse group of students are given wide latitude to choose a subject of interest to them or related to their own culture and tradition. There is an opportunity for them to delve into a worldwide menu of reference material rather than rely on Wikipedia. Finally, it is a subject I am passionate about and would like to bring more of my own documented experiences, and narratives to the course material.”*

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## University of the District of Columbia

Dr. Jasmine Yarish

- HIST 101 US History to 1865
- HIST 102 US History since 1865



### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“Though I have not participated in the Open@WRLC Open Textbook Library (OTL) \$200 stipend review program, in Fall 2023, I integrated a free online training program entitled ‘Leadership and No-Blame Problem Solving’ developed by The Citizens Campaign into my ‘Discovery Civics’ course (IGED 280). I found this no-cost multi-media source as a valuable substitute for more traditional textbooks. In turn, this preliminary use of an open source has inspired me to dig deeper into OER.”*

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## George Mason University

### **Dr. Daniel Ferguson**

ECED 401/501 Developmental Pathways  
of Diverse Learners, Birth-Adolescence

#### **Why did you select this specific course for OER adoption?**

*“This course has required a large textbook for several years that, at minimum this year, costs \$80 to rent for six months, and \$300 to buy new. Secondly, faculty members who have taught this course have already discussed changing the text to provide broader perspectives on child development, in order to more intentionally align the course reading with our core principles of inclusivity, equity and global connectedness.*

*I view replacing this text with an OER text and supplemental articles curated by faculty members as solving both of these issues. OER adoption with supplemental OA materials would bring the costs of course materials down to zero, as well as provide a more diverse survey of child development scholarship.”*

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## George Washington University

**Dr. Yoshie Nakamura**

HOL 6706 Current Issues in Organizational  
Leadership: Leader as Coach

### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“My interest in Open Educational Resources (OER) is driven by a deep commitment to making education accessible, equitable, and engaging for all students. The traditional cost barriers associated with higher education—specifically the high cost of textbooks—significantly impede student access to required materials, affecting their ability to succeed in their studies. The OER movement represents a transformative shift towards inclusivity and equity in education, aligning with my personal and professional values. It is the opportunity to directly impact students’ academic success and retention that has inspired me to pursue the integration of OER into my teaching practices.”*

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## George Washington University

**Dr. Donald Ritzenhein**

COMM 1040 Public Communication



### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“Desire to reduce costs for students especially in freshman and sophomore year survey courses where considerable agreement exists in the academic community about what constitutes essential content, and OER texts written by experienced and expert faculty show similar levels of high quality as high-priced commercial textbooks.”*



## Howard University

**Matthew Bruckner, J.D.**

LAW 615 Contracts



## What has inspired your interest in OER?

*“Contract casebooks are ridiculously expensive. The list price for my casebook is \$335... But the law doesn't change very quickly. As such, I've long used an older edition of this book. But the 7th edition books have begun to become hard to find. As a result, I was faced with a choice. I could adopt the newest book (or maybe a more recent but still not new edition), in which case I'd likely have the same problem again in a few years. Or I could find a better solution. Open access seems like a better solution because the book will always be free and always be available. Besides, as my course evolves, it will be easy to update the material to reflect changes in the law without forcing students to buy updated editions of the book.”*

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## Howard University

### Dr. Jacob Eliseo

- PORT 003 Portuguese III
- PORT 004 Portuguese IV



## What has inspired your interest in OER?

*“My interest in OER materials started when I was in graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin. As a PhD student, I was an instructor in the Portuguese Language Program. The director of the program developed an OER site titled [ClicaBrasil](#), which I and the other instructors were then trained to incorporate into the program courses. That experience with ClicaBrasil demonstrated to me the effectiveness of using OERs in the university classroom, in particular with developing pedagogical materials that are tailored to the needs of a specific course or program.”*

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## Howard University

**Dr. Bisrat Hailemeskel**

College of Pharmacy 83602-306 Drug  
Informatics

### **Why did you select this specific course for OER adoption?**

*“Given the dynamic nature of drug information, traditional textbooks often become outdated upon publication, posing challenges for students and instructors alike. Moreover, the course objectives emphasize the importance of interpreting and evaluating pharmaceutical data from various sources, including primary literature, to address medication-related problems effectively. This underscores the need for readily accessible and up-to-date resources, which OER can provide.*

*Furthermore, the instructional methodology of the course emphasizes active learning through lectures, discussions, demonstrations, and group assignments. OER materials offer flexibility and adaptability, allowing students to engage with diverse learning resources that align with their learning styles and the course objectives. By adopting OER for this course, we aim to enhance student learning experiences, promote critical thinking skills, and foster collaboration among students and faculty members.”*

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# Howard University

## **Dr. Theresa Hollaway**

RASC 312 Environmental and Radiation  
Therapy



### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“I attended a workshop and was immediately impressed by how well OER fit the needs of the radiation therapy program. There are limited academic textbooks and educational resources covering the fundamentals of radiation therapy. Commercial textbooks focus on radiologic sciences as they primarily relate to diagnostic imaging. [The Open Textbook Library](#) has textbooks in the field of radiology licensed by authors and publishers to be freely used and adapted.”*

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## Howard University

Dr. Tia Tyree  
COMM 410 Social Media & Integrated  
Marketing

### **Why did you select this specific course for OER adoption?**

*“...since there are three required textbooks, and my need to stay current on all things social media requires me to scour the web for trends and industry standard practices, I found the information in those books became less important. Yet, often, they did provide the jumping off point or foundation for the start of discussions. Now, I can find those same subjects in free sources and eliminate those books or move them to the “suggested readings” area in my syllabus.”*

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## Howard University

Tiffany Williams Brewer, J.D.  
HU LAW Professional Responsibility



### **What has inspired your interest in OER?**

*“Teaching at an HBCU after having taught at PWI’s, I see a stark difference in the ability of students to afford textbook materials. I was deeply impacted by the large number of students for whom book purchase is a significant financial barrier. I believe that OER will be a game changer in providing equity to students from underserved communities.”*

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