11 Steps to Create an Open Educational Resource

A step-by-step guide on developing open educational resources (OER), specifically open book publishing. This guide provides recommendations on creating, publishing, and printing OER.

#1 Getting Started

You have already decided to create a free, open resource.

- What are your next steps?
- What OER already exist?
- Can you remix an existing resource?
- How can you share it?

Joyner Library can help you answer these questions and get started with OER publishing.

#2 Organizing Your Ideas

Many open publishing programs allow you to build text in software like Microsoft Word.

To select the best publishing platform for your text, you should identify goals, audience, and types of materials (e.g. video, images).

This information can help identify software needs for your project.

#3 Copyright

You will want to think about how you will license your work. Are you applying a Creative Commons license? If so, which one do you want to use?

If you are using other OER in your text, you will need to plan use based on the license requirement.

Questions about using Creative Commons or other copyright concerns can be directed to Joyner Library at copyright@ecu.edu.

#4 Sharing your text

How do you want to share your text? This will help determine the outline and software that you use.

There are many OER repositories where you can share your work. You may also want to explore more traditional publishing, like print copies with ISBNs.

It will be helpful to have this information when going forward with your project.

#5 Develop the basic structure

Once Step 1-4 are completed, you can begin building your outline for your text.

If you've identified unique features for your text, you may want to meet with a librarian for further support.

#6 Begin your writing

Start writing!

While you can type directly into open publishing software, like Pressbooks, it will be easier to work off a separate document.

We recommend writing your document in Microsoft Word or Google Docs. This process will make it easier for editing your text.

#7 Text editing

When your text is complete, you may want to seek feedback and edit before migrating it to the open publishing software.

Once changes are incorporated in your text, you're ready to transfer to the software.

#8 Migrating to open publishing software

There is a variety of open publishing software that can be used for texts. Pressbooks or iBooks are good options for a more traditional text appearance. Scalar or Wordpress work well for texts more like blogs.

Some software have fees associated with them. You may be able to import your document file or copy/paste may work best with your chosen software.

#9 Proofread

Once the text has been migrated to the software, you will want to proofread the document again. If you are planning to create a print version through a Print-On-Demand service, you should export text versions.

Many times exporting for a print version will cause formatting issues. It will take extra time to fix these errors.

#10 Printing Open Texts

If you are interested in printing copies of your texts, you will want to use a Print-On-Demand service. Print-On-Demand options are available through a number of companies. A prime example is Lulu.com. Some open publishing software has Print-On-Demand Partners.

Remember to consider that formatting for print texts will be different from your electronic copy. Extra time should be allotted if developing a print version.

#11 Share your Work

You can share your text in OER repositories like OER Commons or MERLOT. If your text is like a formal book, Open Textbook Library may be a great location.

You can also submit your text to Joyner Library's institutional repository, ScholarShip.

Please contact the Research and Scholarly Communication Department with questions at scholarlycomm@ecu.edu