

2024 WCU Faculty OER Awareness Survey Highlights

& 2019 University Libraries Survey Comparisons

To inform our decisions about future OER-related efforts at WCU, the Teach & Learning Center and University Libraries worked together to create and distribute a survey to better understand how WCU faculty use, create, and adapt these materials and now want to share some highlights with you.

Summary

The 2024 Faculty Survey shows remarkable growth in OER awareness and adoption since 2019. While faculty interest is high (76% interested in using OER), lack of support and resources remains a significant barrier.

The survey captured responses from 89 faculty members. The respondent pool predominantly consisted of tenured faculty (80%), with smaller representations from tenure-track (9%), full-time adjunct (4%), and part-time adjunct (7%) positions.

Growth in OER Usage

- **+177% Growth**
- **42% now use OER**
(up from 15% in 2019)
- 89% used in undergraduate courses and **76% interested in using OER**

Growth in OER Creation

- **+404% Growth**
- **28% have created/adapted OER**
(up from 5% in 2019)

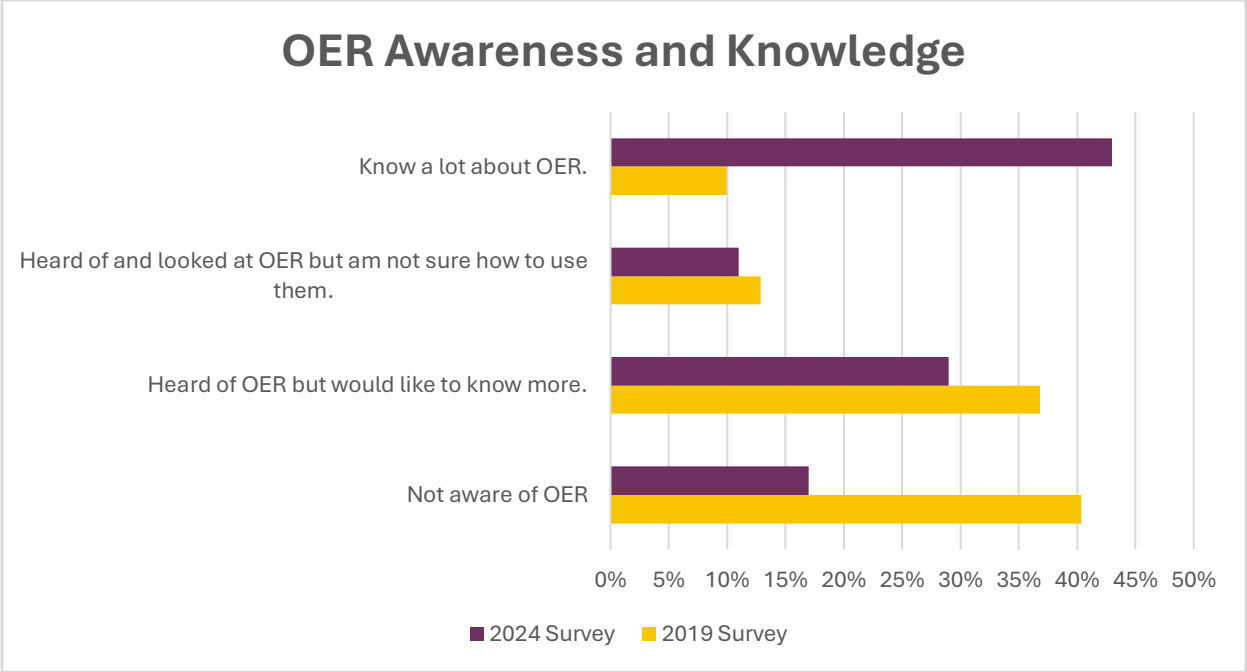
Top Five Motivators for Usage and Creation:

1. Student cost savings (79%)
2. Quality of OER materials (45%),
3. Desire to share knowledge with the community (40%),
4. Desire to diversify the curriculum (40%),
5. Lack of suitable traditional resources (38%).

OER Awareness and Knowledge Comparison

The survey reveals a significant evolution in faculty's OER knowledge base since 2019:

Table 1: OER Awareness and Knowledge



Types of OER Used

Faculty are utilizing OER across various formats, with textbooks leading at 81%. The high preference for OER textbooks aligns with traditional course material needs while providing cost-effective alternatives for students. The diversity of OER types being used demonstrates faculty's growing comfort with different open resource formats:

- **Textbooks:** 81%
- **Multimedia:** 49%
- **Course Materials:** 43%
- **Other (e.g., toolkits, articles):** 11%

Course Material Costs

Cost remains a crucial factor in faculty course material decisions, with 93% of faculty considering cost important and 54% rating it as extremely important (↑ 3% from 2019). However, there is still room for improvement in reducing course material costs with 58% of courses still having materials costing over \$50.

- No Cost: 18%
- \$1-\$50: 24%
- \$51-\$100: 44%
- \$101-\$200: 12%
- \$201 or greater: 2%

Barriers to Implementation and Creation

Despite growing interest, faculty face several significant challenges in OER adoption:

- Time constraints emerged as the predominant barrier, with **72% citing lack of time** as a major concern,
- **Inadequate compensation (41%)** and **copyright/licensing concerns (30%)** form secondary barriers,
- **Technical challenges** and **difficulty finding appropriate materials (both 27%)** represent significant obstacles,
- Institutional factors such as **lack of recognition in scholarship (23%)** and **insufficient support (21%)** also impact adoption.

Resource Usage and Support

Popular Repositories

- Open Textbook Library: 38%
- OER Commons: 30%
- OpenStax: 24%

Desired Support

- Trainings/Workshops: 64%
- Technical Support: 61%
- Financial Incentives: 64%

Implementation and Benefits

OER Key Benefits

- Reduces student financial burden
- Improves material accessibility
- Enables content customization
- Supports educational equity

Recommendations

- Provide faculty release time
- Establish dedicated OER office
- Create centralized repository
- Align with equity initiatives

Conclusion

The 2024 survey results demonstrate significant progress in OER adoption at WCU, with faculty showing both increased awareness and implementation. The high level of interest (76%) combined with willingness to create/adapt materials (64%) suggest strong potential for continued growth. However, addressing key barriers—particularly time constraints and support resources—will be crucial for maintaining this momentum.

The strong consideration of cost (93%) in choosing materials indicates that faculty are increasingly aligned with institutional goals of improving educational accessibility and affordability. With targeted support and resources, WCU would be well-positioned to continue its positive trajectory in OER adoption and creation.

[*Access the full 2024 OER Awareness Survey Results.*](#)