



## **Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning Increasing Student Access and Success with OER**

### **Goal**

Open Educational Resources (OER) support Bradley University's strategic imperative to foster a Welcoming, Caring, Diverse, and Inclusive environment. They can decrease financial barriers to class participation and lower DFW rates in courses, especially for students of lower socioeconomic status. They can also contribute to Boundary-Breaking Innovations, another strategic imperative of the University, by enabling pedagogical strategies that are not feasible with traditional textbooks.

The Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning (CTEL), in collaboration with the Cullom-Davis Library, is providing both training and funding for faculty to discover OER relevant to their courses and adapt their syllabi to utilize these open resources in place of traditional textbooks.

### **Description**

Open educational resources, using the definition provided in [\*Librarians as Open Education Advocates\*](#), are "educational materials in any medium whose reuse, redistribution, retention, revision, and remixing is permitted through any of the following mechanisms: Open licensing such as Creative Commons; Inclusion in the Public Domain; Permission granted for the above uses by the copyright owner(s)."

Following this definition, OER are freely available for students, which removes the barrier of oppressive textbooks costs, and ensures access to the materials when they are needed, rather than at the whims of financial aid disbursements or online shipping timelines. The switch from traditionally purchased textbooks to OER has been found to increase retention and decrease DFW rates for students across disciplines, with a markedly higher improvement for recipients of Pell grants and historically underserved populations ([\*The Impact of Open Educational Resources on Various Student Success Metrics\*](#), 2018).

In order to utilize OER effectively in their courses, instructors must have not only knowledge of what OER consist of and their benefits, but also where to locate them, how to evaluate them, how to use them in ways that are compliant with open licensing terms, and what pedagogical opportunities they can enable. The librarians of the Cullom-Davis Library already possess a wealth of knowledge on these topics, and can serve as valuable partners in spreading knowledge and implementation of OER on Bradley's campus.

### **Opportunity**

Funds (up to \$500 for each award) are available to support the identification and adoption of open educational resources into existing classes, replacing traditional textbooks. An initial \$250 will be awarded to faculty who complete a series of 2 librarian-led OER workshops over the course of Spring 2026.

The second installment of \$250 will be paid to faculty upon submission of materials reflecting the discovery, evaluation, and implementation of OER for their course(s) by the start of Fall 2026.

The brief proposal process, detailed expectations, and the evaluative criteria for making award decisions are described below.

**Deadline: February 28, 2026**

### **Application**

#### **Eligibility:**

- Any faculty member who will be teaching a Bradley course during the 2026-2027 calendar year.
- Any course is eligible, but special consideration will be given to courses in the following categories:
  - courses associated with high textbook costs
  - high-enrollment courses
  - interdisciplinary courses

#### **Expectations:**

- Attend a series of 2 librarian-led, 1 hour workshops. These workshops, led by librarians, will cover the following aspects of open educational resources:
  - How OER are created and where to find them (search tools, repositories, and programs)
  - Evaluating OER for classroom usage and understanding Creative Commons licensing guidelines
  - Open pedagogy practices enabled by the usage of OER
- The workshops will be scheduled based on the availability of the accepted participants, and multiple offerings will be made for each workshop if necessary to ensure faculty can participate.
- Faculty will replace a traditional textbook in their course(s) via either of the following methods:
  - identify and evaluate open textbook(s) from reputable repositories such as OpenStax or the OER Commons
  - research available open educational materials and/or freely available copyrighted materials (open access journals, library materials, etc.) to develop a course resource list that addresses the learning outcomes of the course

- Faculty will evaluate selected resource(s) utilizing a provided rubric covering content, cultural aspects, and accessibility.
- Faculty will update the syllabus for the relevant courses to reflect the utilization of the OER in place of the traditional texts.
- Faculty will provide their resource lists or evaluation of the open textbook to be published on the CTCL website. If faculty submit a resource list, they will be asked to submit it to the [Bradley University OER Commons group](#).
- Faculty will provide a timeline for usage of the adjusted syllabus during the 2026 calendar year. If the adjusted syllabus will not be implemented during the 2026 calendar year, for instance in the case that it is not offered, an alternate timeline will be provided to reflect this.
- Faculty will be asked to report on student cost savings based on course enrollment compared to the cost of the course when taught with the traditional textbook.

**Evaluative criteria:**

- Will the transition to OER represent a significant cost savings for students, based on cost of original text, enrollment, frequency of course offerings, and number of sections offered?
- What potential exists for other instructors of this course to adopt this resource list/open textbook?
- What opportunities for innovative pedagogy does the adoption of OER for this course provide?

**Deadline:** February 28, 2026. See next page for application form.



**Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning Application Form  
Increasing Student Access and Success with OER**

**Instructions:** Please type in the requested information. Please use 12 point font size. The boxes below are expandable. Email the completed form to: [ctel@fsmail.bradley.edu](mailto:ctel@fsmail.bradley.edu). Deadline is February 28, 2026.

Name(s)	Department/Unit	e-mail addresses

Course titles, descriptions, and semester offered

Do you plan to pursue a resource list or an open textbook? Explain this choice. (You may adjust this choice during the project if needed.)

How will the transition to OER impact students enrolled in this course?

How do you anticipate the transition to OER will impact you as an educator?

Faculty and Department Chair electronic signatures (typed or uploaded image)	e-mail addresses
Faculty Name:	
Department Chair:	
Faculty Name:	
Department Chair:	

Email the completed application form and budget request to [ctel@fsmail.bradley.edu](mailto:ctel@fsmail.bradley.edu).

Inquiries, please contact Christina Norton at [cnorton@fsmail.bradley.edu](mailto:cnorton@fsmail.bradley.edu)

**Deadline is February 28, 2026**