

Dear colleagues:

As your Faculty Senate President, I welcome you to the inaugural edition of ***Senate Snapshot***. The ***Senate Snapshot*** is anticipated to be regular communication that emphasizes the exemplar work of the Senate's councils and committees as well as accomplishments of our esteemed colleagues across the University. Each issue will include a synopsis focused around a specific theme. The theme of our first edition is *Open Education Resources*.

We plan to release the Senate Snapshot twice a month, June through August, and once a month, September through May. This communication will be archived on the [Faculty Senate homepage](#) for future reference and review.

We hope that you will find this information useful. Stay safe and be well.

Marilyn S. Kritzman



Senate Snapshot

Open Educational Resources

The faculty senate fully supports and encourages WMU faculty to seek and consider, wherever possible, adopting high-quality, low-cost, or no-cost, accessible open textbooks and other open educational resources (OER), in order to reduce student textbook costs.

The high and rising costs of commercial textbooks and course materials have resulted in many students unable to purchase required materials. Research has indicated a strong correlation between the high cost of textbooks and a decline in student academic success, particularly with Pell Grant eligible students. Open textbooks and other OER, when selected by faculty for

their courses, can offer appropriate, accessible, and no- or low-cost alternatives to commercial textbooks. Since OER are online, they work well with online courses.

Open educational resources (OER) are educational materials that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license. This permits them to be freely used, changed, and shared with others. OER includes everything from images and videos to textbooks and course curriculums. This provides greater flexibility for faculty who may desire to adopt, modify, and enrich content in ways not possible with commercially produced and licensed materials.

The librarians at WMU Libraries are available to assisting faculty in [finding and adopting OER](#). An OER tutorial is being created through WMUx.