

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### BIOLOGY 215 & BIOLOGY 216 // Anatomy & Physiology I & II

It can be tricky for librarian liaisons to support “traditional” science courses, as they all too often lack library-based research assignments, instead focusing more heavily on course content. Using OERs became a new and non-traditional way to think outside the box **and** outside the book for SU Libraries to cohesively support these types of content-intensive courses.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- Informal interviews with teaching faculty showed me that there are no significant Threshold Concepts for BIOL 215/216 as much as there is simply a tremendous amount of information to be learned in a very short time.
- Faculty emphasized that finding opportunities for the students to quiz and self-test themselves on the multiple systems of the body was what was truly needed in terms of supplementation assistance from the library.
- I turned to OERs in the hope of opening up the playing field as wide as possible – wanting to expand far beyond offering up some practice questions in the back of a handful of printed textbooks.
- I searched for reliable OERs via Merlot and OER Commons – looking for stable and robust resources that were widely available on multiple platforms and which covered the needed material in a variety of ways.
- OERs were sorted and organized not only by the related bodily systems, but also by their level of interactivity and self-testing ability.
- All OERs and other supplemental content was organized and published in the form of a LibGuide that is permanently housed on SU Libraries’ LibGuides list.

## IMPACT

- Every semester over 500 students are enrolled in our Anatomy & Physiology I & II courses. In addition, students in nursing, respiratory therapy, and other related courses also study the same anatomical/physiological systems within the body as the A&P students.
- We have no formal data on the impact that supporting Anatomy & Physiology I & II with OERs has made on student grades, but rather have feedback from faculty, students, and Supplemental Instruction Leaders about the usefulness of the guide and the OERs they contain.
- Overall, the guide and its OER content have proven to be extremely popular with our A&P students and faculty, and teaching faculty say that they uniformly and frequently refer their students to the guide to make as much use of the OERs as possible.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Taking a clear look at what the students actually need, and thinking of alternate ways to provide them with that need, is a good way to begin to work OERs into your courses.
- Any course that has a great deal of content that needs to be learned/memorized/digested/understood in a short time is an ideal candidate for an OER-supported course.
- The number of courses that a system like this could support is varied and exciting, once you start to realize the possibilities, and the available OERs fall into place. Some possibilities could be:
  - **Organic Chemistry** – how to put together molecules and properly create structures.
  - **Intro to French** – or any beginning language class that focuses on vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.
  - **Intro to History** – any history class where you need to remember the location of countries, the line of succession of monarchs, etc.
  - **Art History** - is it a Rodin or a Renoir?

## FUTURE PLANS

- Currently I am working to put together a similar guide to support our Organic Chemistry I & II students, as this is also a course with a traditionally high rate of Drop/Failure/Withdrawal, and lacks ‘traditional’ library-based research assignments. Initial feedback from the teaching faculty members is positive and promising.
- Our Modern Language liaison librarian is collaborating with their department to create an OER supported guide for our introductory-level French and Spanish courses.

## RESOURCES

This project was directly made possible by the support of the SU Libraries Dean – Dr. Beatriz Betancourt Hardy, as well as by support from the Center for Student Achievement (CSA) Director, Dr. Heather Holmes, and Assistant Director, Heather Porter.

- Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching – <http://www.merlot.org>
- Open Educational Resources Commons – <http://www.oercommons.org>
- Anatomy & Physiology I & II LibGuide: [http://libraryguides.salisbury.edu/BIOL215\\_216](http://libraryguides.salisbury.edu/BIOL215_216)
- Organic Chemistry I LibGuide: <http://libraryguides.salisbury.edu/Chem221>