

University of Baltimore: WRIT 300 OER Efforts

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

- WRIT 300: Create OER
- **Description:**
 - Adopt and scale up OER resources in WRIT 300: Composition and Research, UB's upper-division general education writing requirement.
 - Part of campus-wide efforts to create maximum positive financial impact on highest number of UB students, particularly in high-enrolled classes.
- **Objectives:**
 - Replace previously uses writer's handbook/reference (\$25-\$45)
 - Curate readings more closely aligned with course outcomes.
 - Offer opportunity for instructor- and student-created resources in an effort to positively impact future populations.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Determined quickly that a singular resource would be inadequate
- Opted for combination of homegrown OERs and a variety of resources.
- **External:**
 - [WAC Clearinghouse](#), [Lumen Learning's Guide to Writing](#), the [Excelsior Online Writing Lab](#), the [Writing Commons](#), and [Plain Language](#).
- **Internal:**
 - Library support, Career and Internship Center support, and homegrown OERs.
 - Ex. "The History of Rhetoric" – developed as an initial rhetoric discussion designed to explore previous knowledge while introducing WRIT 300's focus on contemporary rhetorical lens for document analysis and production.

IMPACT

- **WRIT 300, 2018-2019:**
 - 32 sections
 - 630 students enrolled.
- Student savings: \$25-\$45 dollars

IMPACT (CON'T.)

- Students are more engaged with the material and demonstrate, overall, a deeper understanding of rhetorical lens earlier than previous semesters.
- Students find greater value in the material and are more "bought in" to the course.
- Student essays demonstrate a clearer understanding early on, with the opportunity to apply an evolving understanding.
- Course material is more accessible.
- Courses have been standardized, allowing for consistent results across sections.
- Standardized course materials allow for greater freedom in daily or weekly course meetings as instructor has clear understanding of desired outcomes.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Benefits:**
 - Students have expressed how they enjoy the OER material and find it more applicable to understanding course outcomes and in their individual efforts.
 - Assessment has shown initial in overall skill improvement.
 - Further opportunity for the creation of additional OERs by faculty and students.
- **Challenges:**
 - Initial searches were challenging – adopted a "curated resources" approach rather than a singular textbook offering.
 - Even curated, resources did not always work with stated objectives, owing to the need to look for previously created material.
- **Advice for others:**
 - Utilize faculty teaching material already created when looking to reach specific objectives.
 - Consider the creative benefits of creating homegrown OERs

FUTURE PLANS

- **Future plans:**
 - Continued creation of homegrown OERs. Since undertaking this project, two additional OERs have been created, with plans to create three additional by the end of 2019.
 - Home-grown OERs will be openly licensed with a Creative Commons CC-BY Attribution 4.0 and accessible according to WCAG 2.0 and WCAG 2.1 standards within the limitations of UB's learning platform, Sakai.
 - Continued evolution of internal resources, including library materials and CIC materials.
 - Potentially involve students in creating "banks" of examples for future teaching.