OER Repository Subcommittee Recommendations
January 2021

The OER Repository Committee has been meeting over the past several months to come to consensus on a path forward for the housing and sharing of OER material created by public higher education institutions in Massachusetts. We have identified and discussed issues around technology, management, local needs, duplication of effort, and sustainability. We have met with experts and stakeholders to inform our decision making. The findings below represent our current thinking and recommendations for the Advisory Council to consider.

In our last report, *OER Repository Committee, Establishing a Public OER Repository: Research & Findings To-Date,* we wrote:

> "Our research indicates successful repositories need coordinated oversight and staffing at the system level to ensure consistency in how artifacts are uploaded, that metadata is applied, and proper open citations are utilized. This was echoed by the current Mass. Community College Hub, M.O.S.T., and MOBIUS.
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> The Mass. Community College Hub needs attention. It requires dedicated staff compensated for their work. The site needs to be better organized. The payment of the OER Commons annual fee has been bouncing from institution to institution annually. Faculty members are still creating and uploading work including the results from the Course Development Day in 2019. There is a huge need to market the current site to increase use by more community colleges both to input artifacts and for faculty to access the site to utilize what has been created."

Since that report was written, we have come to agreement on several paths forward that we recommend the Advisory Council take.

Recommendation #1: Retain and enhance the current OER Commons Community College Hub

We believe it is not necessary to create yet another referatory since several already exist; however there are many compelling reasons to have a state repository. We propose the pre-existing CC Hub should be enhanced and expanded beyond the community colleges to become a resource for all public higher education institutions in the state.

Recommendation #2: Hire a Massachusetts OER Commons Coordinator

We believe that a Massachusetts OER Commons Hub needs to be overseen centrally. Currently, material submitted to the Hub is not held to any metadata standard or rigorous review for accessibility, appropriateness, or shareability. Individual volunteers at Community Colleges, and grant organizers from the Go Open (2016) and Massachusetts OER Collaborative (2019) grant projects, have done some review and management, but over the past year and a half it

has been inconsistent. We recommend the DHE fund a stipend for a part-time OER Commons Coordinator to oversee, manage, standardize, and market the existing CC Hub. This individual, who would be a librarian from one of our participating institutions, would work in conjunction with the OER Repository Committee to accomplish several of the following tasks:

1. Transition the Hub into a "Massachusetts Public Higher Education Hub" that will serve all public higher education institutions in Massachusetts.

2. Assess, describe, and curate Hub resources.

3. Establish and implement a rigorous metadata standard that organizes material by discipline, subject, institution, date created, license, etc. to enable better discovery and reuse.

4. Establish and manage a training and education program for hub administrators and faculty authors that would address best practices for adding, maintaining, updating, and removing material. The program could also educate instructors about open licenses, creating accessible material, instructional design, etc.

Recommendation #3 The DHE should continue to pay for the CC Hub
The DHE is currently paying OER Commons for hosting the Community College Hub. We recommend the DHE continue to pay for this resource going forward.