

# Sub-Committees

Version 25

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## Open Educational Resources Committee

**Seneca OER ETAC sub-committee terms of reference**

### Email

✉ [oer@senecapolytechnic.ca](mailto:oer@senecapolytechnic.ca)

### Formation details

- Struck based on the terms of reference of the ETAC.
- Reporting to Seneca's Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC), who reports to Academic Council
- Commencing May 2017, meetings will take place twice a semester or as needed, in person at Newnham in Teaching and Learning, by phone, or by web conference.

### Members

#### College departments

- Jennifer Peters, Library (chair) (the Teaching & Learning Centre sec.)
- Kevin Pitts, Teaching & Learning Centre
- Kathryn McMillan, The Learning Centre
- Adam Chisholm, College Services
- Liana Giovando, Library
- Karen Spiers, CFLEX
- Daniel Fok, Accessibility and Counselling
- Santo Nucifora, ITS
- Mani Sarna, student representative

## Programs

- Catherine Leung, ICT and Centre for Development of Open Technology (SY)
- Tom Bartsiokas, English and Liberal Studies (NH)
- Linda Facchini, Biological Sciences and Applied Chemistry; (Teaching and Learning sec.)
- Valerie Lopes, Liberal Arts (NH)
- Susan Price, Health Sciences
- Kimeiko Hotta-Dover, English Language Institute
- Kay-Ann Williams, English and Liberal Studies (NH)
- Melanie Rubens, Faculty of Continuing Education
- Nancy La Monica, English and Liberal Studies (KG)
- Maxine Britto, Chair English and Liberal Studies (NH) (while Claire Moane is on leave)
- Angela Zigras, Chair Hospitality & Tourism Management (MK)

## Purpose

The Seneca Open Educational Resources (OER) Sub-Committee will promote awareness, develop recommendations and guidelines for the integration and sustainability of OER across the curriculum. We will encourage adoption and adaptation over building of new open educational resources.

## Benefits include

Enabling flexibility and customization in course materials. Faculty are able to dynamically modify or replace materials as well as include multi-modal components when available.

OERs are often inherently easier to make accessible. Although traditional textbooks have come a long way in terms of accessible versions, it can still be difficult to find a fully accessible copy in a timely manner. OERs are usually digital and, if not already, can often be made fully accessible in a shorter period of time.

Increasing the affordability of course materials is another important benefit. Rajiv Jhangiani and Robin DeRosa cite some startling statistics about the rising costs of education in their presentation, "[Open Education: Serving Social Justice & Transforming Pedagogy](#)":

- Ontario students now work 173% more than in 1975 to pay for post-secondary education.

- When debt reaches \$10,000 program completion rates drop from 59% to 8%.
- The cost of textbooks has risen by 1041% since 1977.

While OERs won't erase student debt, it can ease some of their yearly costs.

OERs might also improve student performance. Evidence has found OERs can benefit a student academically. In the same presentation, Jhangiani and De Rosa cite 13 peer reviewed studies with almost 120,000 students that found using OERs in class leads to the same or better result 95% of the time.

The number of benefits easily support further investigation into the adoption and use of OERs at Seneca.

## Relationship to objectives of College Academic Plan

The introduction of the current Academic Plan refers to long-held Seneca principles, including:

"... "build an Academic Community dedicated to student success in which all involved are striving for academic excellence." The principle of "flexibility without compromise" was introduced and since that time has guided administrators, faculty and staff in their day-to-day activities to support student learning."

It is our belief that promoting OERs at Seneca supports these principles.

## Function

1. Build OER awareness and promote its integration into the curriculum at Seneca in order to:
  1. Increase flexibility and customization of course materials
  2. Improve access to and availability of course materials for students, while reducing the cost to them
  3. Improve the accessibility of course materials for students with disabilities
  4. Reduce costs to the college (Library, Bookstore and OpenEd) for:
    1. copyright permissions and licenses
    2. double-paying (occurs when print course packs are created instead of linking directly to existing library e-resources)
  5. Reduce piracy and copyright infringement in the pursuit of course content.

6. Improve student learning outcomes. Research findings suggest that the use of OERs positively impacts student learning.
2. Develop guidelines and standards relating to the adoption of OER across the curriculum.
3. Curate a list of potential OERs for Seneca use based on program.
4. Make recommendations to Academic Council to further OER adoption at Seneca.
5. Identify professional development needs required for effective and sustained implementation of OER-based curricula.

## Sensitivities

- College Bookstore may experience declines in revenue due to reduced sales of traditional course textbooks as well as print course packs.
- Faculty may be concerned that seeking out alternatives to textbooks will require more work on their part.
- Faculty who are textbook authors may not welcome the move to alternative models of providing course materials.
- Faculty who develop their own educational resources for courses they are teaching may not wish to license them openly.
- The College may have an interest in monetizing the OERs that instructors develop for courses.

## Learn More

The OER sub-committee has been featured in the Academic Newsletter:

- [Open Educational Resources at Seneca](#)

## Learn@Seneca

Ad-hoc, as-needed basis

Initiatives included the [Changes to Your My.Seneca Default Course Menu](#).

tags : educational-technology, educational-technology-advisory-committee, educational-

technology-tools, educational-tools, etac, etac-sub-committees, oer, oer-committee, open-educational-resources, teaching-and-learning, teaching-and-learning-centre