

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

June 3, 2025

TO: Dr. Jerry Johnson, President, UHD Faculty Senate
UHD Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. Deborah E. Bordelon 
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Response to Faculty Senate Resolution - SR 25-02 Date: 05/06/2025

I am in receipt of the Faculty Senate Resolution 25-02, which was approved by the Faculty Senate on May 6, 2025. In the resolution, there are concerns expressed about the establishment of a formal funding mechanism for Open Educational Resources (OER) at UHD.

The Division of Academic Affairs wholeheartedly endorses the use of Open Educational Resources (OER), when appropriate, to ensure that student costs are kept to a minimum. The substitution of OER materials for retail textbooks not only reduces the cost to enroll in a particular section, but it also places downward pressure on the optional Gator Textbook Access Program (GTAP) fee, which is based on aggregate textbook annual costs at UHD.

The Division of Academic Affairs continues its financial support of OER adoptions and development through the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). The CTLE regularly welcomes faculty proposals for the funding of various initiatives supporting course innovation, including [Teaching Circles](#), [Online Course Development Initiative Grants](#), and [Learning Continuity Projects](#). These initiatives emphasize key pedagogical strategies on a rotating basis, including topic groups and themes encouraging faculty to leverage OER as part of course or module design. In Academic Year 2026, the OER option is featured as a Teaching Circle topic group and will be included in other CTLE programming and resources.

While the Senate Resolution privileges the development and adoption of OER, strictly defined, the Provost's Office also sees no-cost resources -- such as academic databases that are freely accessible to students -- as part of the solution to minimizing textbook costs. The Office of Academic Affairs will continue to support the leveraging of the W. I. Dykes' Library resources, including access to journals, primary sources, and e-books. Further, the Provost's Office encourages faculty to peruse the recently updated (April 2025) [library OER Help page](#), which identifies librarians who can assist instructors. The webpage also provides an overview of OER and Creative Commons as well as offers directions for requesting an e-text, such as a multi-user e-book license for a specific course. Organized by subject area, the library's OER landing page also provides links to OER titles, suitable for university-level instruction.

The Provost's Office strongly supports the development of OER materials and welcomes the Faculty Senate to support and encourage departmental faculty to propose OER

development to their departmental rank and tenure criteria when they are updated. How these materials are considered and the weight of these materials in the review process, as with all publications, should be set forth by the relevant department faculty and the departmental Rank and Tenure Committee. We also recognize that the passage of SB 37 will likely warrant the re-evaluation of our shared governance policies and procedures. As we receive more guidance from the state and our system on how to proceed, we will keep you informed.

As long as it does not contravene any State, Federal, or System rules, the Division of Academic Affairs supports the production of and distribution of OER by its instructors, following the Creative Commons Classification Copyright parameters. Unless otherwise specified in a grant, the Division of Academic Affairs recommends that the faculty-author use their own judgement when selecting a specific copyright license for their work.

The Division of Academic Affairs shares the goal of reducing student expenses while providing students with high quality course materials that are accessible on Day 1 of classes. To this end, the Division of Academic Affairs supports both GTAP and OER. However, to ensure that we maximize student savings, the Provost's Office will continue its request that instructors submit their book orders (**including notifying the bookstore of the use of OER materials**) to the Follett Bookstore. For OER savings to be maximized, it is critical that the expected textbook costs, for each class, be made known to students through the Follett portal.

Faculty cooperation in our collective effort to support the educational and financial position of our students is welcomed and appreciated.