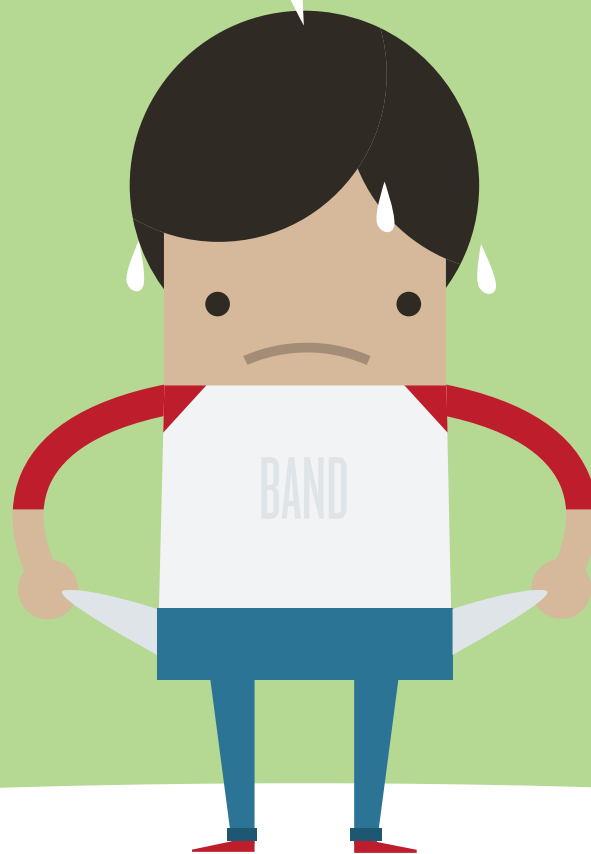


**i just spent  
\$**CENSORED** on  
textbooks!?!**



# **Open Textbooks Now!**

## **Campaign Guide**

# Open Textbooks Now!

The Open Textbooks Now campaign aims to see the expansion and wide-spread adoption of Open Education Resources (OERs) at institutions across the province. OERs come in many forms: full courses, lesson plans, videos, articles, and textbooks. With the cost of tuition fees being higher than ever, open textbooks reduce one of the financial barriers students and their families face. The campaign aims to increase the use of OERs on campuses, and advocates for provincial funding to further develop and enhance OERs in BC. This campaign guide will provide information and tips on how to work with your faculty and administration in advocating for more OERs on your campus.

## Where do I begin?

So, you want to see more OERs on your campus? Not sure where to begin? The first step is finding key players, or identifying champions on your campus who you can work with in achieving your goal. The implementation of this campaign involves identifying and then building partnerships with various allies on campus.

### Identifying Campus Champions

The library is always the first stop; often a library will have a role dedicated to innovation or emerging technologies. If not, begin contact with a library point person and let them know you are looking for whomever would be the most relevant when speaking about Open Education Resources.

Meet with your library contact and see if any work is being undertaken on developing OERs and let them know of the work your local is doing.

### Information to Look For

Try to find information about the OER adoption rate at your institution, and identify what resources are available through the library or other sources for faculty. Seek out instructors who have already adopted OERs for their courses!

This information can be helpful for:

- lobbying faculty and administration
- calculating savings for students
- developing sharables and presentations
- identifying instructors already using OERs that can be contacted for support



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## What about the faculty association? Can't they be campus champions?

Absolutely! A faculty association (FA) can be a strong ally as they often advocate for new and emerging technologies. Getting support from the FA can be another tool that you use when speaking to individual instructors, as they may be more open to dialogue if they know their FA is supportive of the initiative.

Setting up a meeting with the faculty association can be simple:

- contact the FA representative
- let them know that you want to talk about OERs and how your local and the FA can collaborate
- find out how much they already know about OERs before you start from the bottom!
- let them know of the work your local plans on doing
- ask to give a presentation to the FA executive at one of their meetings, or to the FA membership at a general meeting (use the presentation from the toolkit as a guide!)

**Student success is my priority!**



## Joining/Creating an Open Working Group on Campus

A working group is an ideal way to facilitate dialogue and collaboration, and encourage communication and updates on progress towards implementation of OERs on campus. Members of these groups typically consist of representatives from the library, bookstore, print shop, students' union, and faculty from various departments.

If there is already a working group or committee dedicated to OERs on campus that doesn't have a students' union seat, the easiest thing to do is simply to request that the students' union have a representative in the group.

If your campus doesn't currently have a working group, recommend to your library (or the administration) that one be created.

To be most effective, the group should meet once or twice a semester, have a chair to facilitate work in and outside of the meeting, and have an email list to ensure ongoing communication between meetings. The email list can also be used to share updates on OER work being done on campuses around the province or country.

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## Advocacy

Open Textbooks Now is a campaign that operates on multiple levels with different goals at each level. Of course, for a well-rounded multipronged approach, advocating at all the levels would be the most effective. This doesn't mean that you are expected to campaign to students, meet with MLAs, faculty and administration all at the same time! It simply means that a robust strategy would be to engage in advocacy at all the levels at which it would be effective over time.

This campaign targets students, faculty, administration, and the government.

The campaign engages students and faculty by providing education on what OERs are, and a mobilization component through signing pledges of support. Most importantly, faculty are informed about how OERs are proven to lead to better student success in the classroom.

The goal of lobbying administration is to create systems and support for OERs that encourage faculty to adopt them (i.e. grants for OER creation, implementing OER policies).

Finally, the government is lobbied to increase funding to BCcampus, the organization that advocates, creates, and curates open education resources provincially in BC.

BCcampus is the ultimate ally when it comes to advocating for OERs on campus and they should always be your first point of contact when you have any questions or need support. You can also direct faculty that are interested in learning more about OERs to contact BCcampus; they are always willing to speak with instructors to help them make the transition.

### **Gaining Support from Students**

There are many ways to engage students in this campaign! Education and mobilization (e.g. signing a pledge) are one way, but you can also be creative! Have a display of the kinds of OERs available on your campus, or create a visual display for students to share their textbook costs by using jelly beans, a whiteboard, or a banner.

Encourage your library to participate in provincial "Open Access Weeks" that happen once each semester. These are simply weeks dedicated to raising awareness of OERs on campuses, and are a great opportunity to do focused tabling and class talks in conjunction with other departments on your campus. As a bonus, BCcampus will actively promote when your Open Access Week is occurring at your institution!



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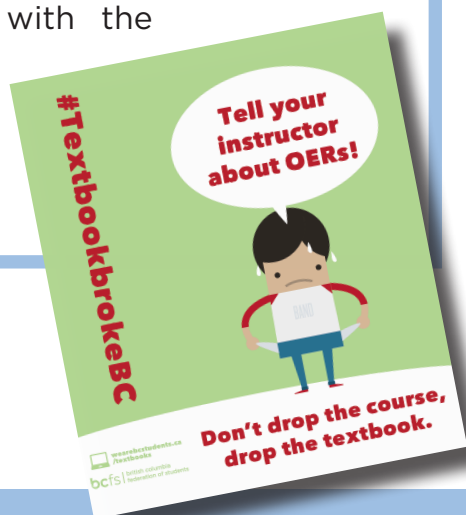
## Gaining Support from Faculty

Ultimately the final decision on what textbooks are used in the classrooms are made by instructors themselves. That is why the primary target of this campaign is faculty and convincing them to adopt open education resources in their classes. You may find that many faculty are already using OERs without even realizing it (free to access articles, TED Talks, etc), and informing instructors about what OERs are is the first step!

Present at department or program meetings. Textbook choices for the year are generally decided upon during the summer semester, so January to July is the best time to lobby faculty.

Faculty care about student success! When speaking with faculty emphasise the fact that it is proven that students will perform the same and often do better in the classroom when using OERs.

Finally, you are never alone. You can engage with faculty through your library, or through BCcampus as they have relationships with the institutions and are accustomed to engaging with faculty.



## Working with Administration

Does your institution have a policy about OERs? Lobbying an institution's board of governors to adopt a policy on OERs is a target that would then be a strong platform from which to lobby faculty to adopt OERs. The introduction of an OER policy would assist your efforts when speaking with administration about creating resources for faculty to use.

BCcampus has information on creating policy on their website at [open.bccampus.ca/open-policy-guide](https://open.bccampus.ca/open-policy-guide)

Does your institution have an OER grant to help faculty members create/research OERs to adopt for their classrooms? If not, this is something that you can lobby to implement. Often instructors want to adopt an open textbook in their classroom, but don't have the capacity. Access to a grant enables instructors to research, create, and implement OERs for their classes. BCcampus is an excellent resource for support of this initiative, and has been behind the creation of grants at multiple institutions.

Has your administration made a position statement about OERs that could be used in further advocacy? A simple statement can go a long way as it shows written support for OERs that can be used in meetings, presentations, and even shareables. There is an example position statement as a part of the campaign toolkit.

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## Lobbying the government

BCcampus is funded mainly through the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, so the Ministry is the target of the campaign at the provincial level. The primary ask is an increase in funding to BCcampus for the development and expansions of OERs.

In 2012-13, the BC Liberal government initially invested \$2 million into BCcampus for the purpose of developing the open textbook program. Since that time, students in BC have saved over \$5 million due to OER adoption in their classes.

The campaign's provincial goal is a one-time funding allocation of \$5 million to BCcampus, which would go to creating, advocating for, and supporting OERs across BC.

## Let's Get Started!

By now you have received posters, rack cards, and pledges for the campaign. Take time to identify ways to reach your audience by choosing tactics that will work best at your institution. Take into account how different campuses may require the use of different tactics.

### Develop Your Timeline

Before you hit the ground with campaigning, develop a plan with your campaigns/organizing committee. Start by developing a timeline—this includes identifying the best times for different tactics, like a campaign launch, student outreach, and lobbying administration. A timeline is also an opportunity to set goals for milestones. For example, you can decide that by your two-month mark you want 500 pledges from students, and 10 faculty pledging to adopt OERs. Or you can set a goal that by a certain month you want a commitment from your administration to invest in grants for transition to OER. By setting goals and a timeline, you can check your progress and identify ways to improve or expand your reach as you go.

## PLEDGES

The pledge card is a tool designed to demonstrate widespread support for the implementation/expansion of OERs. This is a crucial aspect of the campaign, because the more support you have (e.g. signed pledges) the more you will be able to influence your administration to support the campaign goals. This campaign has two pledges: one is for members to sign, and one is for instructors to sign.

Instructors are not typically a primary target for support in our campaigns, so this tactic



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is an opportunity to collaborate and grow your relationship with the faculty association and individual instructors. Many faculty members do already support OERs but there are none available for their classes, or the systems that support OERs are not in place at their institution. Pledges are gathered from faculty in order to consolidate faculty OER support into a strong voice.

Information from the pledges should be input into a spreadsheet that's shared with the BC office. Develop a schedule for inputting the pledge information regularly (minimum once per week). This is an important step to ensure ongoing engagement throughout the life of the campaign—it will allow you to communicate with campaign supporters as you gain small and large victories on your campus, and when we win the provincial victory of provincial funding for OERs! You can also use the pledges when lobbying administration and faculty to demonstrate support.

After someone signs the pledge card, perforate the card and give them the side piece. It was designed to be a bookmark so they can take it with them and be reminded of the great work their students' union is doing!

## TABLING

Tabling for this campaign can be fun because there are so many ways to be creative and interactive! However, this outreach tactic is most effective only at certain times of each semester... specifically within the first few weeks when students are buying their textbooks and their bank accounts are still feeling the pain of the purchase.

Set up your table in a busy area of campus. If you have a large campus or multiple campuses where members often stay within particular areas, try to spend some time tabling in each of those spaces. Stand beside or in front of your table and try to connect with as many members as possible. If someone looks like they are going to walk past you, try to get them to come talk to you by asking something like “how much did you spend on textbooks this semester?”

When you are tabling, you often have very little time to get your message across to members. Get comfortable with the campaign message box to relay information quickly, and use the longer script when you are able to. It is common that several people will come up to the table at a time, so it's always a good idea to table with at least two people.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Online campaigning helps to build on the on-the-ground tactics. Make sure you are sharing content from the Federation's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts.

Identify ways to have members engage with the campaign online, such as posting photos with their textbook receipts or a sign stating how much they paid for their books.

Make a timeline on how often you want to be sharing and creating content for the campaign via your social media platforms.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

For many people OERs are a brand new concept, so you're going to hear a lot of questions from students, faculty, and administration! Here are some questions you will likely hear, and some easy go-to answers to address them. If someone asks you a question you don't know the answer to, don't make up the answer — offer to take the person's contact information so you can look up the answer and get back to them. Contact the BC office or BCcampus directly to get the information you need.

If you get a question that isn't on the list, share it with the BC office so we can include it, and an answer, for everyone to access!

### How can I be sure an open textbook is high quality? Are these books peer reviewed?

Many open textbooks are of comparable quality to traditional textbooks and have been peer-reviewed. There are easy-to-search online repositories that can help you search for the best books. However, as with any book, faculty will be the best judge of whether a book is right for your class or not.

### Are open textbooks the same as e-books?

No. Open textbooks are similar to e-books in some ways. But open textbooks can always be printed at cost. Further, traditional e-books have drawbacks, because a user's access is temporary and usually expires after six months, and because there are limits on printing.

### Is it legal to share and adapt open textbooks?

Yes. By definition, open textbooks are released under an open license that lets anyone copy, distribute, and print that text without needing special permission. Most open licenses also allow professors to legally adapt or edit the text. However, the author still owns the copyright and should be attributed for that work, and may restrict some types of use, like whether you can sell copies for profit.

### Where can I find an open textbook for my course?

Start with BCcampus by searching for BCcampus in Google, or ask a librarian.

### How can I gather information on OER adoption on my campus?

Your library will have information on the adoption rates on campus. If they don't you can support the library in doing so as it will be valuable information that they would appreciate in having as well. You can work with the BCFS office or BCcampus on how to go about this.

### I don't understand all this licencing stuff, how can I get more information on it?

For a detailed explanation on how licencing works check out this link to BCcampus:

[open.bccampus.ca/2013/12/17/licensing-for-open-textbook](http://open.bccampus.ca/2013/12/17/licensing-for-open-textbook)

