The University of Southern Mississippi
The Aquila Digital Community

University Libraries Workshops and Presentations | University Libraries

10-2017

A New Kind of Academic Freedom: Library-Led Initiatives to Promote Adoption of Open Educational Resources

Josh Cromwell
University of Southern Mississippi, joshua.cromwell@usm.edu

Jocelyn Tipton
University of Mississippi, jttipton@olemiss.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://aquila.usm.edu/libraries_workshops

Recommended Citation

Cromwell, Josh and Tipton, Jocelyn, "A New Kind of Academic Freedom: Library-Led Initiatives to Promote Adoption of Open Educational Resources" (2017). *University Libraries Workshops and Presentations*. 4.
https://aquila.usm.edu/libraries_workshops/4

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Libraries Workshops and Presentations by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact aquilastaff@usm.edu.

A New Kind of Academic Freedom: Library-Led Initiatives to Promote Adoption of Open Educational Resources

Josh Cromwell, University of Southern Mississippi Libraries
Jocelyn Tipton, University of Mississippi Libraries
MLA Annual Conference
October 18, 2017

Road Map

- Introduction
- What are Open Textbooks/OER?
- Why Open Textbooks?
- Case Study
- University of Mississippi's Z-Degree Initiative
- University of Southern Mississippi's Open Textbook Initiative
- Better Together
- Q&A

Introduction

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

Josh Cromwell
Institutional Repository Coordinator - (Aquila)
University Libraries

118 College Drive #5053
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu

P: 601.266.6200
F: 601.266.6033
aquila.usm.edu

THE UNIVERSITY of
MISSISSIPPI

www.olemiss.edu

Jocelyn T. Tipton
Assistant Dean for Public Services
JD Williams Library

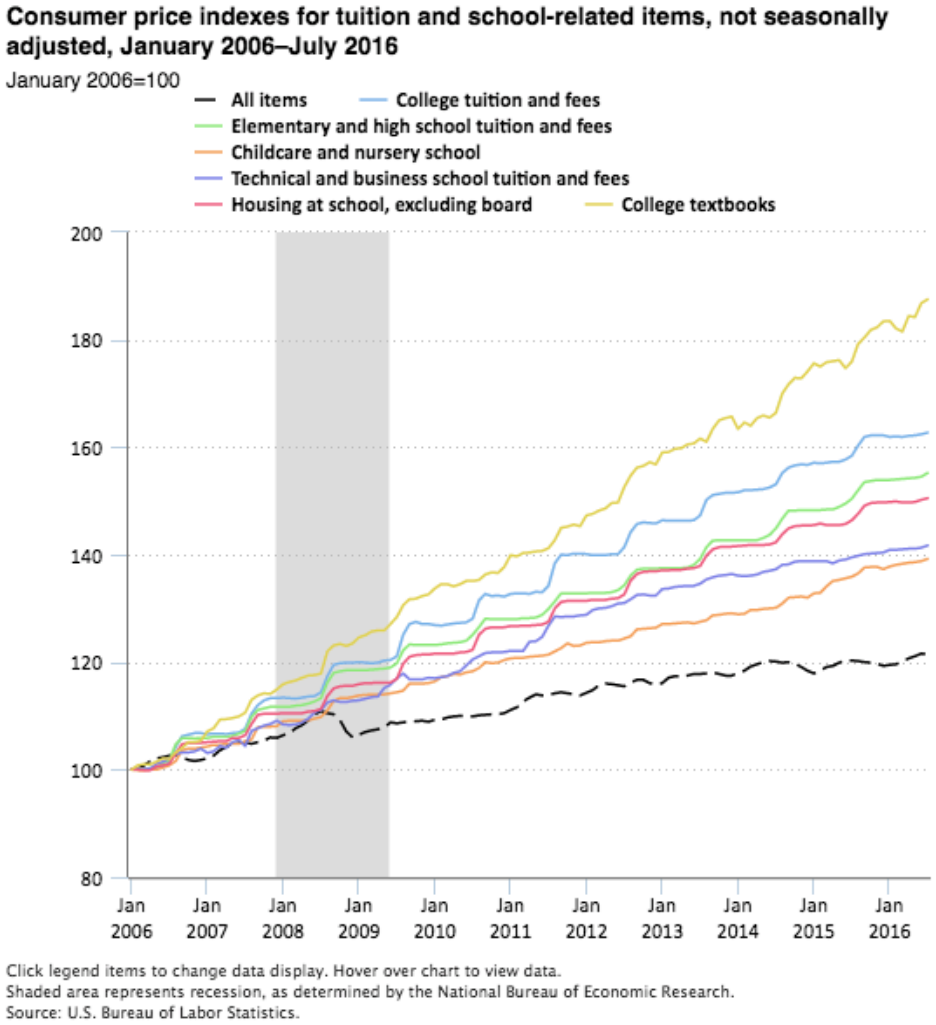
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677-1848
Office: (662) 915-2340
Fax: (662) 915-5734
jttipton@olemiss.edu

What are Open Textbooks?

- Textbooks or other course materials that are free to use and reuse
- Composed of resources that are Open Access, public domain, or licensed but free to students (e.g. library resources)
- Created electronically but often print-friendly
  - Print-on-demand option

Why Open Textbooks?

- Beneficial for students
  - No cost for students
    - Avg. cost per semester using traditional textbooks: $600-$1200
  - Many students can't afford traditional textbooks
  - Frequently improve student performance/ retention



Why Open Textbooks? (cont'd)

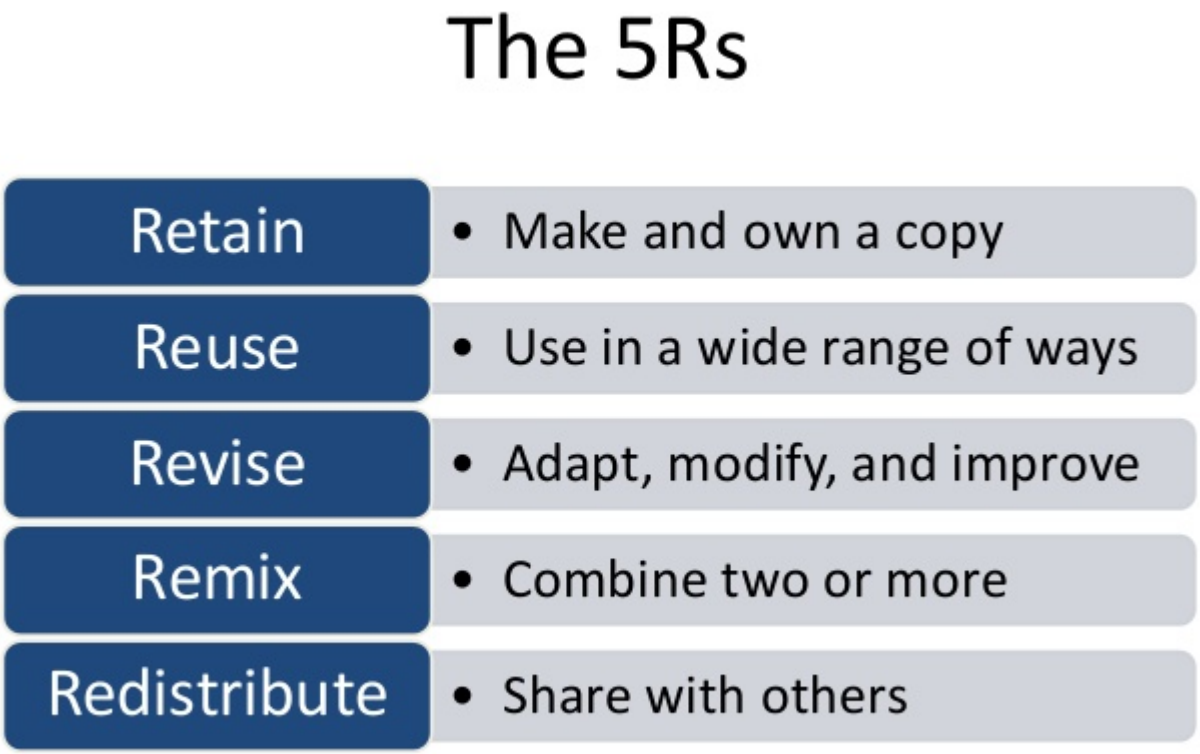
- Additional Benefits for Students
  - Lifetime Access
  - Portability
  - Opportunities to engage with material

Why Open Textbooks? (cont'd)

- Beneficial for Faculty
  - Can be adapted to course objectives
  - Gives assurance that all students have access to the same material
  - Easier to refine/adapt
  - Broader impact

Why Open Textbooks? (cont'd)

Contributes to Academic Freedom



Why Open Textbooks? (cont'd)

- Beneficial for the University
  - Recruitment tool
  - Promotes student success
  - Reduces time to completion

A Case Study (Or: "I Was Told There'd Be No Math!")

- At Southern Miss in 2015-2016…
  - 7731 students awarded need-based financial aid
  - On average, this aid met 67% of student need
  - Tuition for in-state full time student was $3490
  - Room and board was $4305
  - Average cost for textbooks was $1000
    - Avg. cost for a full-time in-state undergraduate living on campus: $8795
    - If aid covers 67% of need, student would owe $2902.35
    - Without textbook fees, this drops to $1902.35
    - Aid would now cover 78% of student expenses rather than 67%

What About the Bookstore?

- Many students already forego the bookstore
  - Textbook rentals, used copies from Amazon, etc.
- Textbook margins are minimal
  - "As Textbooks Go Digital, Campus Bookstores May Go Bookless," Chronicle of Higher Education, 14 November 2010
    - "'…the margin on textbooks is one of the lowest margins around.' In terms of profit margin, [the bookstore] does better selling chips."
- OER still a very small portion of the marketplace

Open Textbook Initiative (Southern Miss)

- Opportunity for faculty to apply for funding to assist with creating or implementing an open textbook
- Application opens at the beginning of October
  - Three tiers:
    - Adopt ($400)
    - Modify ($800)
    - Create ($1600)
- Recipients notified by end of the fall semester

Open Textbook Initiative (cont'd)

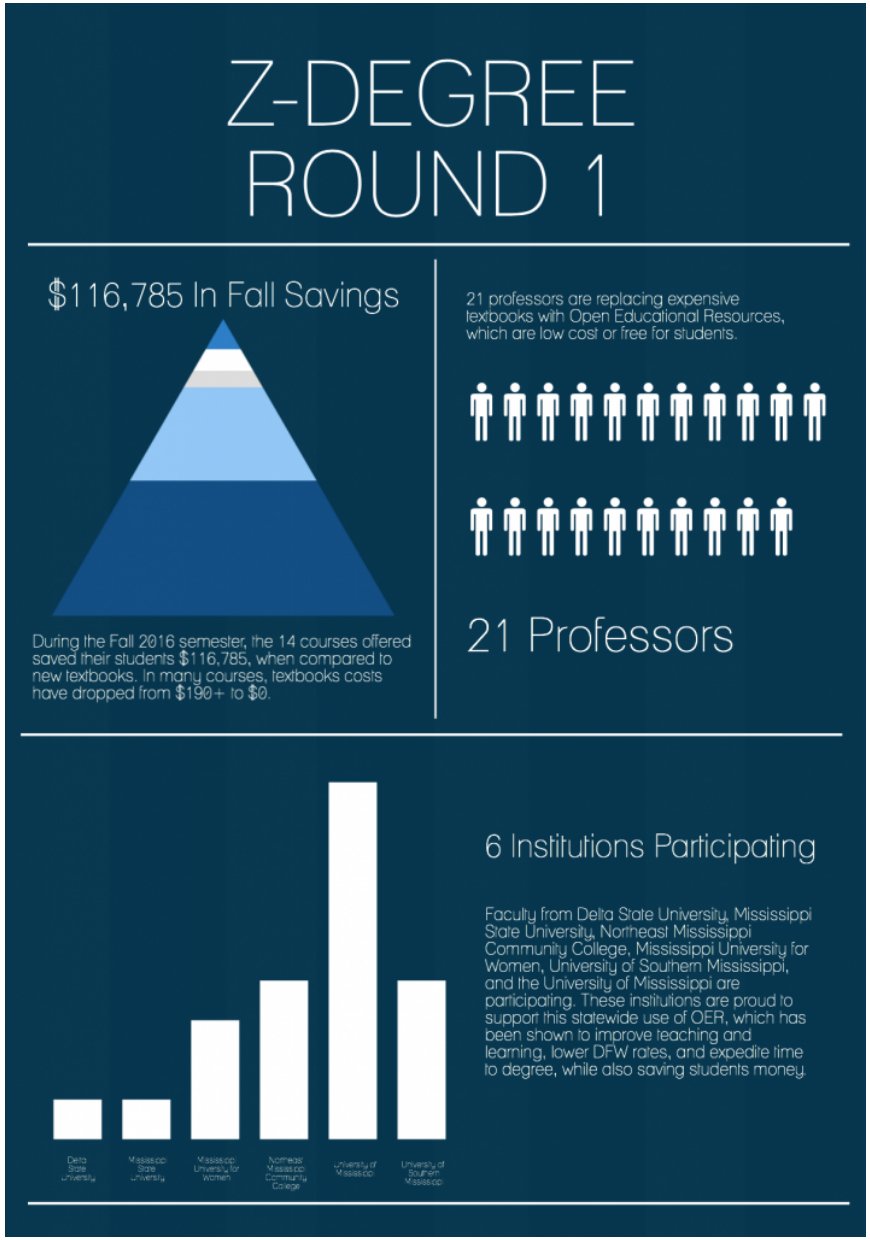
- Other elements of the program
  - Copyright training
  - Partnering with a research librarian who can assist with identifying resources
  - Group meetings with other participants to share ideas, discuss progress, etc.
  - Participants writing their own open textbook may host them on Aquila
- Recipients must complete the program by the start of the next academic year

Z Degree Mississippi Program Description

- **What**: A three-year plan to expand adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER) in Mississippi public higher education. OER are course materials, including textbooks, which are free and shareable.
- **How:** When faculty adopt OER for their courses, those courses are tagged as "Z-Degree" on the course schedule, indicating that they have "zero textbook cost." Once enough courses are designated Z-Degree, it is possible for students to earn a degree with no textbook costs.
- **Who:** Invited participants will include eight public universities and four community colleges

Z Degree Mississippi Program Description

- Funding Sponsor – William and Flora Hewlett Foundation – 3 year grant
- Target Population – Teaching Faculty at Mississippi IHL institutions and Community Colleges
- Incentives - $4000 to faculty for course adoption
- Support/Training – workshops and one year access to support from the Lumen Learning


Z-DEGREE
ROUND 1
$116,785 In Fall Savings
During the Fall 2016 semester, the 14 courses offered saved their students $116,785, when compared to new textbooks. In many courses, textbooks costs have dropped from $190+ to $0.
21 professors are replacing expensive textbooks with Open Educational Resources, which are low cost or free for students.
21 Professors
6 Institutions Participating
Faculty from Delta State University, Mississippi State University, Northeast Mississippi Community College, Mississippi University for Women, University of Southern Mississippi, and the University of Mississippi are participating. These institutions are proud to support this statewide use of OER, which has been shown to improve teaching and learning, lower DFW rates, and expedite time to degree, while also saving students money.

Z-Degree Round 2

- 52 Faculty participating
- 11 Institutions
- 32 Courses
- Anticipated cost savings $365,000

Better Together

- State and campus OER initiatives are not in competition
  - The ultimate goal is to help students (and faculty!)
  - More options mean more opportunities to get the word out
  - Each approach has strengths and weaknesses
- The two approaches compliment each other
  - State-level initiative offers greater level of funding and experience from nationally-known organizations that support OER
  - Campus-level initiative offers more hands-on support locally and a platform for hosting original open textbooks

For More Information

- Presentations
  - Marilyn Billings, "The Open Education Initiative at UMass Amherst: Seeking Alternatives to High-Cost Textbooks"
    - http://aquila.usm.edu/irday2015/1/
  - Michele Frasier-Robinson and Anne Hudson, "OER Building Blocks: Identifying Resources for Open Textbooks"
    - http://aquila.usm.edu/oaweek/2016/1/2/
  - Panel Discussion, "Open Textbooks: Experiences and Perspectives"
    - http://aquila.usm.edu/oaweek/2016/1/3/

For More Information

- Reports
  - Ethan Senack, "Open Textbooks: The Billion-Dollar Solution"
    - http://studentpirgs.org/sites/student/files/reports/The%20Billion%20Dollar%20Solution.pdf
- Open Textbook Initiative
  - Program overview
    - https://www.usm.edu/provost/open-access-textbook-initiative

Questions?

Josh Cromwell

Institutional Repository Coordinator

University of Southern Mississippi Libraries

Phone: 601.266.6200

Email: joshua.cromwell@usm.edu

Website: http://aquila.usm.edu

Jocelyn Tipton

Assistant Dean for Public Services

University of Mississippi Libraries

Phone: 662.915.2340

Email: jttipton@olemiss.edu

Website: http://libraries.olemiss.edu