

Washington Community and Technical Colleges



The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) launched the Open Course Library (OCL) in 2011 in response to the impact of rapidly rising textbook costs on student success and completion. Phase 1 included 42 courses. Phase 2, released in April 2013, added another 39 courses.

The OCL offers free or low-cost materials for 81 of the highest-enrolled courses at Washington's 34 community and technical colleges. Course materials cost students \$30 or less and are available to the public at opencourselibrary.org. When faculty uses OCL materials, each student can save about \$100 per class.

The Student PIRGs conducted an analysis of the cost-saving potential of the 81 courses contained in the Open Course Library. The analysis estimates that the Open Course Library has saved students \$5.5 million since its inception, including \$2.8 million this academic year alone. Students who take OCL courses save \$96 on average per course over using an expensive, traditional textbook. A 2011 analysis by the same group found that the savings could climb to \$41.6 million annually if Open Course Library materials are adopted statewide.

Use of the OCL course materials is entirely optional, but many faculty and departments have already moved to adopt them. New course materials developed for the OCL are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), making them Open Educational Resources (OER), freely useable and shareable with educators and students across Washington and the world.

Initial project funding was \$1.5 million, including \$750,000 from the Washington State Legislature and \$750,000 from The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Course materials were developed by teams of:

- One or more faculty developers who currently teach the course
- Two or more expert content reviewers
- One instructional designer
- One research librarian
- All courses were evaluated by a global education specialist and by an accessibility specialist

Faculty met the challenge to develop courses that cost the student \$30 or less in textbook costs with:

- Publisher resources at reduced cost
- Links to free materials on the web
- Instructor-developed open textbooks
- Instructor videos on YouTube

OER projects related to the OCL:

- Tacoma Community College, Clover Park Technical College, and Community Colleges of Spokane have all invested in open educational resources, staff, and programs to help faculty find and use OER.
- SBCTC plans to incorporate content from other Washington-based OER programs including Air Washington (Dixie Simmons, dsimmons@sbctc.edu) and Project I-DEA (Connie Broughton, cbroughton@sbctc.edu)

Other ways Washington community and technical colleges are addressing textbook affordability:

- Faculty use open textbooks from a variety of sources
- Faculty use open resources in lieu of textbooks
- College bookstores rent books to students
- Faculty allow students to use older versions of textbooks that can be purchased online at a very low cost

Open Course Library Success Stories

Tacoma Community College - Quill West

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Tacoma students hired a full-time open educational advocate to help faculty find and use open resources. This year TCC started a project called Liberate \$250K with the goal of saving students \$250,000 in two years. The project reached its goal in nine months.

Pierce College - David Lippman

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Published an open textbook for precalculus which students can access online for free. The [book webpage](#) has been visited over 67,000 times. The book PDF file has been accessed 95,000 times (many users access more than once). As of December 2012, students had purchased 2,029 copies of the book for \$18.

The math materials have been adopted by the Gates-funded Kaleidoscope Project; faculty at Scottsdale Community College, Green River Community College, Shoreline Community College; and a UCLA lecturer.

Green River Community College (GRCC) reports using the OCL precalculus texts has saved students nearly \$140,000 since fall 2011. GRCC is also using OCL calculus texts by Dale Hoffman, saving students about \$30,300. Comparable precalculus texts cost between \$117 and \$156.

Lippman created and supports [MyOpenMath](#), and [WAMAP](#), two math lab sites that are free to students. Nearly 4,000 students are enrolled.

Clover Park Technical College - Phil Venditti

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Bellingham Technical College - Carl Oekerman

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Bellingham Technical College is revamping its related instruction courses and asked Phil Venditti of Clover Park Technical College if he had any materials. Phil directed Carl to the Open Course Library, which includes materials developed by Phil. Carl responds, "I immediately started going through all of the Open Course material when I got your message, and it felt like Christmas!"

Shoreline Community College - Paul Herrick

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Paul Herrick published a third edition of his Introduction to Logic textbook through Oxford University Press as part of the OCL. The text is published at \$59 for the 800-page paperback and \$29.95 for the e-text. Specadel, a Portland company, developed and sells an app for the book for \$3 that delivers all the online videos, PowerPoints, exams and quizzes to students' mobile devices. These materials are used in at least 30 Introduction to Logic classes across the US.

North Seattle Community College - Jill Lane

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For Introduction to American Government, Jill Lane uses an etext available through [BVT Publishing](#). The book is available as an e-book for \$20, and students can buy an online study package for only \$10.

South Seattle Community College - Carey Schroyer

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Schroyer reports students in Biology 101 not only saved between \$50 and \$100 each by using OCL materials, but they also scored virtually the same on tests and lab reports as students who used the more expensive commercial texts.