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Draft of Recommendations to Faculty Senate on Open Educational Resources

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Recommendations to Faculty Senate on Open Educational Resources

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Background (provided by Senate President) The Senate Accessibility Committee was asked to review a Proposal developed by Kansas Student Government Associations and presented to the Board of Regents. The request also asked for recommendations that could then be used in discussions at the Board of Regents meetings and with WSU faculty. Below is their response:

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are educational resources that are free to access online and licensed in a way that is less restrictive than copyright. OERs provide an effective, flexible alternative to traditional textbooks that can make a significant impact on the expense to students, which is a SEM/Retention issue.

At Wichita State University, the faculty take seriously the challenges inherent in providing a high quality, effective learning experience for students while being sensitive to the expense and limitations of traditionally published course materials. The University must consider the time and effort inherent in creating textbooks, and the need for WSU to incentivize the production and selection of instructional materials in areas that can have the most impact.

For the effective implementation of a campus-wide OER program, coordination and support are necessary.

The Accessibility Committee requests the Faculty Senate support the following recommendations:

- The university administration be encouraged to follow the model of institutions like Kansas State University and set aside funds for grants to target OER development in areas of critical need and high impact for WSU students, based on the number of students taking classes, the expense of publisher materials for those texts, and the lack of acceptable OERs in the subject area.
- The university administration is encouraged to seek additional grants for OER creation from outside agencies and university donors
- Faculty be strongly encouraged to investigate existing Open Educational Resources as alternatives to traditional texts for their classes.

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- The university administration is encouraged to provide incentives for instructional staff who design courses that exclusively use OERs and have no cost to students for textbooks and resources.
- Faculty be strongly encouraged to submit their research and creative work with the University Libraries, which makes the University's digital scholarship available to a global audience.