

# Access Codes and OER Myths

“don’t believe ‘em”

Carrie Horvath, Ph.D., Director of Education Technology

Jaime Hammond, Director of Library Services

Neph Villanueva, Director Information Technology

Jenna Stebbins, Librarian

# Access Codes

**Myth:** Students can borrow any needed course materials from the Library if they cannot afford to purchase them.

**Fact:** The Library can loan physical copies of textbooks, but publisher restrictions do not allow the Library to loan e-textbooks or access codes.

The Library also cannot loan any textbooks that are not available for purchase at the bookstore (such as rental-only textbooks).

# Access Codes

- ▶ **Myth:** Students know exactly what is needed for their courses.
- ▶ **Fact:** They don't, but there are a variety of resources to help students including faculty, student support resources like Education Technology, ACE, and Library, and IT including the System Office helpdesk, which is available 24/7/365.

# Access Codes

**Myth:** Students who do not use their course access codes are not engaged in learning.

**Fact:** Not using an access code can be a result of many factors outside of the student's control, none of which indicate that they are not engaged in learning.

- ▶ When students can't afford an access code, they do not have options for alternative access such as sharing books, borrowing from library, or buying used
- ▶ 38% of students who reported that they were food insecure during the pandemic had also skipped buying an access code - that's nearly twice the rate of their peers. (["Fixing the Broken Textbook Market, Third Edition: A Survey on College Textbook Affordability during COVID-19"](#) p. 3)
- ▶ Ability to pay has direct effect on grade

# Optional Resources

- ▶ **Myth:** Students will check with their professors and/or Blackboard before purchasing required materials.
- ▶ **Fact:** New students are told to check the bookstore website for their required course materials.

# Format Choices

- ▶ **Myth:** Digital textbooks help students save money.
- ▶ **Fact:** Follett charges students a \$2.99 digital delivery item per item.

# NOLO Courses

**Myth:** If it is possible to get any version of the course materials from any source for \$40 or less, a course can be marked as "NOLO."

**Fact:** To calculate your course costs for NOLO eligibility, you must use the cost of *new materials in your campus bookstore*.

- ▶ Students purchasing materials with financial aid funds must buy their materials at the bookstore.
- ▶ There is no guarantee that all students will be able to get a used copy or a copy from a different online vendor, like Amazon.

# Open Educational Resources (OER)

**Myth:** Faculty have no help, resources, or time to build out quality OER content for their courses.

**Fact:** NVCC's Library Staff is here to help you! *You are not in this alone.* Apply for the Grant offered yearly:

- ▶ 2021 Connecticut Open Educational Resources Grant Program
- ▶ **Deadline:** March 15, 2021 at 11:59 PM EDT (Midnight)
  - ▶ <https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/69619-Connecticut-Oer-Coordinating-Council>
- ▶ Many open textbooks and courses come with ancillary materials
- ▶ Many OER repositories include faculty reviews to ensure quality



# Open Education Resources (OER)

**Myth:** If you choose an Open Textbook, students will know that it is free.

**Fact:** Open Textbooks, such as the popular OpenStax series, often have a free digital version as well as paperback and hardcover versions that can be purchased. Each version has a different ISBN. Be careful about which ISBN you use as the **Required** text for your course, as some of the print copies exceed the NOLO limit of \$40.