About Affordable Learning Solutions (AL$) @SDSU

What is AL$?
Affordable Learning Solutions is an umbrella term that encompasses all the ways educators can lower the costs of educational materials. One way is to choose Open Educational Resources (OER), but putting textbooks on reserve at the library, choosing to use older editions of books, and creating course packs through Montezuma Publishing are all AL$.

What are OERs?
Open Educational Resources are usually digital resources that have been licensed with Creative Commons so that typical copyright restrictions do not inhibit your ability to use and remix the content for your needs. They include everything from full textbooks, to online quizzing and assessment software, videos and full course modules. Many other open resources: journals, data, etc. become OERs when you use them for teaching and learning.

What’s Creative Commons?
Creative Commons is a set of licenses that allow licensers to retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some uses of their work. The licenses also ensure credit is given when due. Find out more:

www.creativecommons.org

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SDSU Library & Information Access
SDSU Information Technology Services
SDSU Center for Teaching & Learning
Why Use AL$/OER?

It’s an equity and student retention and success issue.

As the cost of education spirals ever higher, textbooks and other course materials are often unable to be paid for using student loans. Traditional textbooks can easily cost over $100 each, placing some students’ semester book bills close to $1000. Many students choose to forgo purchasing the book for as long as possible, thus jeopardizing their success in a course from the very beginning. Providing free and low-cost options to students will contribute to student success.

 Aren't OERs poor quality?

Not at all. MIT, Harvard, Yale and Stanford all have open courseware initiatives, where course materials from classes are freely available for reuse. The nature of openly licensed materials allows them to be seen, used, reviewed and remixed by a wide variety of educators, helping them to become more robust. Most OER authors are educators like yourself.

What if I still prefer print?

Not a problem! Many OER textbooks allow low cost print options for those who prefer physical copies. Montezuma Publishing also allows faculty to create lower-cost coursepacks of materials for students and can sell low-cost print copies of OER textbooks. The library can place print copies of textbooks on reserve for student use, and if the material does not drastically change from year-to-year, using older editions of textbooks is an AL$ option.

How can I get started?

You can visit the California Open Online Library for Education at www.cool4ed.org
You can search for OER materials at OpenStaxCollege.org or www.OERCommons.org
You can learn more by visiting the AL$ Research Guide at http://libguides.sdsu.edu/als