

Articulation and OER

A long-standing concern about OER has been its potential impact on articulation. Fortunately, both the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems have provided clear and definitive statements on this matter. And OER-related guidance has been integrated into the [Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers](#) (October 2019), a joint publication of the CSU and UC.

The position of the CSU Office of the Chancellor Chancellor's Office (CSUOC) and UC Office of the President (UCOP) was confirmed in a 2017 email distributed on the California Intersegmental Articulation Council (CIAC) listserv. The message below was sent on behalf of Nancy Purcille (Transfer Articulation Coordinator, UCOP) and Alison M. Wrynn (State University Associate Dean, Academic Programs, CSUOC).

Dear Colleagues,

We continue to receive questions about the use of OER (Open Educational Resources) and if/whether this will impact articulation. I've consulted with Alison Wrynn at CSU. CSU and UCOP are in agreement that:

Open Educational Resources (OER) Textbooks:

- There's been no change on this issue: for CSU and for UC, it's fine to use assembled materials or Open Educational Resources, so long as they're stable and publicly available as published textbooks (and not a list of links).
- All CSU and UC campus departments consider the content of textbooks when reviewing articulation proposals from the CCCs. The use of online texts is reviewed by campuses on a case-by-case basis for articulation with CCCs.
- There are multiple CCC courses that use online texts that are approved for CSU- and UC-transferability, and for articulation with CSU and UC campuses.
- Some CSU and UC campus departments use online texts themselves.

The guidance provided in the [Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers](#), which “have been developed based on recommendations from the faculty and staff who review course outlines proposed for lower-division general education credit” at California’s two public university systems offers specific recommendations. Specific reference to OER is found within the section on textbooks. The 2019-2020 document offers the following:

Proposed courses shall include at least one textbook. Reviewers use the representative text as a way to confirm their understanding of course content. It’s understood that the instructor in a given section may choose a different text, but the proposed one is still given close attention. It’s expected that the structure of the text will be consistent with the course outline. Including additional reading is a good way to demonstrate that multiple points of view will be evaluated, as a means of developing critical thinking.

Texts do not need to be published in hard copy. The UC and CSU welcome the use of online texts and other Open Educational Resources (OER), so long as the resource is a stable, bona fide textbook, and not just a collection of links to lecture notes or other web pages.

Open Educational Resources (OER)

- All CSU and UC campus departments consider the content of textbooks when reviewing articulation proposals from the CCCs. The use of online texts is reviewed by campuses on a case-by-case basis for articulation with CCCs.
- Multiple CCC courses already use online texts that are approved for CSU- and UC-transferability, and for articulation with CSU and UC campuses.
- Texts, both online and traditional, must be dated within seven years for most course submissions. Older books should be included if they are considered classics in the field and clearly identified as classics in the course outline (e.g., “classic text” or “discipline classic”). Lab science courses must include a lab manual.

A general search to ensure that all public-facing statements regarding OER and articulation in California are consistent yields the following information [on the textbook requirements page of the UC’s TCA \(Transferable Course Agreements\) policy](#):

- Open Educational Resources (OER), or online/digital texts, are acceptable if they are stable and publicly available as published textbooks, not a list of web links.
- Lab science courses must include a clearly identified lab manual in the COR. Lab manuals from either a publisher or compiled by CCC faculty (e.g., “CHEM 001 Lab Manual, CCC Chemistry department, 2019”) are acceptable.
- College Success courses must include a community college catalog. A hyperlink to the online community college catalog is acceptable.

For additional information and resources on this topic, please see:
<https://asccc-oeri.org/articulation-curriculum-and-open-educational-resources/>

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