Using Open Educational Resources to increase equity

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Topic: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Category: Quality Improvement/Evidence-Based Practice Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction
In a Doctorate of Nursing Practice-leadership program, faculty developed a course that incorporated the concepts of professionalism, advocacy, communication, and political engagement. However, it was challenging to identify one book that covered all the required content. One potential solution to this problem was to utilize open education resources (OER) to develop a cohesive, low-cost, high-quality learning resource. Multiple studies link textbook costs to equity, access, and student success. In a recent multi-campus study examining students and textbook costs, 89% of students experienced stress due to textbook costs. In addition, 80% delayed purchasing a textbook, and 65% had not purchased at least one textbook because of cost. Unsurprisingly, 56% of students indicated that not purchasing a textbook negatively impacted their performance. These statistics were even higher among minority students. One strategy to reduce the cost of textbooks is to utilize OER.

Purpose
The purpose of this project was to identify, organize, and utilize high-quality, no-cost learning resources to improve access and affordability for students.

Methods or Processes/Procedures
Applicable content was located, reviewed, and organized. Finally, the new Open Educational Resources were utilized in the course. Student satisfaction was measured retrospectively using a survey.

Results
The OER learning materials utilized were successful in decreasing student costs while still providing them with high-quality learning materials. Significantly, student satisfaction with the new no-cost learning materials was higher than in previous courses with no Open Educational Resource use.

Limitations
This innovation may not work for all courses; however, with some effort on the part of educators, Open Educational Resources can be used in select courses when applicable.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice
Open Educational Resources can positively impact students through improved access and affordability.

Biography

Tamara Berghout, EdD, RN, is a Professor and RN-BSN Program Director for the Nursing Department at Weber State University (Utah) with 11 years of faculty experience. In addition, she has many years of clinical nursing experience. She also has extensive experience in teaching healthcare policy, curriculum development, interprofessional collaboration, leadership, and patient care coordination. Her interest in open educational resources started with a continuing education course in eLearning and accessibility.

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