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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ‘Open’ textbooks at BMCC save students nearly \$1.1 million

PENDLETON, Ore. – A new report from the Open Oregon Educational Resources reveals that the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) at Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) has saved students nearly \$1.1 million in textbook costs since 2015.

OERs are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Instructors pull together materials utilizing the available OERs to provide students with no-cost or low-cost textbook options they can view for free online or print for a small fee. BMCC was an early adopter of OERs, and has utilized them in coursework since 2012.

In 2015, the Oregon Legislature approved HB 2871, which requires each of Oregon’s public colleges and universities to designate courses with no-cost and low-cost course materials in the schedule. In the 2019 Legislative session, legislators approved HB 2213 to further require that textbook affordability plans at each institution include steps to market the no-cost/low-cost designation to students.

Since 2015, BMCC has received \$149,056 in statewide grant funding through Open Oregon Educational Resources for instructors to develop these OERS for their courses. In the 2017-19 biennium, BMCC offered 776 course sections with no-cost/low-cost designations in the course schedule, representing more than a quarter of all BMCC courses.

BMCC’s e-Learning Coordinator, Bruce Kauss, says the cost of textbooks is rising at the rate of four times inflation, and the high cost of some course materials can impede a student’s academic success. In fact, data from Open Oregon shows 60% of students have delayed purchasing textbooks until they’ve received their financial aid.

(more)

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“Open textbooks can help alleviate the burden of textbook costs for students and provide faculty with content that can be utilized for their courses,” Kauss said. “Open textbooks are full, real textbooks, used by many faculty across the country, and licensed to be freely used, edited and distributed.”

Kauss will offer BMCC faculty interested in learning more about the use of OERs in their fields a workshop on Nov. 15.

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