



Policy Number: I.33
Policy Level: Operating Policy
Originally Issued: March 9, 2020
Reviewed: April 4, 2022
Revised: March 31, 2025
Policy Owner: Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost and
Student Services
Policy Implementation: College Deans

Open Educational Resources (OER)

I. Policy Statement and Purpose

Athens State University encourages and supports faculty, staff, and students to use, create, and publish Open Educational Resources (OER) to enhance the quality of the student experience; improve student access, success, and completion of coursework; enhance the provision of teaching and learning opportunities; increase teaching efficiency and effectiveness; and promote innovation in teaching and learning.

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) define OER as “teaching and learning materials that instructors and students may freely use and reuse at no cost without asking permission” (2018).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) agrees that OER are both learning and teaching materials while also including “research materials”. They note that all the materials, in any format or medium, and “that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others” to be considered OER (2019).

Those who incorporate OER materials into their courses shall assume all responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the course content as related to copyright and scholarly merit and OER materials shall be used in accordance with the [Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998](#); applicable state and federal copyright laws; the Creative Commons licensing standards; accepted best practices of the OER community; and college policies and academic standards.



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II. OER Procedures and Responsibilities

The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services is responsible for developing and maintaining procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with applicable regulations, policies, and procedures of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and the laws and regulations of the State of Alabama.

III. Creating and Using OER

Faculty creating and publishing OER materials understand that these materials are designed to be shared without financial compensation. Creation of OER by Athens State University faculty must comply with the [Intellectual Property: Ownership of Created Works](#) policy of the University. Faculty and staff are encouraged to use materials with Creative Commons licenses or those in the public domain, ensuring proper attribution for all content used.

Athens State University faculty, having created written, visual, and interactive digital teaching resources, are encouraged to contribute those open materials to the Alabama OER Commons and any other appropriate repositories or public-access websites in order to maximize discovery and use by others.

IV. Licensing OER

Faculty, as subject matter experts, are responsible for selecting OER of equal or greater quality than commercially distributed publisher content currently available for adoption. Faculty are to use only materials that are published under a Creative Commons License or exist in the Public Domain. Faculty should employ the following OER Community standards in the adoption of OER: Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, and Redistribute (Wiley, 2014).

When creating and publishing OER, the Creative Commons license must be visibly attributed.

- Retain - the right to make, own, and control copies of the content
- Reuse - the right to use the content in a wide range of ways



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- Revise - the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself
- Remix - the right to combine the original or revised content with other material to create something new
- Redistribute - the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others

V. Responsibility for this Operating Policy

Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Provost's Council, the Faculty Senate, and the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the College Deans.