Case Study

An Embedded Librarian's Experience Piloting a Subject-Specific OER Initiative

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Abstract

This case study will describe the labor and collaborative efforts, to-date, of an embedded librarian to pilot an OER textbook creation and/or adoption program in her liaison area—a school of education serving approximately 850 graduate and 150 undergraduates at a private Catholic university on the West Coast of the U.S.A.. This case study will explore the initial project goals, successes (e.g., administrative support and graduate student enthusiasm), and challenges (e.g., faculty buy-in, unbalanced labor, OER creation support) encountered in this project. The study will also discuss the librarian's professional development undertakings in an effort to fill OER creation and platform knowledge gaps. Finally, the study will discuss the librarian's next steps for this project in the upcoming academic year.

Keywords: open educational resources (OER); graduate students; textbook; embedded librarian; case study

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Background

In November 2018, the author joined a private Catholic university on the West Coast of the U.S.A. as an education librarian. In this role, she serves as an embedded librarian—with a primary office in the Department of Learning and Teaching—to the School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES), and supports the teaching, learning, and research needs of the school's approximately one thousand faculty, staff, students, and seven affiliated centers and institutes. According to recent enrollment statistics, graduate students comprise over 88% ("History and facts," 2019) of the education school's population and 24% of campus-wide graduate students take some or all courses online (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). SOLES online Masters of Education and new hybrid/online social justice education graduate programs comprise nearly 30% of the education school's graduate population. The author has observed an increase in the education school's online course and program offerings and an increase in e-book requests from faculty and students. Academic librarians across degree-offering institutions—including her own—have encouraged faculty adoption of library-licensed e-books, as course texts, as a component of textbook affordability initiatives. Institutions such as Louisiana State University are "identifying and purchasing e-books that have been adopted as course materials, then making these available to students through the Libraries' website and the university's learning management system" (Comeaux et al., 2019, p. 29). Other institutions such as the University of California – Los Angeles are collaborating with campus and campus-adjacent bookstores to expand textbook course reserve programs (Celik & Peck, 2016). However, publisher constraints on e-book availability, cost, and user license options can leave academic librarians struggling to provide sustainable e-book options to their institution's community through traditional firm order, demand-driven, or large package options (Carrico, et al., 2016).

Recent scholarship and news note that textbook publisher mergers have resulted in five publishing companies—Pearson Education, McGraw-Hill Education, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Scholastic, and Cengage Learning—controlling nearly 80% of the industry (Echevarria & Bowman, 2018; Senack & Donoghue, 2016; Senack & The Student PIRGs, 2014) and occupying five of the top twelve worldwide revenue spots (Milliot, 2018). Other publishers such as Elsevier's RELX Group, Thomson Reuters, Springer Nature, and Wiley, also appear in this top twelve list (Milliot, 2018)—which is unsurprising based on the author's own field-specific collection development experience. The book publisher and library tug-of-war over print and e-book affordability has regularly circled LIS practice, trade, social media, and scholarship dialogue. Occasionally, library and publisher book affordability disputes capture mainstream media interest, e.g., Jessamyn West's *CNN Opinion* piece, which brought additional public interest to print and e-book affordability issues (J. West, 2019).

Undergraduate admissions and other informational higher education websites regularly provide undergraduate textbook estimates as a component of cost of study considerations. Undergraduate textbook costs rose approximately 88% between 2006 and 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016; The College Board, 2018). The College Board (2018), a national college trend aggregator, anticipated 2018-19 undergraduate students spending between $1200 to $1500 annually on textbooks and supplies. Undergraduate textbook costs are frequently discussed in textbook affordability and open educational

resources (OER) scholarship (Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Clinton, 2019; Colson et al., 2017; Crozier, 2018; Nicholls, 2009; Senack & The Student PIRGs, 2014; Wesolek et al., 2018; Woodward et al., 2017) and on open advocacy organization websites such as SPARC (SPARC, n.d.). However, graduate textbook estimates prove more difficult to locate on graduate school admissions websites. In an effort to find more information, the author conducted Google searches using the terms *graduate school* and *textbook cost* or *textbook estimate* for listed 2018, 2019, and 2020 graduate and professional student estimates. Top results included $972 (University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, n.d.), $1200 (University of Southern California, n.d.), and $1330 (Cornell University, n.d.). It is important to note that these estimates represent averages across an institution's graduate school programs in arts, humanities, sciences, and social and behavioral sciences; estimates may increase or decrease depending on discipline and degree pursued. If these estimates are indicative of their respective peer institutions, one may assume graduate student textbook expenses are relatively similar to undergraduate textbook expenses.

Undergraduates and graduate students face similar expense challenges—tuition, books, supplies, and associated college fees. However, graduate students may encounter additional expenses and changes to their standard of living—such as off-campus housing/rent, family obligations, commuting, health insurance, or food needs—that may not be completely offset by a graduate assistantship or other part-time employment (Coulter et al., 2004; Goncalves & Trunk, 2014; Miller et al., 2019; "MIT facts 2019: Tuition and financial aid," 2019; Powell, 2004; University of Southern California, 2019). Accumulated undergraduate loan debt may also factor into graduate students' expense budgeting (Malcom & Dowd, 2012; Millett, 2003). Social media conversations (e.g., #TextbookBroke, #OER, #OpenTextbooks) sometimes describe if-then situations, e.g., if students spend less on textbooks, then students would be able to afford rent/food/gas/etc. (Reedley ASG, 2019). Social media platforms also draw attention to graduate and professional student populations underrepresented by existing textbook affordability scholarship, including OER awareness campaigns (Essmiller, 2019), existing OER use (Vega, 2019), and new Z-degree[2] graduate-level programs (Jenkins, 2019).

Increasing textbook costs may encourage students to make choices that may hinder or prolong their degree and/or certification pursuits (Clinton, 2019), such as decreased courses/credit hours per term (Florida Virtual Campus, 2016), not purchasing required texts despite course enrollment (Clinton, 2019), or using obsolete older editions (Florida Virtual Campus, 2016; Senack & The Student PIRGs, 2014). E-textbook editions packaged with assignment software or textbook codes also affect textbook affordability, as students are forced to purchase new textbooks for the code or assignment software access instead of being able to purchase cheaper used copies.

OER emerged as a response to increased textbook costs (Clinton, 2019). OER scholarship usually defines OER from existing, similar definitions provided by Creative Commons, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (Crozier, 2018; Wesolek et al., 2018). UNESCO's website currently defines OER as "teaching, learning or research materials that are in the public domain or released with intellectual property licenses that facilitate the free use, adaptation and distribution of resources" (UNESCO, 2019, para.1). Scholars cite OER beginnings as emerging from a Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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[2] Z-degree programs offer pathways for students to complete a degree with zero textbooks costs.

initiative to provide zero cost online learning (Goldberg, 2001); learning objects (Mishra, 2017); and "as a concept with great potential to support educational transformation" (Butcher, Uvalic-Trumbic, & Kanwar, 2011, p. 5). The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) announced the 2018 completion of its five-year $1 billion OER savings tracking challenge, reporting on OER use from over 4000 institutions worldwide (Allen, 2018). SPARC estimates postsecondary students save $117 per course when an OER is used as the primary textbook (Nyamweya, 2018). Rice University's OER publishing platform, OpenStax, touts over $233 million in savings for nearly 3 million current high school, 2-year degree, and 4-year degree students on its website (OpenStax, 2019). OpenStax's repository does not currently list any graduate-level textbooks, but is a recognized name among the OER textbook platforms.

Liaison Faculty as Key Decision Makers and Collaborative Partners

Of all the OER stakeholders, liaison faculty, or faculty assigned to a librarian's liaison area, hold the most decision-making power and influence as traditional course creators, text selectors, scholarship producers, and lynchpins amongst librarians' connections and relationships. Over the years, multiple textbook affordability and OER studies discuss the role of faculty perspectives and buy-in to textbook affordability initiatives (Annand & Jensen, 2017; Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Clinton, 2019; Wesolek et al., 2018). Butcher et al. (2011) calls the university's financial investment in faculty OER creation and professional development "critical".

Annand and Jensen (2017), Senack (2014), and the Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey 2018 (2019) rank faculty's importance as key decision makers, above students' purchasing power. This is notably different than food, transportation, energy, or other for-profit industries that prioritize the actual purchaser of goods or services. "Student interests are essentially ignored [by for-profit textbook publishers] because they do not make the purchasing decision" (Annand & Jensen, 2017, p. 9, author's emphasis). Textbook publishers market to faculty with course creation and text selection responsibilities by providing "in-class presentation resources, exam banks, adaptive learning systems, and other features that make the teaching process easier" (Annand & Jensen, 2017, p. 9). Textbook publishers and their sales representatives pitch these products to faculty as integral to reducing course preparation and increasing time to pursue other teaching, research, or service commitments (Senack & The Student PIRGs, 2014).

For these reasons, liaison faculty should be considered essential OER partners for academic libraries. A number of studies note the existence of or potential for positive OER collaborations between liaison faculty and academic librarians (Hess et al., 2016; Jung et al., 2017; Wesolek et al., 2018; Q. West, 2017; Q. West et al., 2018). Hare et al. (2018) reported that Duke University, Davidson College, Furman University, and Johnson C. Smith University's collaborative TDEL OER project strengthened liaison faculty and librarian relationships by allowing each group the opportunity to better understand the other's needs and expertise. This led to additional project collaborations beyond the TDEL OER project (Hare et al., 2018). Studies reported infrequent-to-nonexistent graduate OER use: OER textbook adoption in one or two courses. Academics

librarians could strengthen partnerships with liaison faculty by providing expertise to address this potential area of growth.

Liaison faculty perspectives and buy-in heavily influence the success or failure of any OER program. Multiple studies cite reducing students' textbook cost as a key motivation to OER consideration (Allen & Seaman, 2016; Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Clinton, 2019). OER's creation, reuse, and remix features are possible incentives over traditional publisher's locked textbook content (Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Hess et al., 2016; Jhangiani et al., 2016; Mishra, 2017). Other studies also cite OER's accessibility in e-book or print-optional texts as potentially reducing class time lost since the texts are immediately available to students (Bliss et al., 2013).

Common barriers to undergraduate and graduate faculty OER adoption include the time commitment necessary to locate and evaluate resources (I. E. Allen & Seaman, 2016; Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Olcott, 2012); lack of OER awareness (Belikov & Bodily, 2016; Wiley, 2015); and confusing OER with other digital resources (Belikov & Bodily, 2016). OER Commons, a repository of more than 50,000 OER items, provides a "graduate/professional" education level search limiter, and has a submission policy that allows contributors to cross-list resources with multiple subjects, material types, and levels ("Submission guidelines," 2018). However, only forty-five items, or approximately 0.09% of OER Commons repository, are currently tagged as graduate-level textbooks in the education subject area, including Seifert and Sutton's *Educational Psychology* (2009), Desrochers and Fallon's *Instruction in Functional Assessment* (2014), Frederiksen and Phelps' *Literature Reviews for Education and Nursing Graduate Students* (2017), and Johnson's *Launching Digital Writing in the Elementary Classroom* (2015). OER platforms such as Open Textbook Library and Open Textbook Network and other websites also appear in the results. Faculty with limited time and OER knowledge may find searching for OER tedious or ineffective if they are unable to quickly locate desired resources.

A lack of incentives, such as course release time, recognition towards promotion and/or tenure, and grants, can also hinder faculty buy-in (Annand & Jensen, 2017; Clinton, 2019; Henderson & Ostashewski, 2018). Barriers related to funding, promotion and/or tenure, and recognition cannot be directly addressed by libraries and require partnerships with other entities—campus deans, provosts, etc.—to encourage faculty OER adoption. Academic libraries can more easily address OER education, awareness, and publishing issues as components of information literacy and distribution. Annand and Jenson (2017) surmise, "Once the financial interests of students, faculty and educational institutions are aligned, any number of models could create self-sustaining OER revenue streams that will benefit higher education institutions and their students" (p. 12).

OER at the Library

Academic libraries, historically described as the center of campus communities, serve as ideal environments to nurture grassroots, emerging, and innovative projects—particularly those like OER, that involve multiple stakeholders and disciplines, and content creation, modification, and/or distribution. In Fall 2014, three librarians at the University of San Diego, representing digital collections and technical services, initiated the library's OER efforts by developing a plan designed to gauge faculty OER interest.

This was implemented during Spring 2015. The plan consisted of a survey to query faculty's existing OER knowledge and perceptions; an introductory OER workshop; and finally, a focus group of selected survey and workshop participants that discussed OER interest and potential adoption challenges (Hess et al., 2016).

While the initial plan suffered from a low response rate and timing issues (Hess et al., 2016), the librarians succeeded in gaining financial support from the Dean of the University Library and the institution's provost, to award four $1000 stipends to faculty willing to replace a traditional course text with an OER. The initial 2015-2016 awardees represented undergraduate courses in philosophy, communications, mathematics, and a graduate course in nursing.

The librarians continued to build the library's OER initiative during the 2016-2017 academic year with faculty outreach opportunities including a new faculty orientation presentation (Nann et al., 2017). With additional funding, the librarians welcomed nine more faculty to review and adopt an OER course text. The librarians supported awardees with regular in-person and email check-ins (Nann et al., 2017). They also received additional funding to pilot the Library Open Textbook Review, which allows faculty to receive a $250 stipend in exchange for a written review about an appropriate textbook for their course. Twenty-three faculty were accepted into the review pilot (Nann et al., 2017), though it is unknown to this author how many SOLES faculty participated. The two programs offered faculty two different engagement levels for OER participation. Between 2015 and 2017, the OER initiative and review supported thirty-six faculty in their efforts to review and potentially adopt OER as course texts.

During this time, the library's OER Committee was chartered —which allowed other interested librarians to participate in the OER efforts. The committee's establishment also signaled the administration's continued support of OER awareness, education, and increased usage. The committee currently operates under the charge of encouraging the institution's community to increase OER use by providing OER education and expertise. The committee conducts faculty workshops, collaborates on promotion and events during Open Access Week, and meets regularly during the fall and spring semesters to plan related events.

By the author's arrival in November 2018, the library's faculty OER grant program and OER Committee were building a positive reputation on campus and sought to do more to increase OER usage. The author came into the position with previous OER and open access committee experience, having facilitated OER workshops, and worked with faculty to evaluate OER texts and apply for OER grants. Due to her previous experience and research interests, continuing this work at the library made sense, and the OER Committee became one of her first committee assignments in this new position.

As an OER Committee member, the author, as the education librarian, collaborated with two other committee members—representing technical services and access services—to plan and facilitate an OER faculty workshop called *5 Things to Know About OER*. The workshop aimed to raise faculty awareness about OER, why they are useful as course texts, and how to begin searching for existing OER through platforms such as Mason OER Metafinder (MOM). The facilitators had multiple planning meetings and used many avenues for promotion— individual emails, mass emails, and visible print and digital signage, but unfortunately no faculty attended the actual workshop. Like previous efforts, the poor attendance may have been due to a number of factors. LIS

scholarship and social media circles acknowledge the difficulty developing, sustaining, and/or increasing in-person workshop attendance despite best efforts (Crozier, 2018; Hess, et al., 2016). Future workshop efforts may include offering online synchronous or asynchronous options to engage faculty in OER content.

Case Study

The Directive

In Fall 2018 during a regularly scheduled meeting, the library dean and the education librarian discussed the education faculty's interest in OER. The education dean, had expressed interest in increasing the school's OER use and—perhaps more importantly—showed a willingness to financially support the local development of OER. Studies from Hess, et al. (2016) and Nann et al. (2017) previously demonstrated the importance of financial incentives for encouraging faculty buy-in at the institution. The library dean then encouraged the education librarian to meet with the education dean to confirm his interest, financial support, and his goals. A subsequent fruitful meeting with the education dean left the education librarian with the following tasks:

- Work with dean, department chairs, faculty, and graduate students to develop a standardized thesis & dissertation template for graduate students;
- Develop a writing style guide text with content and examples specific to education school's needs;
- Research appropriate platforms for OER content access and preservation, including possible app platforms;
- Work with department chairs, faculty, and graduate students to evaluate existing OER for possible course text replacement or development for graduate-level courses;
- Build a team of faculty and graduate students interested in authoring OER texts for graduate level courses in the school.

The education dean verbally committed $2000 to $3000 for the development and adoption of each OER text. This funding would be distributed to education faculty or graduate students authoring, modifying, or editing OER texts for relevant courses. The education librarian would be responsible for leading the teams through OER evaluation, creation or modification, original publishing, and future revisions.

Her initial efforts included meetings with departments, calls for participation on internal faculty and graduate student listservs, one-on-one conversations with faculty and graduate students, and the creation of a writing style guide document. After two meetings and multiple emails with the library and education deans, a third meeting with education school department chairs was requested to discuss the first two tasks. Scheduling conflicts and other job responsibilities regularly impeded meeting opportunities and led to project delays. Calls for participation initially received enthusiastic responses, but actual participation commitment was lackluster. Future OER development and adoption projects would include a task force made up of librarian, faculty, and graduate student representatives collaborating for semester-long commitments. This shorter term commitment may encourage more faculty and graduate student participation.

Successes

 A few initial project successes can be reported. This is the first OER adoption project the author has helmed and the library and education deans' continued support has been integral to the project's current and future success. The author was given significant agency and autonomy to lead and manage the project, build teams from colleagues and graduate students, and pursue professional development opportunities.

The liaison faculty and graduate students' vocal enthusiasm for OER adoption was also a welcome sign, despite their lack of actual participation. The education librarian has received positive support and interest whenever the project was mentioned. The author hopes the education dean's formal support will encourage faculty and graduate student OER participation and create pathways for such work to be recognized in promotion and tenure consideration. Studies show liaison faculty and graduate students are more willing to create and adapt OER when offered appropriate support and incentives (Cox & Trotter, 2017; Hess et al., 2016; King, 2017).

The author has also engaged in formal and informal professional development opportunities related to OER. She regularly subscribes to OER listservs (e.g., LibOER), monitors related Twitter hashtags (e.g., #OER, #textbookaffordability, and #opentextbooks), and participates in OER webinars and workshops, particularly those related to education or the social sciences. The library dean has been instrumental in sending OER-related program notifications and financially covering associated costs. Through these venues, the education librarian has been able to engage with other OER advocates in discussions about communicating OER implementation and adoption to liaison faculty, OER development platforms, and existing or new OER items. When a liaison faculty asks for a textbook recommendation, the author queries OER listservs for recommendations before exploring traditional commercial options. OER and other web-based formats meet the SOLES online graduate community's need for easy-to-access, multiuser-licensed texts, especially when affordability and difficulty accessing print outside the U.S. can hinder student success. For example, a SOLES faculty member contacted the education librarian to request an e-book version of a commercially available higher education leadership textbook. The SOLES faculty preferred easy-to-access online resources since the class would spend time traveling internationally. Publisher restrictions prevented library purchase of the e-book format. However, the education librarian recommended an OER alternative—found on LibOER—that met faculty and student needs. The SOLES faculty member subsequently adopted the OER as a replacement for the course text.

The education librarian began exploring OER creation and publishing platforms that would meet content, format, accessibility, and platform stability needs. It was determined that the first project, a writing style guide with accompanying thesis and dissertation templates, would eventually be hosted on Springshare's Libguide platform. The education librarian's regular use of Springshare products, authorship privileges, and exploration of other OER using the Libguide platform helped her to come to this conclusion. The author began drafting the writing style guide in summer 2019 and published it as a shared Google Doc in spring 2020. Due to the COVID pandemic's impact on institutional functions, the thesis and dissertation template development was postponed until Spring 2021. The template will serve to provide a standardized template for graduate students, who are currently using various online APA-style templates or

manually creating their own. The standardized template aims to reduce often unintentional formatting errors that can delay the thesis and dissertation submission process and/or hinder quality. After additional conversations with faculty and department heads, the education librarian aimed to create a template similar to those provided by Mississippi State University Libraries, Purdue University, and Cornell University.

Challenges

The education librarian faced a number of both anticipated and unforeseen challenges to the project. The anticipated challenges mostly echo what others have found while researching faculty/librarian collaborations and/or OER initiatives, and centered on faculty buy-in as a main obstacle (Annand & Jensen, 2017; Belikov & Bodily, 2016). Survey results and reports from mainstays such as Educause (2017) and the Ithaka S+R U.S. Faculty Survey 2018, mixed faculty perceptions of OER quality, content appropriateness, and topic specificity. Although the Ithaka S+R found "substantial interest in use of open educational resources for instructional practices, particularly from younger faculty members" (as cited in Blankstein & Wolff-Eisenberg, 2019, p. 5). The author's observations at their institution echo the Educause (2017) and Ithaka S+R (2018) findings of mixed faculty perception regarding OER quality, content appropriateness, and topic specificity, particularly for faculty teaching upper level graduate courses.

The education librarian informally asked approximately ten liaison area faculty representatives what incentives would encourage their OER participation. The top three responses were course release time, a financial stipend, and publication credit towards promotion and tenure. These responses echo common barriers described in OER research. One-on-one discussions between the education librarian and education dean quickly revealed that course release time would be cost prohibitive and could potentially create course scheduling issues for the school. The course release time barrier is a major one for faculty who self-describe as already *overloaded* with teaching and service responsibilities. Despite the author's communication of the education dean's financial and publication support commitments, liaison faculty still seemed reluctant to participate in OER creation, modification, or adoption.

An additional observed barrier was the lack of a direct communication from the education administration—deans and/or department heads—about the OER textbook initiative, the goals, and benefits. It makes sense that faculty desire verification and communication from their direct supervisors before committing their time, labor, and expertise to an unfamiliar initiative.

Graduate students were also hesitant to participate in the OER initiative. One issue was a lack of faculty buy-in, as most of the graduate research or teaching assistants were already assigned to faculty with their own work, course, and personal commitments.

The education librarian's relative newness to the liaison faculty and emerging, yet positive, rapport may have also contributed to liaison faculty reticence. The author is serving as the first full-time education librarian for SOLES in recent years; and before her, the position was staffed with contract or temporary workers who held expertise in other subject areas. Thus, there were a number of faculty unfamiliar with having subject specialist, and particularly in-house, library support. Liaison faculty have expressed an uncertainty with what an embedded research librarian does. The author foresees that

faculty will be more willing to collaborate once a stronger positive rapport is built and liaison faculty's familiarity with librarian responsibilities and duties increases.

Time constraints also served as a large barrier to the education librarian's project progress. The spring 2019 semester was the first full semester the author served at this institution. The faculty, staff, and student needs and enthusiasm for one- or multi-shot sessions, instruction and research consultations, and service projects resulted in high demands on the education librarian's time. She also precariously balanced her own active conference, fellowship, and research agenda and family responsibilities as well as dealing with the sometimes stressful transition of a Southeast to West Coast move. To better manage time constraints, the author hired a student assistant for the upcoming academic year. The author looks forward to collaborating with a motivated student who can handle some basic and essential aspects of the author's workflow such as web maintenance and development, basic research, and compiling bibliographies. Staff support will be vital as additional OER development and adoption projects are started.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

Though the project has not produced as many immediate tangible results as the education librarian desired, there is renewed hope for significant progress in the next academic year and beyond. The author continues to meet with the library's OER Committee and liaison faculty to gain additional support and participation. She will continue to encourage the education dean to formally encourage faculty participation with financial support and publication recognition. A meeting with the education dean and department chairs revealed a desire to survey current SOLES graduate students about their textbook acquisition and affordability practices, opinions, and experiences. The survey could help reveal acquisition and affordability issues SOLES graduate students encounter. The survey data could also help support future conversations and collaborations with textbook affordability advocates and interested parties in SOLES and the library. Student participants, faculty, and others have expressed genuine interest in the impending results and next steps. The education librarian will present the survey results at an upcoming department chairs' meeting and has reached out to liaison faculty and student groups to share information.

The Psychological Association's recent APA Style 7th edition announcement (American Psychological Association, 2019) will require significant updates to SOLES's current dissertation and thesis templates, which vary by department. SOLES administrators expressed an interest in developing a taskforce to create an OER best practices guide and accompanying dissertation and thesis template based on APA 7th edition standards. The goal is to create a stable, accessible resource customized for the research and formatting needs of SOLES graduate students, regardless of department, before SOLES adopts the APA 7th edition. One of the three SOLES departments has confirmed participation and assigned the staff member who supervises departmental dissertation submissions to work with the education librarian. A successful collaboration on the guide and template project may encourage interest in future OER creation and adaptation projects.

If the education librarian could restart this project, securing the education administration's formal, well-communicated support with clear faculty and graduate

student funding options and incentives would be a priority. An earlier meeting with SOLES department chairs would have likely resulted in an earlier dissemination of a student textbook affordability survey and more productive OER project pitches to the liaison faculty and graduate students. These critical missteps led to additional labor, ineffective communication loops, and wasted time. However, lessons learned from this experience are invaluable to future project success. The graduate student survey and dissertation and thesis template are positive steps forward on what should be a long-term, successful project. Future reports will revisit this case study providing project progress, challenges, next steps, and reflection on new lessons learned.

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