



What is OER?

Minnesota State relies on the William and Flora Hewlett definition of Open Educational Resources (OER):

“OER are teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, texts, software, and any other tools, materials or techniques used to support access to knowledge.”



Accessing OER

Instructors may provide OER via:

- Email
- D2L Brightspace
- Link within the course syllabus

If students can't download and store the material or don't have Internet access away from school, it is recommended they use Internet-connected computers in campus computer labs and/or libraries to access OER content. Some content, such as videos from YouTube, can't be downloaded. Students without Internet at home should also make plans to watch this content somewhere with an Internet connection.



Storing OER

Save the files or bookmark the webpage of the OER to your computer or mobile device. If you are using a public device, students should be sure to bring a flash drive for storing it for future use, or store it in [Microsoft OneDrive](#), a cloud service that stores your files and can be accessed on any device with an Internet connection.

Every Minnesota State student has access to a OneDrive account, which can be accessed with a StarID at

<https://outlook.com/MinnState.edu>.

Why is your instructor using OER?

Your instructor may have decided to use Open Educational Resource content for several reasons. Faculty, like students, have become concerned about the significant rise in the cost of textbooks and see OER as an opportunity to provide rich learning content for students. Faculty also make use of OER content because they find OER to be great quality content made often by people they know or by individuals who teach and work in the related fields of study. Finally, faculty may also choose to use OER to help make the course current and fresh. Rather than relying on a book which might have old examples or references, faculty appreciate the flexibility to find newer content for their students.



Using OER

Depending on the OER format, students can read, watch, listen to or download OER. Often times OER is available as a PDF, in which case students can utilize these features:

- Bookmark
- Annotate/Comment
- Highlight
- Print

Learn more about printing OER, including ways to get more out of each page in the full [Student Guide to OER](#)



Did you know?

Minnesota State has begun Phase I of the Textbook Search and Display Project. For this pilot phase, students at colleges participating in the [Z-Degree Project](#) have the ability to search for courses that offer **no cost** textbooks and materials by using the Advanced Search feature in the registration process. These campuses include:

- Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- Central Lakes College
- Century College
- Lake Superior College
- Mesabi Range College
- Minneapolis College
- Northland Community and Technical College

