

## Open Learning



If you have ever watched a YouTube video or used Khan Academy for studying, you've already been learning in the open.

### What's Open Learning?

Open learning is about connecting with communities and networks beyond UBC, by openly sharing your work (finished or not) and building on the work of others for your own learning. For example, by sharing a picture with a Creative Commons license, others can use the image for their own purposes, as long as they align with the Creative Commons license terms and include proper attribution.

Open Educational Resources (OERs) have an open license that allows users to engage in the "5Rs": Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, and Redistribute. What does this all mean for you as a student?

#### 1. Retain

By using open educational resources, students have the right to make their own content or own copies of the learning resources they access:

- Practically, this means that unlike conventional textbooks, Open Educational Resources are free to access and download.

For example, as a biology major, I don't get the opportunity to study subjects such as statistics in depth. This summer, I wanted to go beyond my first year data science courses and increase my data science literacy. Instead of paying tuition for another course or buying an expensive textbook, I signed up for a data science course on Coursera, a platform with courses made up of open educational resources. For the past few weeks, I have been learning to use the R programming language free of charge and with great flexibility.

- Unlike online textbooks and course materials that require expensive access codes and expire after a course is done, I can keep my own copy of OERs and continue to use them after course completion.
- Lastly, by adding an open license to their work, the creators of the course retain their rights as content creators AND make it easy for students like me to build on their work.

#### 2. Reuse

By using open educational resources, students have the right to use the content in a wide range of ways. This means that students are free to use OERs in class projects and presentations,

such as using openly licensed images on research posters or slides, without breaking copyright laws if acknowledging the source.

For example, I often use Creative Commons images or graphics in my class presentations. Incorporating openly accessible illustrations in my projects or presentations is a great way to give substance to my own work without having to draw them myself.

### **3. Revise**

By using open educational resources, students have the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter content. Because anyone can edit OERs, students can build on the work of scholars and peers by editing or adding to their openly licensed work as long as the source is acknowledged.

Editing a Wikipedia page is a great example of revising an open educational resource. Recently, I got to update an instructions page on UBC Wiki by directly editing the work of previous students instead of starting from scratch.

### **4. Remix**

By using open educational resources, students have the right to combine or incorporate the original or revised content with other open content to create something new. An example of remixing is expanding on a meme or dueting a reel on Instagram.

### **5. Redistribute**

By using open educational resources, students have the right to share copies of the original content, revisions, or remixes with others.

Rather than turning in assignments to one person, the professor, and never seeing it again, openly licensed work can be shared with a wider audience of learners who can learn from and build upon it themselves. For example, after taking a software development class, I could share my class projects to my portfolio, to showcase to future potential employers. Similarly, creative works, data science projects or scientific experiments can be contributed to public repositories.

## **So, why should you care about Open Learning?**

1. OERs can save you money over conventional textbooks.
2. You participate in open learning already by watching Youtube videos, browsing reddit, using Github, or sharing on social media!
3. You could contribute to collaborative learning.
4. You have access to other people's work in addition to your own, which could lead to new discoveries!

## **Tips and strategies for students to find OERs**

If you are looking for some UBC-curated open OERs, visit [open.ubc.ca](http://open.ubc.ca). UBC students also have access to LinkedIn Learning courses, which contain helpful professional resources. Beyond UBC, KhanAcademy, edX and Coursera contain open educational resources on diverse

subjects. As with any educational resource, it's important to critically analyze and evaluate the learning resources accessed prior to using or citing them.

Actually, this video is open licensed and is one of many open-licensed student toolkits created by the Chapman Learning Commons at the University of British Columbia. To learn more about ways to excel at university take a look through the Learning Commons website at [learningcommons.ubc.ca](http://learningcommons.ubc.ca) or come visit our Chapman Learning Commons Help Desk on the third floor of the Irving K. Barber Learning Center.