Tips for Faculty, from Faculty: OER Implementation

Hi, my name is Bruce Wilson. I'm a professor of political science at UCF. If you find a good open-access textbook, the quality is as good—if not better—than the commercially available ones because the people who are writing them are actually very dedicated to doing this.

In this one class, in three semesters, the students have saved around fifty-six thousand dollars, which is not to be sniffed at. This makes it a lot easier and increases access for students.

When I decided to choose this book, I got in touch with Jim and we organized what the book was going to look like and how we wanted to use it. He did the technical part and I did the substantive part.

My name is Jim Paradiso, and I'm an instructional designer at UCF. I run the Press website. I knew the tool was in our deck of cards, so to speak, for implementing it. It becomes another element where I can come in with Bruce specifically.

There are a couple of big repositories you can start with: OER Commons, Oasis. The library is very involved as well with all things affordability and early OER materials. You can take an OER, but then what do you do with it? We landed on Pressbooks, and it gave us what we would consider a seamless experience for students, which I think was helpful. I don't really ever have to leave the Canvas interface to read the textbook. Jim did a fantastic job of loading it in and making it accessible to the students, and they've found it very readable.

In the online class, the book is the basis, and then I have supplemental materials that guide them through a student-led type of learning. It's really levelled the playing field for everyone in the class, whether you have money or not to buy the book. The book's there, you're ready to learn—so let's get started.