



**Oxnard College Sabbatical Proposal**  
**Proposed Project: OER Materials and Supplementary Materials for English R105 and English R108**  
**Submitted by: Renee Willers**  
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**October 14, 2022**

**Request for Sabbatical:** Spring 2024

**Previous Sabbatical:** None

**Hire Date:** August 2016

**1. Sabbatical Purpose**

The purpose of this sabbatical is to address the Open Educational Resources (OER) initiative for English R105: British Literature II and English R108: American Literature II. The OER initiative for community college strives to reduce the cost of attending community college. According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, "bills for books and supplies often surpass the cost of tuition and fees" at community colleges. This norm is unfortunately true for many literature courses in which anthologies can be expensive. Using OER materials provide students with much needed financial relief; however, many texts used for English R105 (British literature from the late eighteenth century to present) and English R108 (American literature from 1865 to present), do not fall under public domain as these courses use more recently published literature. In addition to the lack of literature that falls under public domain, many free resources online are not well suited for English R105 and English R108; both of these courses require the literature assigned to be contextualized within the historical and

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cultural timeframe. This sabbatical would enable me the time necessary to locate and evaluate the OER material for both primary texts and the necessary reading material to contextualize these texts. One of the great benefits of using OER materials is that instructors can revise and mix OER materials in ways that are impossible for other types of resources (Hays and Mallon 22). This means I can incorporate material from both literature OER textbooks and history OER textbooks. In addition, material will be gathered to model and facilitate the reading, thinking, and writing skills necessary to be successful in English major courses.

In essence, I am proposing to create two Canvas shells that would contain the material found in traditional textbooks for English R105 and English R108. For the Canvas shells, I will compile primary literary texts and material that contextualizes these texts. In addition, I will create content pages and videos to supplement material that is not available through OER or material that is underdeveloped in the OER textbooks currently available.

Currently, the English Department is striving to create OER and ZTC options for all its English courses. English R101 has a lending library that enables free access to the common textbook for all students. In addition, OER textbook options and ZTC courses exist for both English R101 and English R102. This proposal will enable both English R105 and English R108 to join the list of English ZTC courses.

English R105: British Literature II is a 3-unit course. It surveys the literature of the British Isles from the late eighteenth century to the late twentieth century, ranging from the early Romantic period to the Postmodern era. Students study these works within the political, historical, and cultural trends of the periods represented. English R108: American Literature II is also a 3-unit course. As with English R105, English R108 is a survey of literature. Students study the literature of America from 1865 to the present with emphasis on significant writers from

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diverse cultures within the United States. As with English R105, texts studied in English R108 are examined within the political, historical, and cultural trends of the periods they represent. Both courses complement studies in humanities. Both courses attract students from throughout the district and beyond. Both English and non-English majors take these courses.

The typical textbook for English R105 and English R108 is *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (English R105) and *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (English R108). Because the courses cover such long periods of time, students typically buy multiple volumes of each text. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* costs about \$70.00. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* costs about \$100.00. Locating, evaluating, vetting, and supplementing OER material for English R105 and English R108 will greatly benefit students. Research has shown students using OER material tend to be more successful in their courses, and these students are more likely to continue their education and meet their larger educational goals (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office). These students only benefit, however, if the OER materials are appropriate and of high quality. Currently, some of the OER textbooks offered that would be suitable for English R105 and English R108 are still being finalized. Material is available, but it is incomplete or underdeveloped. To ensure the quality of the materials, time is necessary. This sabbatical will allow me the time to offer the best possible OER materials for English R105 and English R108 and to supplement the material necessary to increase student learning.

## **2. Rationale**

### **a. Supplementing Material for Student Success**

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In addition to locating, evaluating, and vetting OER material for English R105 and English R108, I will create material to supplement student learning. Even in advanced courses, many students still require additional instruction in writing and MLA format. Students also require supplementary material that helps them understand the primary texts and the context surrounding these texts. I will create instructional materials that can support student goals in English R105 and English R108. These materials will range from content pages and videos on historical time periods, biographical information about various authors, lessons on critical lenses, and clarification on MLA format. Although there are many short videos and various other types of content online that discuss the Romantic period or the Harlem Renaissance, for example, this content is not well-suited for English R105 and English R108. Information may be slightly off topic from the lessons explored in the course, videos may be unnecessarily long or inaccessible, or videos do not have appropriate subtitles or sound or visual quality. In addition, when instructors link to online content, they do not have control over the stability of the material. Content may be there one day and gone the next. These issues make it necessary to not only locate and evaluate OER materials for these courses, but also to create supplemental material to promote student success.

I have been teaching literature courses for Oxnard College for over six years. I have found it challenging to locate appropriate and stable online materials that are cost effective for English R105 and English R108. However, I recognize the need to locate, evaluate, and supplement free resources. Research has shown that “open educational resources give students more flexibility in learning, and research shows most students perform as well or better using open educational resource course materials compared with students using traditional textbooks” (California Community College Chancellor’s Office). Studies have also shown that students are more likely

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to remain enrolled in OER than in non-OER courses (Griffiths, Mislevy, and Wang). In addition, using OER materials creates a more inclusive classroom and leads to more opportunities for student engagement and participation, increasing student empowerment (Hays and Mallon 20).

b. Professional Development

Completing this sabbatical will enable me to spend time locating OER material. I will spend time locating access to primary text and reviewing OER textbooks for literature courses. I will spend time creating supplemental material to be used in these courses. These activities will expand my own professional development.

c. Value to the English Department

As stated earlier, one of the English Department goals is to create OER/ZTC courses for all English course listings. Completing this sabbatical will directly help the English Department come closer to its goal. This sabbatical project will also help individual faculty. The English Department practices course rotation in which faculty takes turns teaching the various literature courses offered. Creating a Canvas shell that houses OER and supplemental material for English R105 and English R108 will prove immensely helpful for the next faculty member who teaches these courses. Many times, English R105 and English R108 are offered online. Selecting materials and creating Canvas courses is an overwhelming task the first time one teaches a course. Sharing these materials with the English Department will lessen some of the burden of taking on a new course, therefore, promoting the department's goal of rotating the courses among faculty.

d. Value to the Community

Offering ZTC courses promotes equal access to higher education within the community. One

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more barrier to higher education will be removed. The community will benefit as more people will have access to higher education and to the opportunities this education brings.

### **3. Implementation**

#### **a. Implementation Procedure**

In January of 2024, I will begin researching OER textbooks and primary texts for English R105. After reviewing this material, I will list the material that could be used for English R105 and determine what supplementary content needs to be provided. Using the Course Outline of Record for English R105, I will also search for primary texts that can be used in English R105. My goal is to locate at least twenty-five primary texts for each course that can be used based on the instructor's discretion. These primary texts will include poetry, short stories, essays, novels, and plays. In February, I will begin creating the supplementary content. Beginning in March, I will begin to look for OER textbooks for English R108. As with English R105, I will make a list of appropriate materials and determine what supplementary content needs to be provided for English R108. Using the Course Outline of Record for English R108, I will also search for primary texts that can be used in English R108. In April, I will begin to create the supplementary content for English R108. In May, I will upload these materials into a Canvas shell.

#### **b. Projected Results and Dissemination**

At the conclusion of this sabbatical project, I will have created two Canvas shells that will be available to the English Department. These shells will contain OER materials and links to primary texts to enable English R105 and English R108 to be OER/ZTC. The Canvas shells will also contain content on historical context, authors, and other necessary supplementary material that will promote student success.

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**Timeline:**

**January:** In January, I will spend time researching OER materials and textbooks for English R105. This will be a time-consuming task. One of the benefits of OER materials is that instructors can mix and revise OER material to better meet the student learning and course outcomes of a specific course. I will use this month to locate, read, evaluate, and if necessary, mix and revise OER materials for English R105. I will also use this time to locate free primary texts available online. These texts will include links to the texts and when available, audio recordings. My goal to is to locate at least twenty-five primary texts for each course that can be used based on the instructor's discretion.

**February:** After reviewing the available OER material for English R105, I will determine what supplementary content pages and/or videos need to be created. I will use February to create this material.

**March:** In March, I will spend time research OER materials and textbooks for English R108. I will use this month to locate, read, evaluate, and if necessary, mix and revise OER materials for English R108. I will also use this time to locate primary texts available for free online. These texts will include links to the texts and when available, audio recordings. As with English R105, my goal to is to locate at least twenty-five primary texts that include poetry, short stories, essays, novels, and plays.

**April:** After reviewing the available OER material for English R108, I will determine what supplementary content pages and/or videos need to be created. I will use the month of April to create this material.

**May:** In May, I will upload the material discovered and created into two Canvas shells: one for English R105 and one for English R108.

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**August:** In August, I will share the Canvas shells with the English Department. Faculty will be able to use these OER and supplementary materials when teaching English R105 or English R108. In addition, some of the materials gathered and created will be useful for other English courses. Faculty will be able to determine for themselves what material will benefit their courses and their students.

**4. Length of Service and Contributions to the District**

Both my masters and doctorate degrees are in English. The emphasis for my doctorate is in American literature, nineteenth century with additional emphasis on British literature. I was hired August of 2016. Throughout my six years as a faculty member, I have served on several committees: Program Evaluation Committee and Sabbatical Committee. I have also represented English for Academic Senate. I am an active member of the English Department. This will be my first time submitted for a sabbatical.

Works Cited

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. "Open Educational Resources." *California Community Colleges*, 2022, <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Open-Education-Resources>.

Griffiths, R., J. Mislevy, and S. Wang. "Encouraging Impacts of an Open Education Resource Degree Initiative on College Students' Progress to Degree." *Higher Education*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00817-9>.

Hays, Lauren, and Melissa Mallon. "Using OER to Promote Inclusion in Higher Education Institutions." *Currents in Teaching & Learning*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2021, pp. 20-33. *Currents in Teaching & Learning Archive*, <https://www.worcester.edu/currents-in-teaching-and-learning/currents-in-teaching-learning-archive/>.