OER Awareness and Adoption Trends in US Higher Education through the COVID-19 Pandemic

Mon Oct 18, 1:45 PM EDT

Julia Seaman, Bay View Analytics

OVERVIEW

- Introduction

- Pre-pandemic Growth of OER

- COVID-19 impact

- The Future of OER

POLL QUESTIONS   Q&A AT END

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Introduction to Bay View Analytics

Bay View Analytics offers a comprehensive suite of consulting services in survey design and statistical research. Our services build on nearly two decades of research design, sampling, survey design, and statistical analysis expertise.
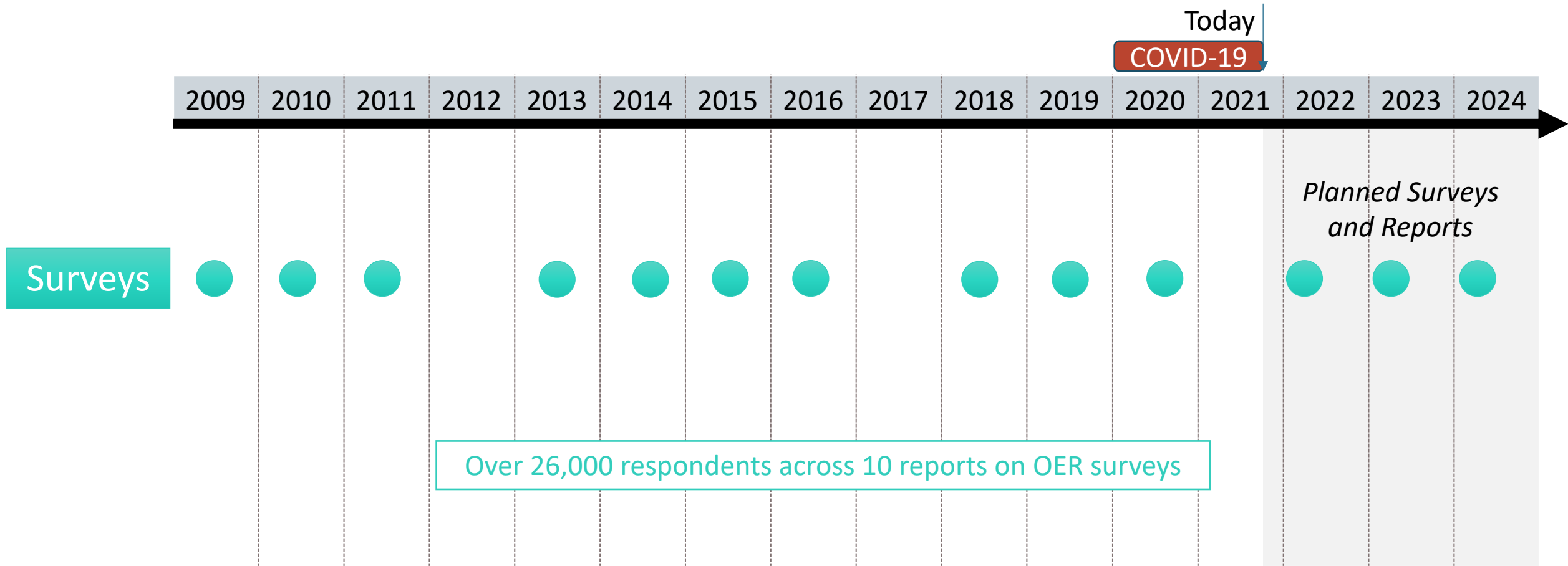
Julia Seaman, Ph.D.
Director of Research
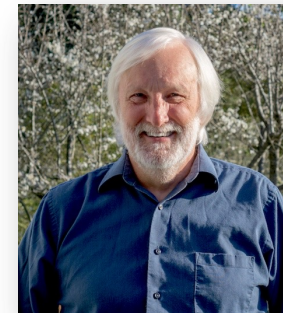
Jeff Seaman, Ph.D.
Director

We have conducted higher education surveys for over a decade

Today

COVID-19

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |

Surveys

Planned Surveys and Reports

Over 26,000 respondents across 10 reports on OER surveys

Survey Goals and Targeted Respondents

Goal of Surveys

- To understand the role of OER in Higher Education

- To quantify perceptions and awareness of OER

Respondents

- Higher Education Admins, Faculty, and Chief Academic Officers

- Nationally representative for geography and type of institution

Project supported by   WILLIAM + FLORA Hewlett Foundation   OLC ONLINE LEARNING CONSORTIUM   Pearson   ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATION   KAPLAN UNIVERSITY

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SURVEY QUESTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Over the last 7 reports, similar questions were asked year to year to allow trends to be examined.

Definitions used in surveys

Open Educational Resources (OER): *OER is defined as "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 re-purposing by others." Unlike traditionally copyrighted material, these resources are available for "open" use, which means users can edit, modify, customize, and share them.*

Licensing Types

Public Domain: *A designation for content that is not protected by any copyright law or other restriction and may be freely copied, shared, altered, and republished by anyone.*

Creative Commons: *Open license that gives everyone from individual authors to governments and institutions a simple, standardized way to grant copyright permissions to their creative work, provided by Creative Commons.*

POLL QUESTION 1

How much do you think OER Awareness has changed since the 2014-15 academic year?

a) Declined

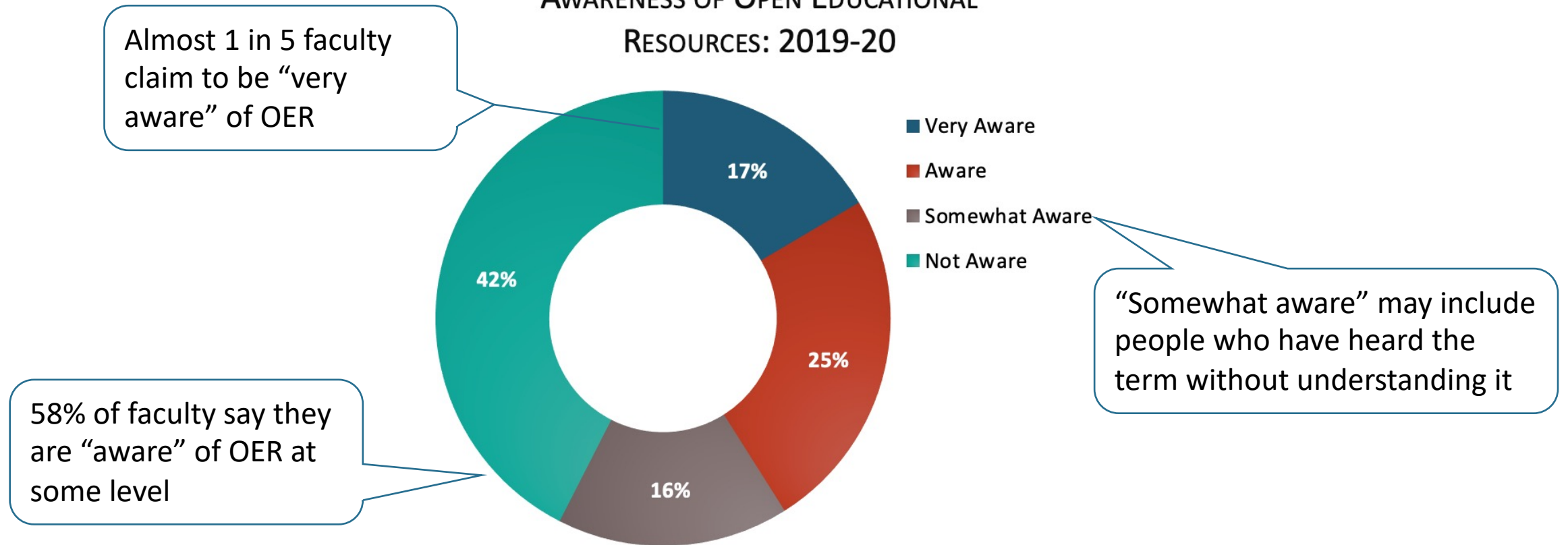b) Steady

c) Increased 10%

d) Increased 20%

e) Increased 30%

PRE-PANDEMIC GROWTH OF OER

PAST AWARENESS FOR OER

For Fall 2020, the majority of faculty claim some level of awareness for OER

Almost 1 in 5 faculty claim to be "very aware" of OER

"Somewhat aware" may include people who have heard the term without understanding it

58% of faculty say they are "aware" of OER at some level

Awareness of Open Educational Resources: 2019-20

Very Aware — 17%
Aware — 25%
Somewhat Aware — 16%
Not Aware — 42%

OER AWARENESS ON ITS OWN MAY NOT BE A GREAT MEASUREMENT

AWARENESS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: 2019-20

- Very Aware
- Aware
- Somewhat Aware
- Not Aware

17%
25%
16%
42%

Can we trust these answers?
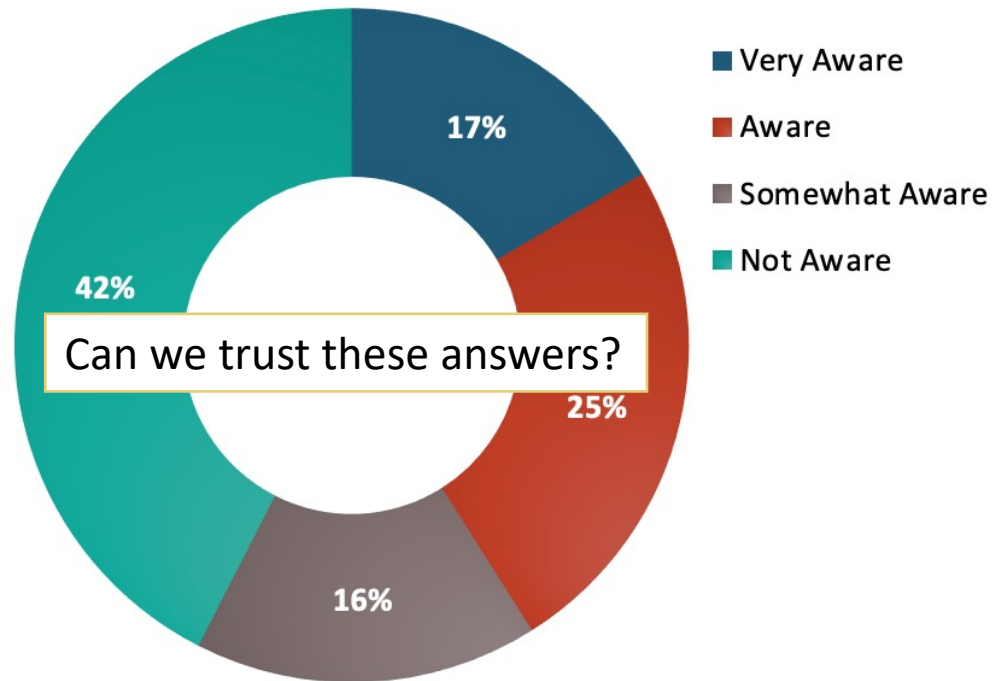
Faculty who are "Aware" of OER:
- May confuse it with any free online materials
- May confuse it with "open source" materials

Therefore, this question alone may be imprecise.

An **improved measurement** for OER Awareness is to require combination of **both OER Awareness and Creative Commons Awareness**.
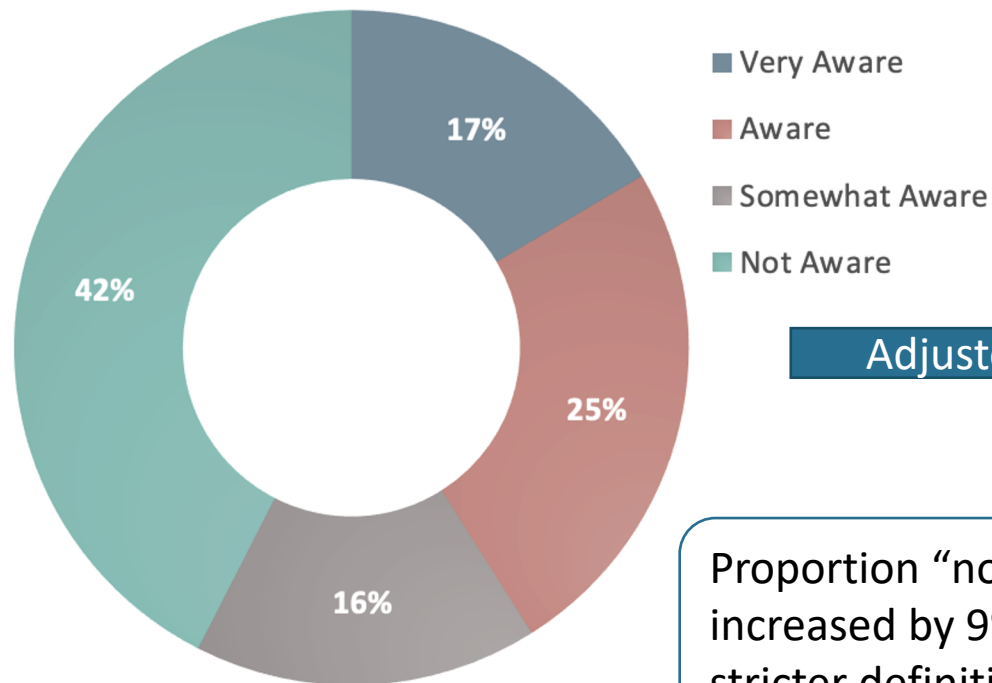
Respondents who report that they are unaware of Creative Commons licensing are removed from the "Aware" categories, creating a stricter index of OER awareness

USING THE STRICTER DEFINITION, JUST UNDER HALF OF FACULTY ARE "AWARE" OF OER

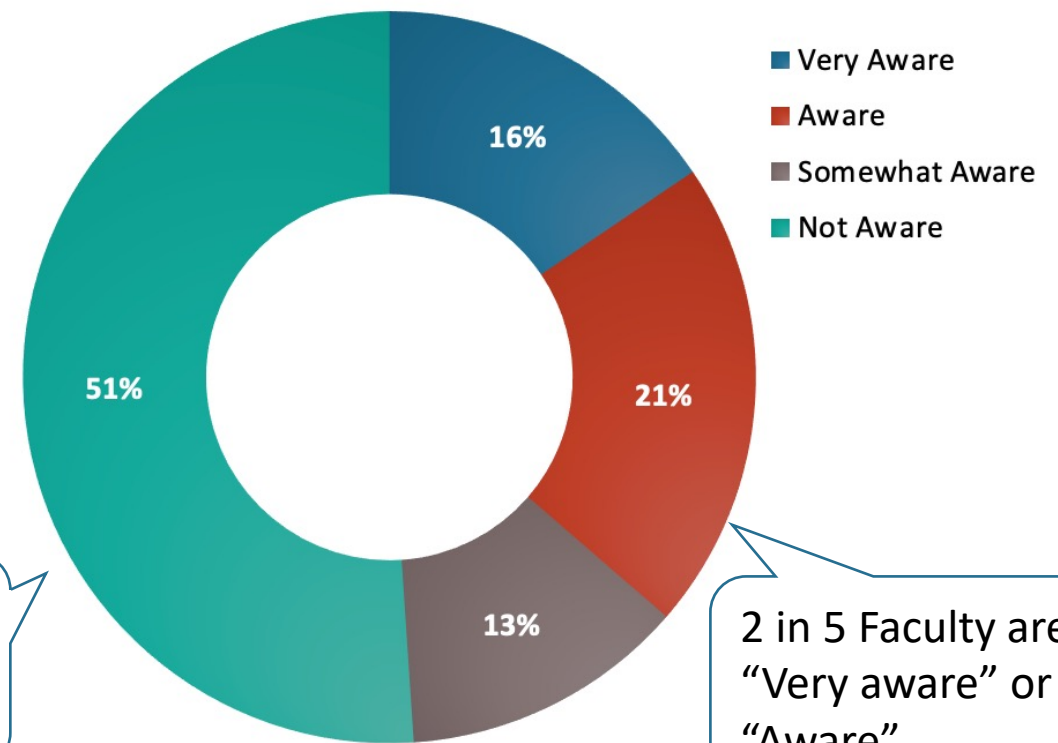AWARENESS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: 2019-20

- Very Aware
- Aware
- Somewhat Aware
- Not Aware

17%

25%

42%

16%

Adjusted

Proportion "not aware" increased by 9% at this stricter definition

AWARENESS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND CREATIVE COMMONS 2019-20

- Very Aware
- Aware
- Somewhat Aware
- Not Aware

16%

21%

13%

51%

2 in 5 Faculty are "Very aware" or "Aware"
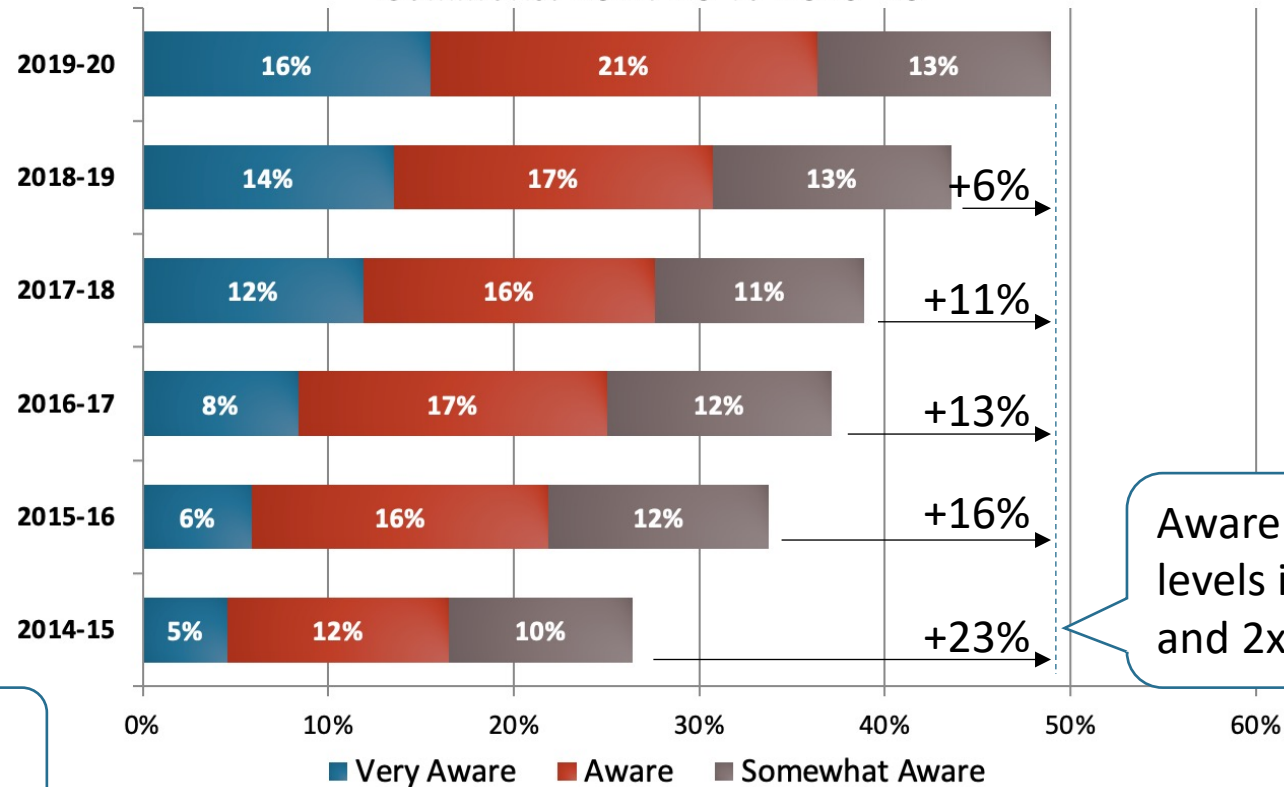
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OER AWARENESS HAS GROWN YEAR OVER YEAR, THOUGH GAINS MAY BE SLOWING

"I have started using OER materials because the cost of publishers' materials has become prohibitive for my students."

"I lean towards OER textbooks as I work with a low income population and they simply cannot afford the textbooks…. OER gives them a huge advantage. The downside of course is that the supplemental materials are not as good."

Cost is a commonly cited factor for OER use

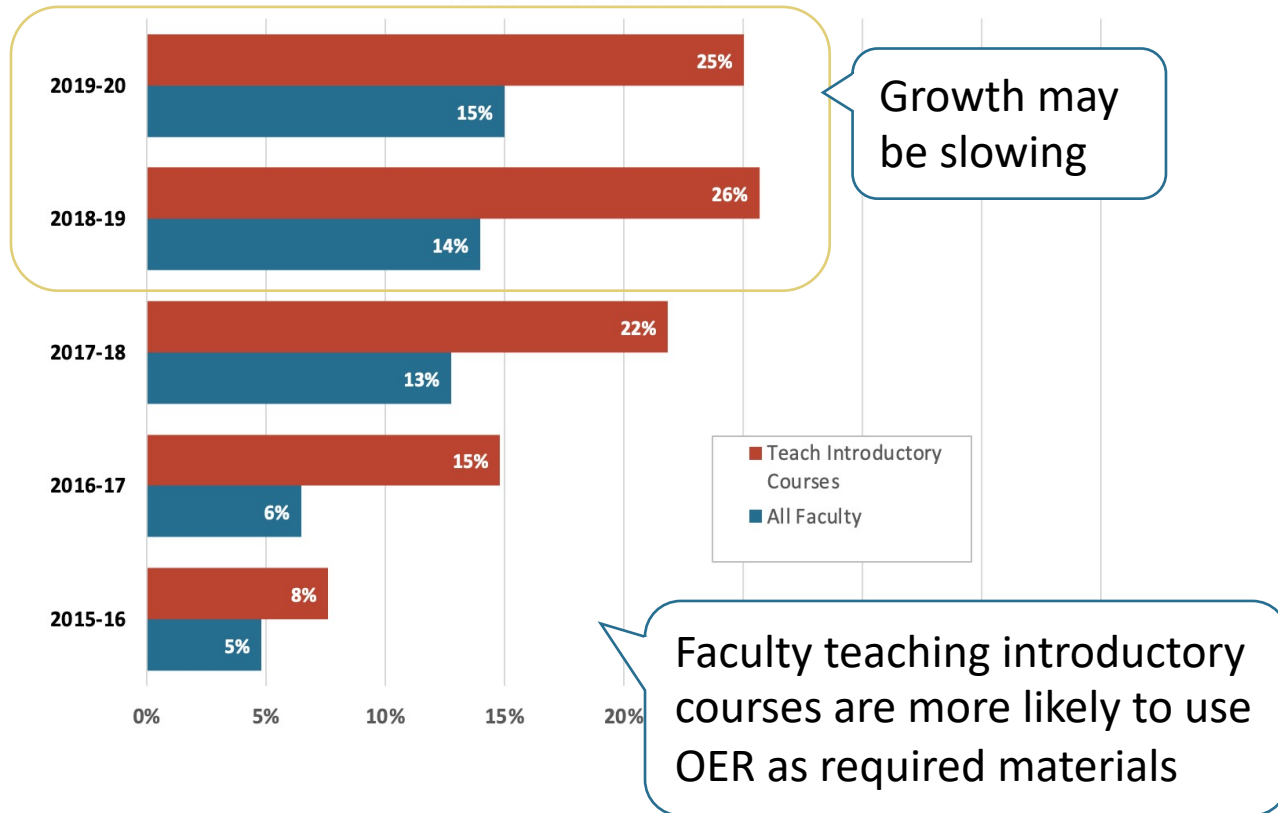**AWARENESS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND CREATIVE COMMONS: 2014-15 TO 2019-20**

Year	Very Aware	Aware	Somewhat Aware	
2019-20	16%	21%	13%	
2018-19	14%	17%	13%	+6%
2017-18	12%	16%	11%	+11%
2016-17	8%	17%	12%	+13%
2015-16	6%	16%	12%	+16%
2014-15	5%	12%	10%	+23%

Legend: ■ Very Aware ■ Aware ■ Somewhat Aware

Question 1: How much do you think OER Awareness has changed since the 2014-15 academic year?
• ~~Declined~~
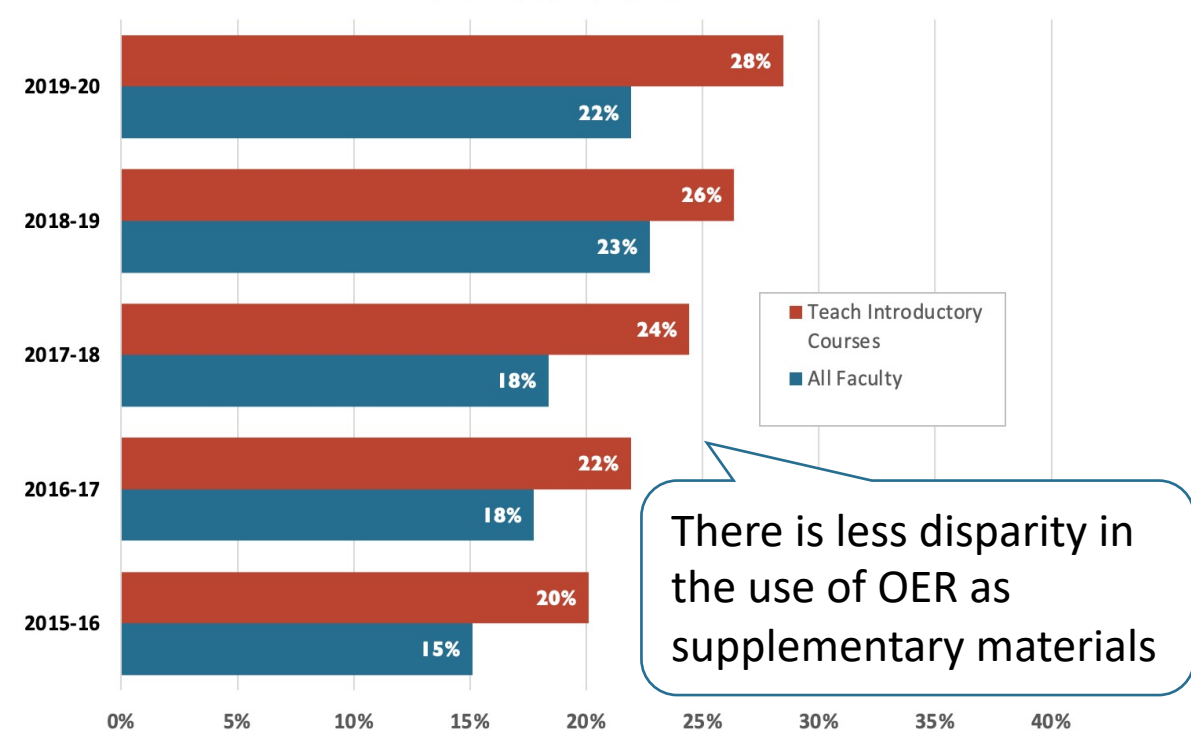• ~~Steady~~
• ~~Increased 10%~~
• Increased 20%
• ~~Increased 30%~~

Awareness grew and improved as levels increased 3x for "very aware" and 2x for "aware" from 2014

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OER Growth corresponds to increased use of OER materials in courses

Used OER in Any Course as Required Material:
2015-16 to 2019-20

Growth may be slowing

Faculty teaching introductory courses are more likely to use OER as required materials

Used OER in Any Course as Supplemental Material:
2015-16 to 2019-20

There is less disparity in the use of OER as supplementary materials

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Conclusions

- OER awareness and use has grown year over year
  - However, confusion remains about what OER is, and how it can be found
- OER is a tool aligned with current efforts to reduce costs, improve opportunities for marginalized students, and provide materials that follow newer teaching standards offering adaptable educational materials

"There is a broad, vague system-wide statement in favor of OERs, but there does not seem to be actual teeth or real support for it."

"I'm not entirely clear as to how OER and Educational Fair Use overlap, and while I am well aware of both concepts, I suspect that most of my colleagues are quite unaware of them."

"Students learn differently and are influenced by different factors in terms of access to Wi-Fi, reliable computers, and finances which impact their success. As often as possible providing students a chance to choose their medium for materials has paid off by giving students more agency in their learning."
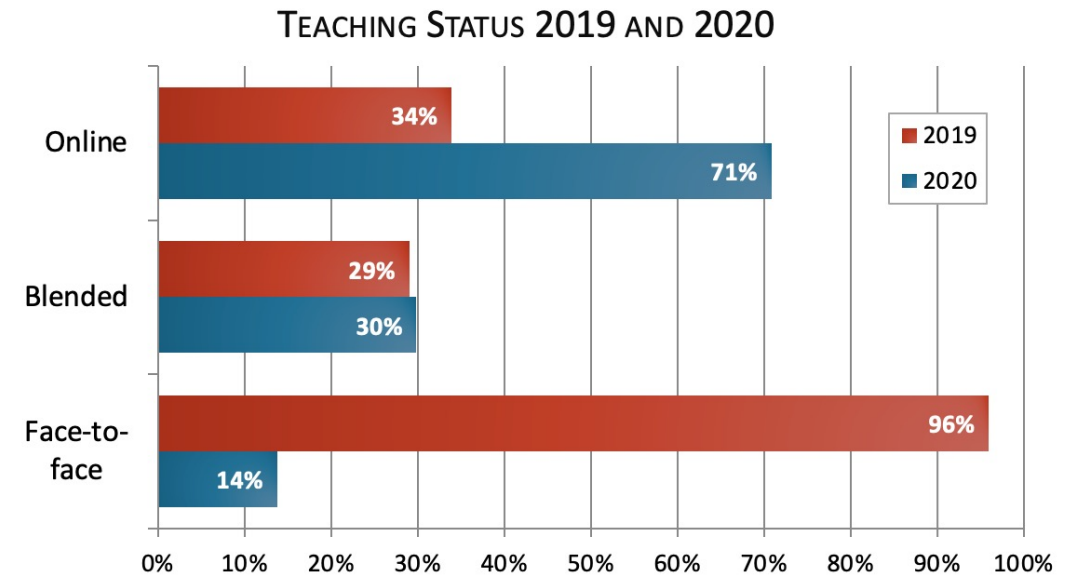
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COVID-19

Help or Hindrance for OER?

What proportion of faculty taught face-to-face in Fall 2020?

a) 0%

b) 15%

c) 30%

d) 45%

e) 60%

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PANDEMIC SHIFT TO ONLINE INSTRUCTION HAD FAR REACHING IMPACT FOR COURSES

- Fall 2020 term saw a major shift away from face-to-face to online classrooms
- The change in teaching status had a large impact on the type and use of classroom materials

TEACHING STATUS 2019 AND 2020

Legend: 2019, 2020

Online: 34% (2019), 71% (2020)
Blended: 29% (2019), 30% (2020)
Face-to-face: 96% (2019), 14% (2020)

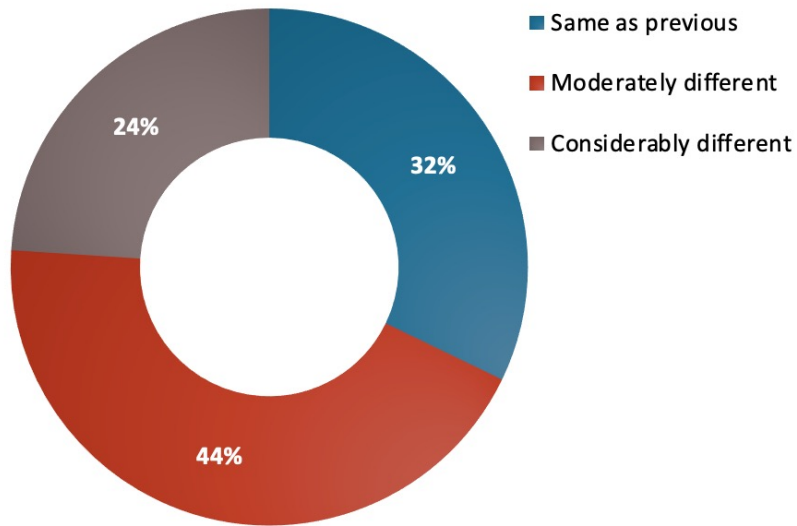0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Question 2: What proportion of faculty taught face-to-face in Fall 2020?
- 0%
- 15%
- 30%
- 45%
- 60%

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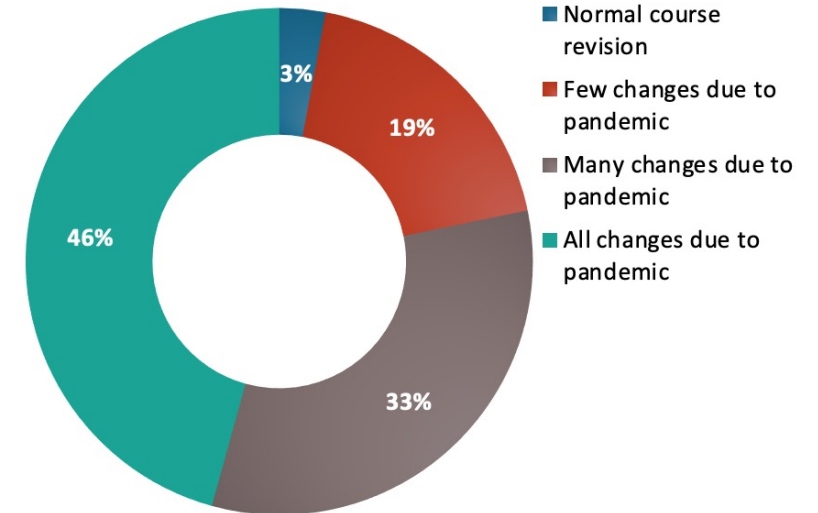
PANDEMIC DROVE COURSE CHANGES FOR FALL 2020

HOW DOES THE VERSION OF THIS COURSE COMPARE PREVIOUS TERMS?

- ■ Same as previous
- ■ Moderately different
- ■ Considerably different

24%
32%
44%

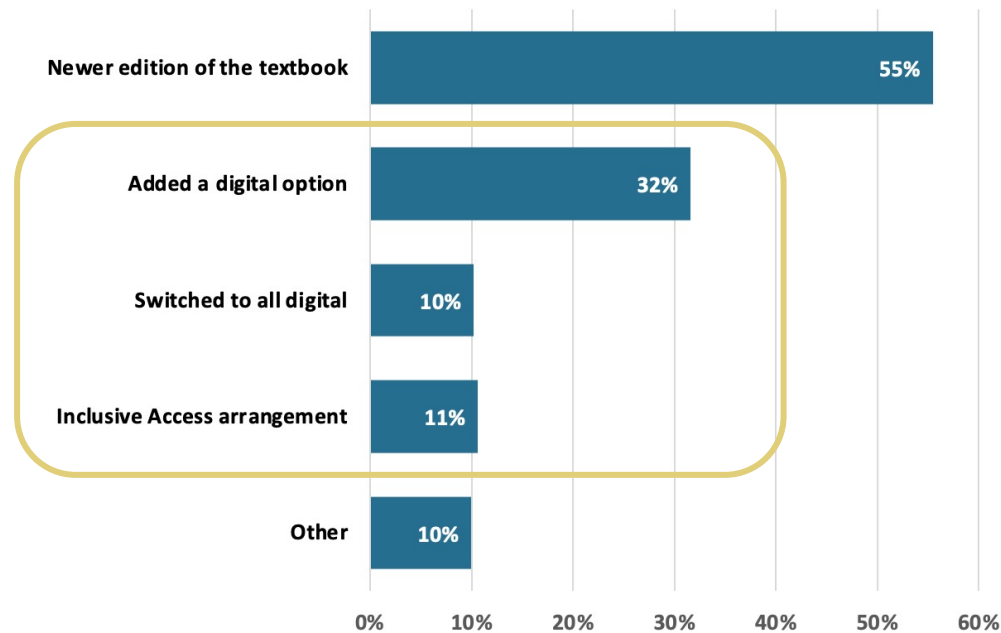2/3 of faculty stated their courses were moderately or considerably different.

Only 3% of changes were normal revisions – **97% of changes were due to the pandemic,** with almost half entirely pandemic-induced.

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE CHANGES TO THE COURSE?

- ■ Normal course revision
- ■ Few changes due to pandemic
- ■ Many changes due to pandemic
- ■ All changes due to pandemic

3%
19%
46%
33%

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MANY TEACHERS UPDATED TEXTBOOKS WITH DIGITAL OPTIONS

CHANGES TO TEXTBOOK FOR FALL 2020

| Category	Percentage
Newer edition of the textbook	55%
Added a digital option	32%
Switched to all digital	10%
Inclusive Access arrangement	11%
Other	10%

Use of newer editions are considered normal changes year over year

While most faculty used the same textbook as previously, many added digital options for Fall 2020
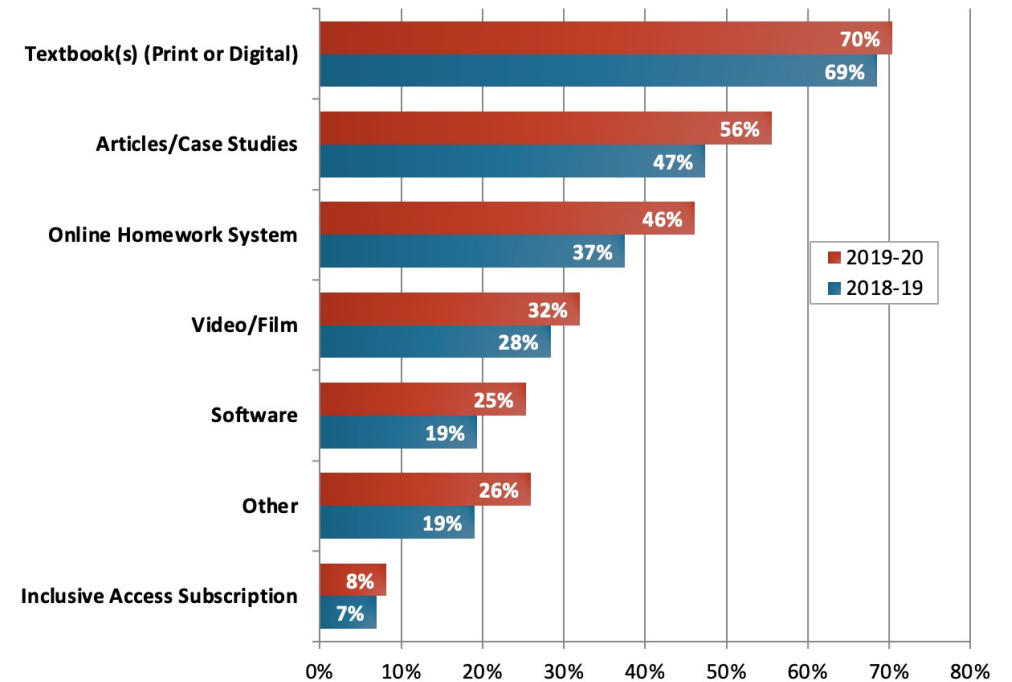
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THERE WERE MINIMAL CHANGES TO THE REQUIRED TEXTBOOK OR REQUIRED MATERIALS

CHANGES TO THE PRIMARY TEXTBOOK FOR FALL 2020

- Same as previous — 87%
- Different from previous — 10%
- Other — 2%
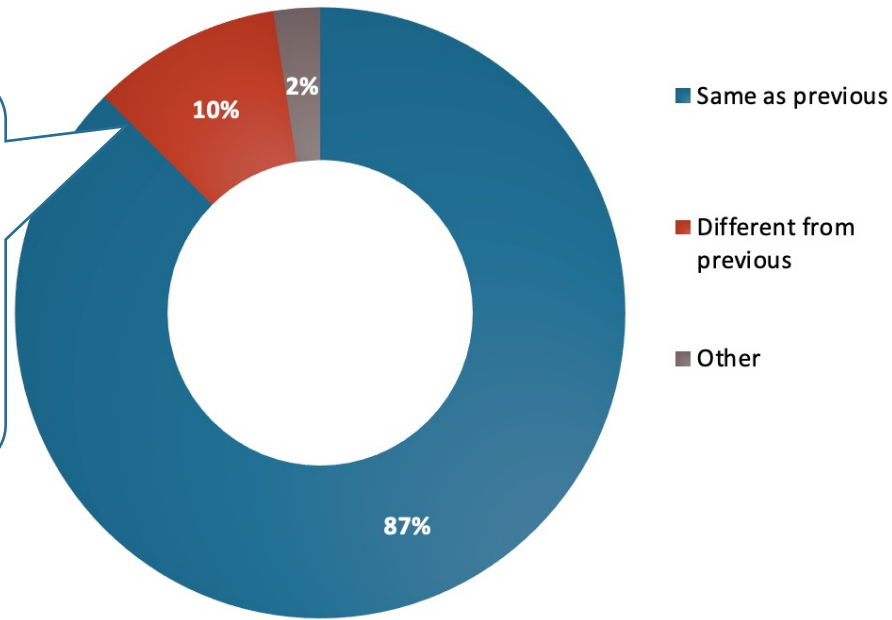
Only 1 in 10 faculty reported a change to their textbook

PROPORTION OF FACULTY REQUIRING PARTICULAR MATERIALS FOR THEIR COURSE: 2018-19 AND 2019-20

Material	2019-20	2018-19
Textbook(s) (Print or Digital)	70%	69%
Articles/Case Studies	56%	47%
Online Homework System	46%	37%
Video/Film	32%	28%
Software	25%	19%
Other	26%	19%
Inclusive Access Subscription	8%	7%

There were slight changes in materials, with increases in non-textbook options

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INSTITUTIONS WERE LARGELY HANDS-OFF REGARDING OPTIONS AND INITIATIVES FOR UPDATING COURSE MATERIALS

STEPS INSTITUTIONS TOOK TO PROVIDE COURSE MATERIALS
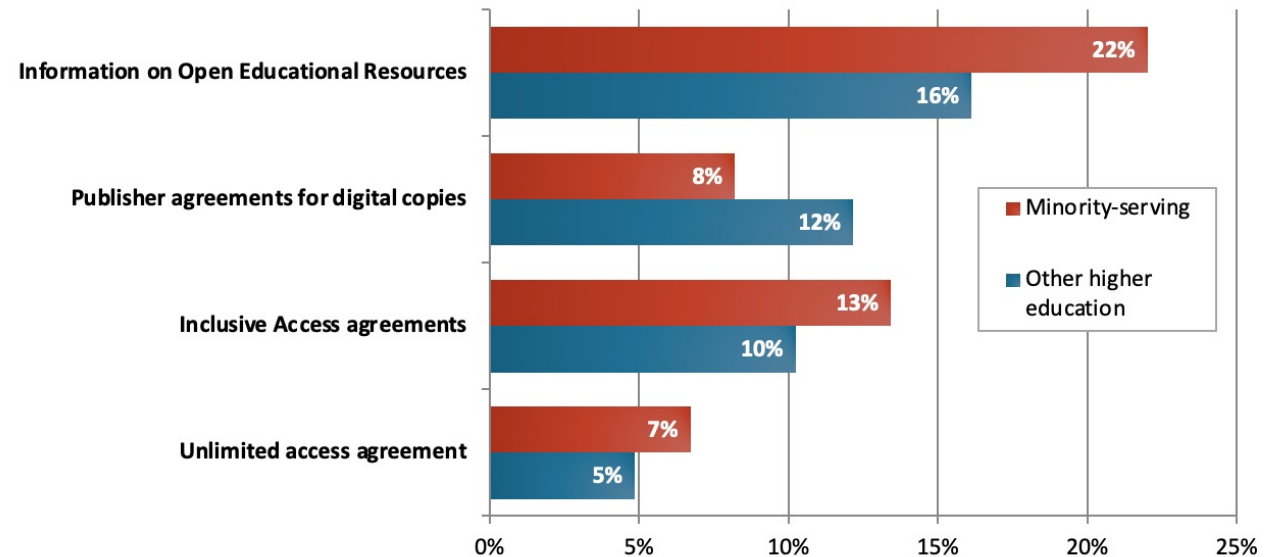
- Information on Open Educational Resources: 18%
- Publisher agreements for digital copies: 11%
- Inclusive Access agreements: 11%
- Other: 10%
- Unlimited access agreement: 5%

STEPS INSTITUTIONS TOOK TO PROVIDE COURSE MATERIALS

- Information on Open Educational Resources: Minority-serving 22%, Other higher education 16%
- Publisher agreements for digital copies: Minority-serving 8%, Other higher education 12%
- Inclusive Access agreements: Minority-serving 13%, Other higher education 10%
- Unlimited access agreement: Minority-serving 7%, Other higher education 5%

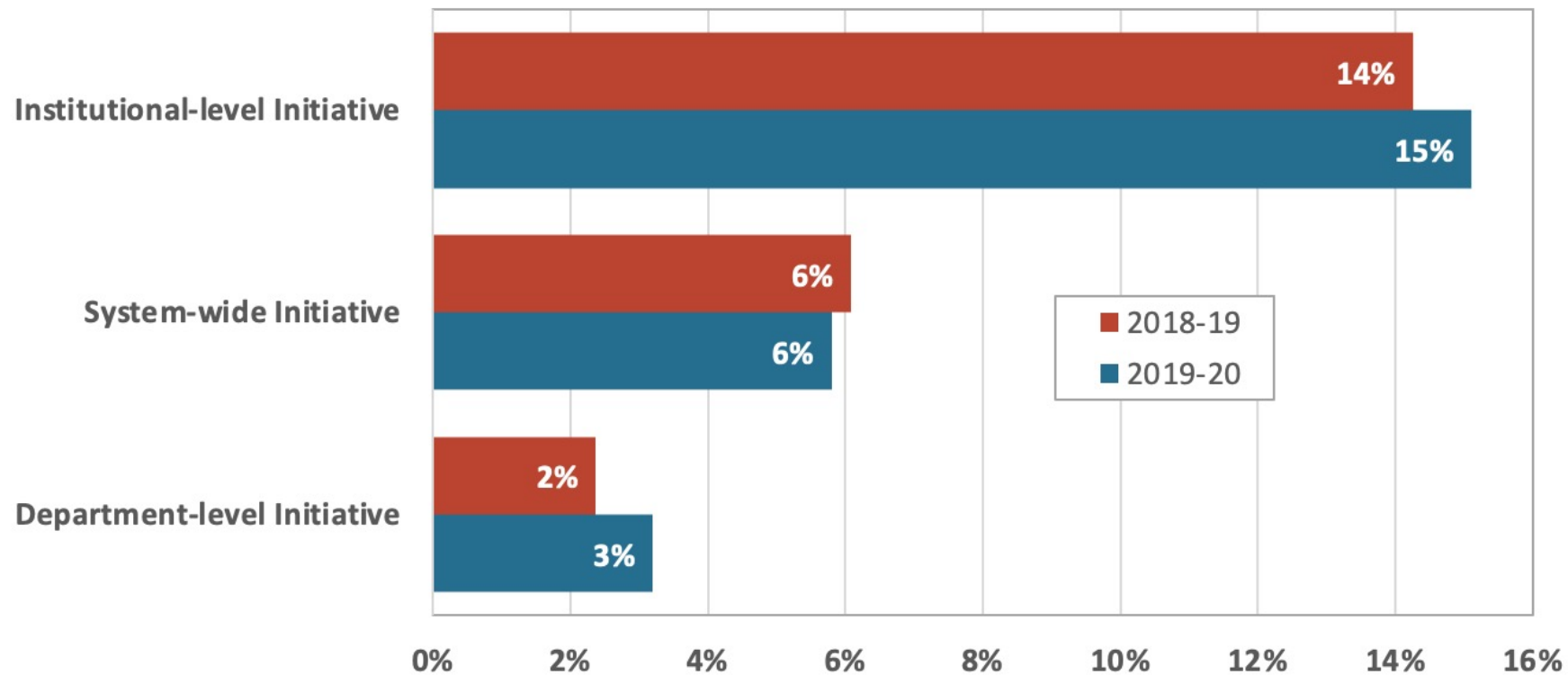Legend: Minority-serving / Other higher education

Only a small number of institutions helped faculty with course materials; Information on OER was most common

Minority-serving institutions were slightly more likely to provide information on OER

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FACULTY AWARENESS OF OER INITIATIVES BARELY CHANGED COMPARED TO PRIOR YEARS

OVERALL FACULTY AWARENESS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE INITIATIVES 2018-19 AND 2019-20

- Institutional-level Initiative: 2018-19 = 14%, 2019-20 = 15%
- System-wide Initiative: 2018-19 = 6%, 2019-20 = 6%
- Department-level Initiative: 2018-19 = 2%, 2019-20 = 3%

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CONCLUSIONS

- The COVID-19 pandemic forced many classrooms to shift to online instruction quickly

- Majority of faculty adapted by changing existing courses, and supplementing with digital materials to the same textbooks as prior years

- Institutions mostly took a hands-off approach, with some providing information on alternatives, but faculty — either acting alone, or as a committee — made the final decisions

- Overall, there was limited impact to OER awareness and use

"Nobody likes change; most people only change when forced to, and that's what the pandemic has done. Some things (activities, assignments, interactions, etc.) were rendered difficult, impossible, or dangerous by the pandemic, but some new ways of teaching have arisen from necessity, some of which will be continued even after all-online teaching is no longer required. This is perhaps the one silver lining in this very dark cloud of pandemic disease."

WHERE WE ARE GOING

THE FUTURE ROLE OF OER

WHAT FACTORS IMPACT AND DRIVE OER ADOPTION?

Factor associated with OER adoption	Recent Changes in 2020	Impact
Faculty with online teaching experience were more likely to adopt OER	Faculty with experience teaching online has doubled	⬆
Faculty with experience using digital materials were more likely to adopt OER	Substantially more faculty used and like digital materials	⬆
Faculty making changes to their courses and willing to try new approaches were more likely to adopt OER	Pandemic teaching exposed faculty to new ways of teaching that they plan to continue using post-pandemic	⬆
Faculty with the luxury of time searching for and evaluating OER were more likely to adopt	Pandemic course adoption and revisions were quick and chaotic and outside normal course revision pathways	⬇
Faculty who do not value supplemental resources (test banks, online homework, etc.) were more likely to adopt OER	More faculty used courseware provided-supplemental materials than ever before for pandemic teaching	⬇
Cost has always been the driving force for faculty OER adoption	Commercial publishers massively increased their inclusive access and similar programs, often with discounts	⬇

WHAT WILL THE NEXT SURVEYS SHOW?

How will this unique experience impact the future directions of teaching and learning?

How many teachers intend to continue using these techniques post-pandemic?

How has the commercial digital curricular landscape changed?

We expect the full impact of the pandemic may not be known for years to come.

POLL QUESTION 3

What is your expectation for the level of OER adoption next year?

a) Increase over this year

b) Stay the same

c) Decrease

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Q&A
Thank You!

INFO@BAYVIEWANALYTICS.COM

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