VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

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Open Educational Resource Policy

A. Purpose

The Virginia Military Institute encourages the creation, use, adoption, sharing, and ongoing maintenance of Open Educational Resource (hereafter, "OER") materials in accordance with established curriculum standards for educational purposes. The goals of this policy are to provide students with high-quality learning materials that are openly licensed to augment and/or replace costly textbooks and course materials, to create sustainable academic resources for students, faculty, and staff, and to provide opportunities for professional growth of faculty and staff.

This policy provides guidance to faculty in achieving the following outcomes through the utilization of OER at VMI:

- Improve student success through increased access and affordability.
- Improve teaching efficiency and effectiveness through the ability to focus, analyze, augment, and evolve course materials directly aligned to course learning outcomes.

B. Definition of OER

Open Educational Resources (OER) are freely and publicly available 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. OER include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

C. OER Policy Statement

VMI shall make use of OER materials in accordance with the provisions of the VMI Intellectual Property Policy (General Order 14); the Creative Commons licensing standards; the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1986; applicable state and federal copyright laws (especially § 23.1-1308 of the Code of Virginia); accepted best practices of the OER community, including the definition of OER listed above; and VMI academic policies and standards.

VMI will provide support for and encourage recognition of OER use, adaptation, and creation as a meaningful professional endeavor. Such projects may be considered scholarly work by departments on a case-by-case basis. Faculty who creates or modify open textbooks and other resources are encouraged to apply for funding under current programs. The creation of open textbooks is eligible for Institute support through course release and/or established funds, such as the faculty development fund and faculty leave.

In choosing textbooks, faculty should be aware of OER course materials in their discipline, and they should seriously consider adoption of OER materials for their courses as appropriate.

Instructors should communicate their adoption of OER to the VMI Bookstore, along with any desire for the Bookstore to sell printed copies of the OER, if they exist.

D. Licensing OER/Legal Context

VMI's intellectual property and copyright policies, given in General Order 14 (Intellectual Property Policy) and General Order 65 (Digital Copyright Compliance Policy), govern rights and requirements for works created during the course of employment, including ownership, open licensing, and public release.

Faculty or staff who create original content that is incorporated into an OER course or create OER of other types or formats are encouraged to place the most open license possible, such as the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY) (or equivalent for software) on such content before or at the time it is introduced into the course. Faculty adopting OER are encouraged to use the least restrictive license possible. It is the faculty member's responsibility to ensure that such content is eligible for and meets the standards for each license. Best practices for incorporation of third-party works (permission, fair use, etc.) must be followed as is required by U.S. Copyright Law.

E. OER Procedures and Responsibilities

As needed, an ad hoc committee on Open Educational Resources shall be formed to review procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with applicable policies (GO14, GO 65, and other Institute policies and Academic Regulations}, procedures of the Institute, and federal and state laws, including Fair Use. Administration and management efforts shall include advocating for the creation of OER to be recognized as meaningful scholarly and professional endeavor.

Faculty, staff, and cadets using, adapting, and creating OER are responsible for obtaining permission for incorporating cadet-created works into OER or an OER course. Employees of VMI are responsible for following relevant laws and policies regarding accessibility of learning materials for persons with disabilities. VMI will provide guidance and agreed-upon levels of support to achieve accessibility requirements. For OER-designated courses {if adopted} or OER-created content, faculty are to use only content that adheres to the following OER Community standards: Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, and Redistribute, which includes content in the public domain. It is the faculty member's responsibility to ensure that content incorporated into OER or OER courses meets the licensing standards and is properly attributed.

In accordance with § 23.1-1308 of the Code of Virginia, department scheduling officers, the registrar, and bookstore personnel shall identify conspicuously in the course registration system, as soon as practicable after the necessary information becomes available, each course for which the instructor exclusively uses no-cost course materials or low-cost course materials. In the Commonwealth, "low cost" is defined as any Open Educational Resource materials.

F. OER Training and Professional Development

Librarians serve a central, collaborative education and training role for faculty, staff, or students wishing to use, create, or adapt OER or to incorporate OER into a course. Among the support provided by designated librarians are facilitating training on OER creation and use of existing materials; understanding intellectual property, copyright, and open licenses; assisting faculty in the location, curation, and marking of OER content; advising regarding public discoverability; consultation on OER eligibility and attribution; and collaboration with Commonwealth schools that have existing training.

G. OER Technical Format, Archiving and Discovery

OER and OER courses shall be published in electronic formats to permit free, public, and preferably easily editable access to the content, course content, course materials, and any supplemental materials. OER must comply with digital accessibility laws. OER and OER courses shall be publicly shared in a stable, publicly accessible location and utilize naming and/or metadata conventions to enable discovery within and beyond Virginia. Courses shared as truly open access courses, where not only can all individuals involved in a course (including cadets) alter and edit content, but where courses can be taken and used whole cloth by other institutions, should follow the guidelines corresponding to the website utilized.

H. OER Quality Assurance

As subject matter experts, faculty are responsible for selecting, adapting, or creating OER in alignment with course learning outcomes.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

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