



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Nov. 7, 2017

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### **Texas Tech University Libraries Encourage Open Access Materials**

University Libraries joined the Open Textbook Network and awarded professors for open access teaching materials.

[Texas Tech University Libraries](#) is a new member of the [Open Textbook Network](#) (OTN), an initiative to lower the cost of textbooks through open access materials.

According to the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, open access is the free, immediate availability of research articles online, coupled with the rights to use these articles fully in the digital environment.

[Collegeboard.org](#) lists the average cost of course materials as \$1,200 per year. Studies have shown that courses with open access textbooks and other educational materials tend to have higher enrollment rates, retention rates and overall student success.

Wakefield Research's Survey of students shows 85 percent of new college or university students had not purchased college textbooks by the first day of class or decided not to buy the textbooks at all. According to the study, about 91 percent of students who did not purchase the materials cited costs as the issue and half of those students admitted that their grades went down because they did not have the necessary materials.

Dean of University Libraries Bella Gerlich said that by adopting textbooks from the OTN for their courses, faculty can have a direct impact on offsetting the cost of textbooks for their students.

"Through our membership, which consists of more than 500 members, Texas Tech instructors can easily find affordable, quality textbook solutions that have not only been reviewed by faculty from a variety of colleges and universities to assess their quality," Gerlich said, "but also are funded, published and licensed to be freely used, adapted and distributed."

Gerlich adds that the Libraries will be hosting workshops on how to incorporate open access materials into courses and faculty interested in attending should contact Scholarly Communications Librarian Camille Thomas at [camille.thomas@ttu.edu](mailto:camille.thomas@ttu.edu) or at 806-834-5474.

Office of Communications and Marketing

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In addition to joining the OTN, the Libraries also introduced a new award to recognize faculty who have made their research open or used open access materials in their courses. It is intended to assist faculty while demonstrating the impact of their work.

The Open Access Award was given to an assistant, associate and full professor:

- D. Gilson of the [Department of English](#) was selected as the assistant professor recipient for authoring an open book, editing an open access journal and using open materials in creative writing instruction.
- Martin Binks of [Nutritional Sciences](#) was selected as the associate professor recipient for publishing multiple high-impact open access manuscripts, one of which was the journal Obesity Review's most downloaded article in 2016.
- Jacalyn Robert-McComb of the [Department of Kinesiology and Sport Management](#) was selected as the full professor recipient for publishing an open access article and scholarly book.

"This award will call me to focus on open access journals," McComb said. "Thank you for setting up this competition awarding faculty who pursue open-access publishers."

Winners were selected by the Libraries' Faculty Research Committee.

"This award will help me develop a digital humanities section in my advanced creative nonfiction course for fourth-year undergraduates," Gilson said. "Additionally, I plan on using this award to promote the open access literary journal I edit, "Lunch," and to rebrand it as an official publication of Texas Tech's English Department."

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