


# The Lymphatic System of the Dog: Translating and Transitioning to an Open Textbook

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## Abstract

This contribution is situated at the University of Saskatchewan, where Open Education Resources have been supported since 2014. During the pandemic we began the work of translating *The Lymphatic System of the Dog*, by Dr. Hermann Baum, into English. Originally published in 1918, Dr. Baum's book has been transitioned into Pressbooks, with the addition of ancillary resources. Balancing the legacy of Dr. Baum's research with our own innovations in assessment and design engages new generations of learners and practitioners. The benefits for faculty and students in designing and publishing openly must also be acknowledged. Locally designed and produced open education resources created with and by our university community is of significance to the academy. The adoption of open textbooks in university classes establishes a discourse and refinement of knowledge ensuring quality resources are designed and shared.

**Keywords:** open textbook, open education resources, OER, H5P, equitable access, catalysts of open, barriers to adoption



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## Introduction

In this paper we offer the story of our work together at the University of Saskatchewan to translate and adapt a seminal text that remains eminent after more than a century. Since 2014, open education practices at the University of Saskatchewan have dedicated instructional design support and collaboration. As well, the establishment of funds for the creation of open education resources and open pedagogy are available and may be utilized to encourage student assistance in open projects. Our work utilizing these resources to establish this open community of practice and sharing is available on the [USask OpenPress](#) site where our open textbooks and ancillary resources are designed with Pressbooks.

### *The Lymphatic System of the Dog*

In 2021, in the midst of the pandemic, we began the work of transitioning *The Lymphatic System of the Dog* by Dr. Hermann Baum from German to English and moving it into Pressbooks. A professor and veterinary radiation oncologist from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine led a team of graduate and undergraduate students for this project in collaboration with an instructional designer from the Distance Education Unit. First published in 1918, Dr. Baum's research continues to hold relevance today with veterinary oncology specialists in the staging and treating of canine cancer patients. The professor recognized the need to make this research accessible for new generations of English-speaking learners and practitioners throughout the world.

Dr. Baum's research took place before the existence of many of the veterinary specializations that are common today. Prior to the completion of our open project, the text was only accessible as the original German publication and referenced within an expensive anatomy textbook in English. Now, English speakers who may not have otherwise been able to access Dr. Baum's book through their library or find antique copies to purchase, may have equitable online access.

### Design and Editorial Choices

While many open textbooks exist in the discipline of veterinary medicine, none have been found that are similarly based on a work in the public domain with the need for translation to English from the previous century. Being unable to explore comparable works, design considerations for this open textbook centred on the instructional designer's experience with the Pressbooks and H5P tools. Alt text was also included with the open textbook images supporting an accessible design.

The need to revise Dr. Baum's 20<sup>th</sup> century writing with an anti-oppressive 21<sup>st</sup> century lens was not required as the book is more scientific and focused on canine anatomy. Dr. Baum's writing style was formal, and the professor chose to continue this throughout the translation process ensuring our work would complement his writing.

The professor identified the need to add additional pieces to the beginning of the open textbook to recognize the original author. An article about Dr. Baum, his life, and career was included. Dr. Baum's image was added with the article after permission was acquired. A chapter detailing the staging of canine cancer patients with the application of Dr. Baum's work was written by the professor. Also, a section of the contributors to the open textbook was included. These

necessary additions offer readers introductory information which ensures the open textbook remains meaningfully connected to the legacy of the original book.

### **Engagement and Innovation**

The importance of designing open educational resources that prioritizes engagement is outlined by UNESCO (2019) in their Recommendations on Open Educational Resources (OER):

the judicious application of OER, in combination with appropriate pedagogical methodologies, well-designed learning objects and the diversity of learning activities, can provide a broader range of innovative pedagogical options to engage both educators and learners to become more active participants in educational processes and creators of content as members of diverse and inclusive knowledge societies. (para. 27)

The professor ensured that space for innovations in assessment and design were prioritized for this project, while the instructional designer responded, offering options and guidance. In designing ancillary resources to supplement Dr. Baum's text, the team became active creators, making the time to learn to use the open H5P tools themselves. A set of H5P drag and drop activities were created with Dr. Baum's numerous original diagrams. Images gathered through the professor's clinical practice were the foundation for the design of an extensive set of H5P dialogue cards, which questions learners about the staging of the lymph nodes of canine patients.

The lack of ancillary resources is one of the criticisms as to why faculty may be slow to adopt open textbooks. Burgess (2017) noted that in consulting with faculty "one of the barriers to adoption that they identify is that resources they use from traditional publishers often come with additional components" (p. 231). Being able to easily share and demonstrate the features of our open textbook, with the connected ancillary resources, without the access paywalls established by for-profit publishers, is an opportunity to engage more faculty in the adoptions and adaptations of open textbooks.

Inspired by our collaboration and the capabilities of open technologies, the professor saw the need for a new H5P tool to be developed. Commissioned with an external web developer, ImageZoom was openly designed and is available for use. With this new tool, images of various sizes can be uploaded, and a smaller moveable magnification box overlay allows learners to scroll over any area of an image to see it in greater detail. This functionality means learners can better see the direction of the lymphatic drainage illustrated in Dr. Baum's intricate diagrams, which can assist in the treatment of canine cancer patients.

### **Catalysts of the Open Movement**

We often hear of the benefits of OER for students in higher education as consumers of knowledge. But, the benefits for faculty and students in designing openly must also be acknowledged. In their work on this project, the professor and the team of students gained a plethora of new technology skills and experiences that they can make use of throughout their careers. They have also become catalysts of the open movement, in their college and beyond, as they share their learning and stories of this open project and use their acquired skills to create additional OERs. As they go out into their local communities and larger society, the open movement beyond academia can flourish.

The conversations surrounding this project emboldens more faculty to participate in open education practices and creates space for students' participation in open textbook creation as well, ensuring new generations of faculty and students will continue this work. Burgess (2017), in describing a Faculty Fellows Program, recognized the critical role of faculty as OER advocates in institutions as being "the impetus an instructor needs to start exploring that for themselves" (p. 232). Lashley et al. (2017) described the OER sustainability cycle which situated students, administrators, and "As a creative force, instructors are at the heart of such a culture as they create and share resources, mentor one another, and work for the betterment of their peers and students with little resistance" (p. 215).

When students are required to use open textbooks in their classes, authored or adapted by their instructor and/or peers, it creates a relationship of knowledge engagement where texts can be discussed, and ideas refined based on valuable student insight. The surrounding discourse ensures open textbooks emerge with higher quality and greater learner relevance as new iterations are produced. It is invaluable to the open movement that students and instructors in higher education can consider their course texts as being socially constructed and negotiable.

### **The Shift Away from Publishers**

Locally designed and produced open textbooks created with and by our university community is a good thing to see and be a part of. This endeavour shifts faculty and students accessing open textbooks away from the control of publishers, who often work with rigid and top-down priorities. Annand and Jensen (2017) noted the continuation of the timeworn publishing model where "Publishers are thus primarily motivated by the needs of financial decision makers—faculty members—and not the purchasers" (p. 9). The work of OER within our institutions creates a valuable local publishing perspective with a responsive dynamic that commercially produced textbooks lack.

As we consider the story of this open textbook centred on Dr. Baum's 20<sup>th</sup> century research, we are ensuring his contributions to academia endure and remain accessible to 21<sup>st</sup> century practitioners. Combining good design and editorial choices with engagement opportunities and innovation ensures active participation by all involved. Our work catalyzes the open movement, shifting away from disconnected publishers, to inspire a needed local open publishing tradition in higher education.

### **Author's Contributions**

Kristine Dreaver-Charles' contribution is as follows:

90% of writing the draft  
60% of the editing

Monique Mayer's contribution is as follows:

10% of writing the draft  
40% of the editing

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### Ethics Statement

Ethical approval was not obtained for the work described in this article. A waiver was not received, and an ethics review was not applicable.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors do not declare any conflict of interest.

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