

Summer 2018

First-Year Seminar (Georgia Tech)

Lacy Hodges

Georgia Institute of Technology, lacy.hodges@gatech.edu

Fred Rascoe

Georgia Institute of Technology, fred.rascoe@gatech.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/fye-collections>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hodges, Lacy and Rascoe, Fred, "First-Year Seminar (Georgia Tech)" (2018). *First-Year Experience Grants Collections*. 2.
<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/fye-collections/2>

This Grants Collection is brought to you for free and open access by the First-Year Experience at GALILEO Open Learning Materials. It has been accepted for inclusion in First-Year Experience Grants Collections by an authorized administrator of GALILEO Open Learning Materials. For more information, please contact affordablelearninggeorgia@usg.edu.

Grants Collection

Georgia Institute of Technology



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OF GEORGIA



Lacy Hodges, Fred Rascoe, and Seth Porter

First-Year Seminar





Grants Collection

Affordable Learning Georgia Grants Collections are intended to provide faculty with the frameworks to quickly implement or revise the same materials as a Textbook Transformation Grants team, along with the aims and lessons learned from project teams during the implementation process.

Each collection contains the following materials:

- **Linked Syllabus**
 - The syllabus should provide the framework for both direct implementation of the grant team's selected and created materials and the adaptation/transformation of these materials.
- **Initial Proposal**
 - The initial proposal describes the grant project's aims in detail.
- **Final Report**
 - The final report describes the outcomes of the project and any lessons learned.



Unless otherwise indicated, all Grants Collection materials are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Initial Proposal

Application Details

Manage Application: ALG Textbook Transformation Grants

Award Cycle: Round 9

Internal Submission Deadline: Sunday, April 30, 2017

Application Title: 319

Application ID: #001740

Submitter First Name: Lacy

Submitter Last Name: Hodges

Submitter Title: Assistant Director, Center for Academic Enrichment

Submitter Email Address: lacy.hodges@gatech.edu

Submitter Phone Number: 404-385-7648

Submitter Campus Role: Provost / Academic Affairs Office

Applicant First Name: Lacy

Applicant Last Name: Hodges

Co-Applicant Name: --

Applicant Email Address: lacy.hodges@gatech.edu

Applicant Phone Number: 404-385-7648

Primary Appointment Title: Assistant Director, Center for Academic Enrichment

Institution Name(s): Georgia Institute of Technology

Submission Date: Monday, May 1, 2017

Proposal Title: 319

Final Semester of Instruction: Spring 2018

Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each):

Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian, Library, fred.rascoe@library.gatech.edu

Seth Porter, Co-coordinator of Library Instruction, Library, seth.porter@library.gatech.edu

Sponsor, (Name, Title, Department, Institution):

Christopher Reaves, Director, Center for Academic Enrichment, Georgia Institute of Technology

Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered:

GT 1000: First Year Seminar; Fall 2017, Spring 2018

Average Number of Students per Course Section: 20

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 95

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 1900

List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or required, & cost for each item): GT 1000 First Year Seminar custom eBook (required), cost: \$37.25

Proposal Categories: No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials

Requested Amount of Funding: \$15,120.00

Original per Student Cost: \$37.25

Post-Proposal Projected Student Cost: \$0

Projected Per Student Savings: \$37.25

Projected Total Annual Student Savings: \$70,775.00

Creation and Hosting Platforms Used ("n/a" if none):

Georgia Tech Center for Academic Enrichment website (to host materials)

YouTube (for videos, tutorials, other visual learning objects)

Project Goals:

GT 1000 is a one-credit hour, letter graded class offered to incoming Georgia Tech students. The course is not mandatory, but approximately 65% of first-year students enroll in the course each year. The course is designed to help students successfully transition to Georgia Tech

through focus on academic success skills, career development skills, communication skills, and campus resources.

Goals for the GT 1000: First Year Seminar Free Textbook Project include:

Reduce cost of course for all students enrolled in GT 1000: First-Year Seminar

Increase instructor use of text across all sections of GT 1000

Revise and streamline textbook materials to better reflect the format and scope of the GT 1000 course

Make text and resources available to all USG schools, peer institutions, and any other interested entity to freely access, reuse, and incorporate into their respective curricula

Create open-access materials and resources that can be easily updated to ensure the accuracy of the materials

Utilize technology to increase the pedagogical effectiveness of resources through the incorporation of digital learning objects, including an online toolkit for instructors, videos to promote creating a flipped classroom, and interactive activities for use by both instructors and enrolled students

Statement of Transformation:

The project seeks to redesign the current for-cost eBook required for all students enrolled in GT 1000: First-Year Seminar as a free, open-access text available to all students. The open-access text would include readings, activities, resources, and digital learning objects relevant to first-year student success.

As part of the GT 1000, all enrolled students are required to purchase a custom e-text that currently costs \$37.25; in the 2016-17 academic year, 1,850 students enrolled in GT 1000 spent a total of \$68,912.50 on the textbook. The text includes materials written by Georgia Tech faculty and staff, as well as selections from third-party texts on student success in the first year. Based on our assessment data for GT 1000, the book has low buy-in from both students and instructors teaching the course; approximately 65% of GT 1000 sections do not use the book in any way.

Feedback from instructors has shown that the book has too much material for them to easily review before the semester begins, resulting in a lack of assigned materials from the textbook. We have also received feedback from both instructors and students that the current format of the book is not intuitive and information is difficult to locate in the text. By making the text more streamlined and easier-to-use for our instructors, it will increase the buy-in from instructors, who can more easily incorporate the materials from the textbook into their curriculum. The current text has a great deal of valuable information for students, but it is not being utilized by instructors in their classes.

Feedback from students has shown that the materials that are included are redundant and in

need of updating. Additionally, the purchase of the textbook for students only grants them access to the eBook for two years, which means they are not able to continue accessing information on key curricular and co-curricular opportunities discussed in the book after their second year of college. Students have also expressed frustration at being required to purchase a text which is not utilized in their class. This project will not only create a more usable text, but will also eliminate the textbook costs for students taking the course, thereby making their overall college experience more affordable.

In addition to the enrolled students and instructors, GT 1000 also incorporates Team Leaders, second through fifth year student mentors who work alongside the instructors to ensure our first-year students transition successfully to Georgia Tech. Currently, the Team Leaders do not have access to the textbook unless they purchase the book themselves. Consequently, they are unable to effectively facilitate discussions for any readings assigned by the instructors. Because the Team Leaders are such an integral part of the class, this contributes to the lack of incorporation of readings from the text into many sections of GT 1000.

Additionally, the openness of the new text will invite more regular revision and adaptation. Because we strive to ensure GT 1000 meets the needs of an ever-evolving cohort of first-year students, instructors, and peer leaders, the course undergoes regular self-studies to ensure it is fulfilling the needs of all involved. An open-access text would allow us to more readily and regularly reflect any changes to the program or university that is important for our students to know. Each year, approximately 70% of our Team Leaders are new to the program; an open-access text would allow our Team Leader Advisory Board to regularly update materials for Team Leaders, based on the feedback from those who served during the preceding year. This isn't currently feasible for the text due to the various timelines of our Team Leader recruitment and our publisher-set timelines for updates to the text. And because 20% of GT 1000 students go on to become Team Leaders, we would also be able to incorporate their feedback into improving the information available to the next cohort of students who enroll in the course.

GT 1000 is not a mandatory class. Around 65% of our incoming freshman do take the course, but approximately 1,200 incoming students do not. By having an open-access, free textbook, even the students who are not registered for GT 1000 can benefit from the resources and materials in the text designed to ensure all of our first-year students have a successful transition to the university. Our campus partners will also benefit, as they can ensure that the materials being presented in GT 1000 are providing our incoming students with accurate, up-to-date information. Additionally, while some of the information in the textbook will be specific to resources at Georgia Tech, other parts of the textbook—such as the sections focused on career development skills and academic success skills—will be useful for students regardless of institute affiliation. An open access text would therefore also benefit students at institutions outside of Georgia Tech.

A successful transformation of the current textbook will benefit enrolled first-year students, student team leaders, course instructors, and campus partners at Georgia Tech. A

successfully transformed open textbook can also benefit by being a resource for other USG schools, as well as any other institutions across the country and world.

Transformation Action Plan:

The transformation will begin with a thorough review of all current textbook information. Materials that are redundant, extraneous, or out-of-date will be removed from the current textbook. We will need to identify any materials whose copyright is not currently held by Georgia Tech and will need to eliminate these materials from the text. Next, we will identify campus partners who can contribute new materials from the text in order to replace any necessary chapters, activities, or resources. New course materials will be created by the GT 1000 program director, as well as by campus partner program directors and coordinators. While much of this stage of the project will focus on the text portion of the eBook, we will also begin working to create activities, resources, and digital learning objects that can be utilized alongside the traditional text. Resources may include: videos, presentations, assignments, activities, and projects.

GT 1000 instructors are currently provided with a template syllabus that includes suggested readings for each class meeting, so these will need to be revised and updated to reflect the new textbook. In addition, all instructors have access to resource site through our Learning Management System, T-Square (Sakai). This site, like the current textbook, would greatly benefit from streamlining, updating, and a more user-friendly design. We would move the current resources from T-Square to the Center for Academic Enrichment website, which would not only improve the usability of the materials, but would also ensure easily accessible IT support for the electronic materials hosted online.

Open access will be provided through moving the materials from a log-in required site (T-Square) to an open website through the Center for Academic Enrichment, which oversees the GT 1000 program. All contributors will also be asked to provide a Creative Commons Attribution license to ensure open access of materials.

Team members for this project include Dr. Lacy Hodges, Assistant Director of the Center for Academic Enrichment and the program director for GT 1000, and Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian, and Seth Porter, Co-Coordinator of Library Instruction. Dr. Hodges will be responsible for overseeing the creation of content for the textbook as well as for communicating with administration, instructors, team leaders, and students to ensure materials for the textbook fit with course goals and learning outcomes. Mr. Rascoe will assist in the coordination of Creative Commons Attribution licenses for all included content and will ensure that all materials are appropriately attributed and licensed. Mr. Porter will provide guidance for the design and implementation of assessment techniques for the textbook, and will assist in designing both quantitative and qualitative assessment measures as well as in the analysis of these measures. Additionally, because all team members also serve as GT 1000 instructors, the team will be able to directly observe the usability and effectiveness of the text in the GT

1000 course throughout the academic year.

Quantitative & Qualitative Measures: The effectiveness and use of the open source textbook will be assessed in the following ways: Quantitative Assessments Pre- and post-semester learning outcome assessment GT 1000 includes six learning outcomes that all students enrolled in the class should be able to reliably demonstrate upon successful completion of the course. The pre- and post-assessment survey includes questions focused on assessing student ability/knowledge for all six learning outcomes. All students enrolled in GT 1000 are asked to complete both the pre- and post-semester surveys, though neither survey is required for students in the course. All students who complete either survey are required to include their Georgia Tech ID number. This allows us to match pre- and post-semester survey responses by students and to analyze learning outcome transformation by particular students. By comparing the pre- and post-semester survey responses for individual students, we will be able to assess how successfully the students in the course are learning the specified outcomes. Additionally, questions will be included on the post-semester survey that asks students to identify if and how the textbook was used in their section of GT 1000. This will allow us to assess the textbook's specific impact on the learning outcomes. Instructor Textbook Use Survey All instructors will be asked to complete a post-semester survey regarding their use of the textbook. We currently have data from 2014-2016 regarding how often instructors used the previous version of the textbook, so we can create a comparison of the change in textbook usage with the introduction of the new textbook. This will allow us to analyze instructor buy-in for the textbook, as well as how many sections of GT 1000 are using the textbook as part of their curriculum. Questions will also be asked regarding individual aspects of the textbook and how often they were used in sections of GT 1000. This data will allow us to assess the usage of various elements of the textbook (readings, videos, activities, etc.) across sections of GT 1000. Qualitative

Assessment Focus groups Focus groups will be formed for each of the three cohorts who may benefit from the textbook: current GT 1000 students, instructors, and team leaders. The focus groups will meet twice each semester (Fall and Spring) and will be asked to provide feedback on the use of the textbook in their section of GT 1000. These focus groups will allow the Center for Academic Enrichment to measure the usefulness of the GT 1000 textbook for a variety of interested groups. Feedback survey Surveys will be sent to GT 1000 students, instructors, and team leaders asking for their opinion regarding the textbook. The survey will be sent at the end of each semester (Fall and Spring) and will ask both closed and open-ended questions regarding the user's opinion of the textbook. Included questions will address the ease of use of the textbook and associated materials, the usefulness of the textbook, and suggestions for improving the textbook and associated resources. This survey will be separate from the learning assessment and textbook use surveys.

Timeline:

May 2017: Textbook review begins; contact campus partners to update materials; outline of tool kit and new materials; web developer begins back-end work on tool kit

June 2017: Updated materials due to GT 1000 program director; Project Team compiles and develops all materials online

July 2017: Instructors introduced to new materials during Annual GT 1000 Instructor Training and Workshops

August 2017: Materials go live online through Center for Academic Enrichment website; Pre-Semester GT 1000 survey released to students to assess current Learning Outcome objective knowledge and skills

September-November 2017: Focus groups are assembled and meet monthly to discuss use of textbook in GT 1000 classes. Three focus groups will be formed: one for instructors, one for GT 1000 students, and one for team leaders.

December 2017: Post-Semester Assessment distributed to all GT 1000 instructors, students, and team leaders.

January-March 2018: Fall post-semester data quantitative and qualitative data is analyzed and compiled, including the pre- and post-semester learning outcome assessment. Pre-semester survey is sent to all Spring 2018 GT 1000 students. Focus groups are created and meet throughout the Spring semester.

April 2018: Post-Semester Assessment distributed to all Spring GT 1000 instructors, students, and team leaders

May 2018: Spring & Fall post-semester data is analyzed and compiled; final report is written evaluating success and efficacy of new textbook mode.

Budget:

Web Developers (Graduate Students)

\$14/hr, 30 hr/week, 26 weeks (Summer and Fall 2017): \$10,920.00

Textbook Materials Coordinators (Undergraduate Students)

\$10/hr, 20 hr/week, 11 weeks (Summer 2017): \$2,200.00

Supplies for Assessment Workshops/Focus Groups (Fall 2017, Spring 2018)

Instructor Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Student Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Team Leader Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Travel & Expenses: \$800

Total Budget: \$15,120.00

Sustainability Plan:

GT 1000 is offered in both Fall and Spring every academic year, and will continue to be offered to all incoming freshman. The open-access e-text would be maintained by the Center for Academic Enrichment, as it will be hosted on our departmental website. Funding will follow the "Institutional Method" explained by Stephen Downes in his article "Sustainable Models for Open Educational Resources" (1). Because GT 1000 is a fundamental course for all Georgia Tech students, any required funding necessary to update or maintain the text would be funded by the institution as a regular part of the GT 1000 program. Updates and revisions to materials can also occur through the Center for Academic Enrichment's leveraging of existing resources, such as the Georgia Tech library's and/or Georgia Tech Cable Network's multimedia services to create updated videos.

The materials and resources would be maintained by the director of the GT 1000 program as a regular part of the program each year. The program director would collaborate with campus

partners regularly and often to ensure the content of all available materials is accurate and up-to-date, and would revise materials as needed. This would help to ensure that the materials are trusted and authoritative as the designated campus offices would serve as a kind of editorial board for their individual content. Additional resources would also be created by GT 1000 instructors, thus working to ensure that many of the consumers of these materials are also the creators of the materials, which often creates a more sustainable model for OER (1). The GT 1000 program director would also collaborate with the Office of Information Technology's web developer in order to ensure the technological elements of the text were maintained.

In order to continue to revise the content of the text and make sure it is relevant and up-to-date for incoming students, we will continue to assess the resources and materials through the use of regular assessment workshops. Advisory groups will be formed each academic year for instructors, GT 1000 students, and team leaders. These groups will meet twice a semester in order to provide feedback regarding both the content and structure of the materials available. We will also continue to include the eBook and resources in our pre- and post-assessment surveys for instructors, students, and team leaders. This will allow us to continue to update the materials for the class and to ensure all materials and resources are meeting the needs of all groups involved in GT 1000.

Updates to the materials will not only include content changes, but may also consist of changes in the method of delivery for particular materials, including creation of digital learning objects such as videos, tutorials, and other multimedia resources.

To the committee for Affordable Learning Georgia:

Please accept this letter written in support of transforming the current GT 1000: First Year Seminar textbook from a required purchase by Georgia Tech first-year students to a free, open-access textbook. Approximately 1,900 first year students at Georgia Tech register for GT 1000: First-Year Seminar, a course designed to assist incoming students transition from high school to college. Research has shown that students taking this course as well as participating in Freshmen Year Experience are retained at higher percentages and perform better academically than students who do not participate. This course also provides an opportunity for 300 upperclassmen to act as peer mentors, “team leaders” to incoming students, as well as provide an outlet for about a 100 university staff, whose normal job responsibilities fall outside the classroom, to be able directly participate in educating our students. A version of the course has been offered at Georgia Tech for the last 30 years and it is as much a part of the university culture as the RAT cap and the Ramblin’ Wreck, but changes need to be made to the textbook to ensure its continued use with today’s ever changing society and technology.

A big part of the success and sustainability of GT1000 has been its ability to offer a valuable curriculum and experience on limited resources. Currently, the course relies exclusively on volunteers from the Georgia Tech community to be instructors and team leaders. The course is coordinated with a professional staff from the Center for Academic Enrichment that is dedicated to ensuring its continued popularity amongst the students, faculty and staff. The current model of using a private publisher to provide a purchasable e-book does not provide the flexibility to update the current text and prohibits us from providing content to our increasingly financially overburdened students and parents. This grant would help us bring more affordable resources to all of our students, as well as providing a current more malleable platform that we could more readily update and provide fresh and interesting content that resonates with today’s students.

If you require any additional information or have questions please let me know.



Christopher W. Reaves, PhD
Director of Center for Academic Enrichment
Georgia Institute of Technology

References for Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Grant Proposal

1. S. Downes, "Models for Sustainable Open Educational Resources", *Interdisciplinary Journal of Knowledge and Learning Objects*, vol. 3, 2007.
<https://www.oecd.org/edu/cei/36781698.pdf>
2. C. Vaz de Carvalho, P. Escudeiro, M. Caiero Rodriguez, and M. Llamas Nistal, "Sustainability Strategies for Open Educational Resources and Repositories", *Latin American Conference on Learning Objectives and Technology (LACLO)*, 2016.
<http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7751806/>

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Round Nine

For Implementations beginning Summer Semester 2017

Running Through Spring Semester 2018

Proposal Form and Narrative

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Submitter Name | Lacy Hodges |
| Submitter Title | Assistant Director, Center for Academic Enrichment |
| Submitter Email | Lacy.hodges@gatech.edu |
| Submitter Phone Number | 404-385-7648 |
| Submitter Campus Role | Academic Affairs |
| Applicant Name | Lacy Hodges |
| Applicant Email | Lacy.hodges@gatech.edu |
| Applicant Phone Number | 404-385-7648 |
| Primary Appointment Title | Assistant Director, Center for Academic Enrichment |
| Institution Name(s) | Georgia Institute of Technology |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|----|---|-------|
| Team Members | Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian, Library, fred.rascoe@library.gatech.edu Seth Porter, Co-coordinator of Library Instruction, Library, seth.porter@library.gatech.edu | | | | |
| Sponsor, Title, Department, Institution | Christopher Reaves, Director, Center for Academic Enrichment, Georgia Institute of Technology | | | | |
| Proposal Title | GT: 1000 First-Year Seminar Free Textbook Transformation | | | | |
| Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered | GT 1000: First-Year Seminar; Fall 2017, Spring 2018 | | | | |
| Final Semester of Instruction | Spring 2018 | | | | |
| Average Number of Students Per Course Section | 20 | Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year | 95 | Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year | 1,900 |
| Award Category (pick one) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No-or-Low-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials <input type="checkbox"/> OpenStax Textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> Interactive Course-Authoring Tools and Software <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Top 100 Undergraduate Courses | | | | |
| List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or | GT 1000 First Year Seminar custom eBook (required), cost: \$37.25 | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| required, & cost for each item) | |
| Requested Amount of Funding | \$15,120.00 |
| Original Per Student Cost | \$37.25 |
| Post-Proposal Projected Per Student Cost | \$0 |
| Projected Per Student Savings | \$37.25 |
| Projected Total Annual Student Savings | \$70,775.00 |
| Creation and Hosting Platforms Used | Georgia Tech Center for Academic Enrichment website (to host materials) YouTube (for videos, tutorials, other visual learning objects) |

NARRATIVE

1.1 PROJECT GOALS

GT 1000 is a one-credit hour, letter graded class offered to incoming Georgia Tech students. The course is not mandatory, but approximately 65% of first-year students enroll in the course each year. The course is designed to help students successfully transition to Georgia Tech through focus on academic success skills, career development skills, communication skills, and campus resources.

Goals for the GT 1000: First Year Seminar Free Textbook Project include:

- Reduce cost of course for all students enrolled in GT 1000: First-Year Seminar
- Increase instructor use of text across all sections of GT 1000
- Make text and resources available to all USG schools, peer institutions, and any other interested entity to freely access, reuse, and incorporate into their respective curricula
- Revise and streamline textbook materials to better reflect the format and scope of the GT 1000 course
- Create open-access materials and resources that can be easily updated to ensure the accuracy of the materials
- Utilize technology to increase the pedagogical effectiveness of resources through the incorporation of digital learning objects, including an online toolkit for instructors, videos to promote creating a flipped classroom, and interactive activities for use by both instructors and enrolled students

1.2 STATEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

The project seeks to redesign the current for-cost eBook required for all students enrolled in GT 1000: First-Year Seminar as a free, open-access text available to all students. The open-access text would include readings, activities, resources, and digital learning objects relevant to first-year student success.

As part of the GT 1000, all enrolled students are required to purchase a custom e-text that currently costs \$37.25; in the 2016-17 academic year, 1,850 students enrolled in GT 1000 spent a total of \$68,912.50 on the textbook. The text includes materials written by Georgia Tech faculty and staff, as well as selections from third-party texts on student success in the first year. Based on our assessment data for GT 1000, the book has low buy-in from both students and instructors teaching the course; approximately 65% of GT 1000 sections do not use the book in any way.

Feedback from instructors has shown that the book has too much material for them to easily review before the semester begins, resulting in a lack of assigned materials from the textbook. We have also received feedback from both instructors and students that the current format of the book is not intuitive and information is difficult to locate in the text. By making the text more streamlined and easier-to-use for our instructors, it will increase the buy-in from instructors, who can more easily incorporate the materials from the textbook into their curriculum. The current text has a great deal of valuable information for students, but it is not being utilized by instructors in their classes.

Feedback from students has shown that the materials that are included are redundant and in need of updating. Additionally, the purchase of the textbook for students only grants them access to the eBook for two years, which means they are not able to continue accessing information on key curricular and co-curricular opportunities discussed in the book after their second year of college. Students have also expressed frustration at being required to purchase a text which is not utilized in their class. This project will not only create a more usable text, but will also eliminate the textbook costs for students taking the course, thereby making their overall college experience more affordable.

In addition to the enrolled students and instructors, GT 1000 also incorporates Team Leaders, second through fifth year student mentors who work alongside the instructors to ensure our first-year students transition successfully to Georgia Tech. Currently, the Team Leaders do not have access to the textbook unless they purchase the book themselves. Consequently, they are unable to effectively facilitate discussions for any readings assigned by the instructors. Because the Team Leaders are such an integral part of the class, this contributes to the lack of incorporation of readings from the text into many sections of GT 1000.

Additionally, the openness of the new text will invite more regular revision and adaptation. Because we strive to ensure GT 1000 meets the needs of an ever-evolving cohort of first-year students, instructors, and peer leaders, the course

undergoes regular self-studies to ensure it is fulfilling the needs of all involved. An open-access text would allow us to more readily and regularly reflect any changes to the program or university that is important for our students to know. Each year, approximately 70% of our Team Leaders are new to the program; an open-access text would allow our Team Leader Advisory Board to regularly update materials for Team Leaders, based on the feedback from those who served during the preceding year. This isn't currently feasible for the text due to the various timelines of our Team Leader recruitment and our publisher-set timelines for updates to the text. And because 20% of GT 1000 students go on to become Team Leaders, we would also be able to incorporate their feedback into improving the information available to the next cohort of students who enroll in the course.

GT 1000 is not a mandatory class. Around 65% of our incoming freshman do take the course, but approximately 1,200 incoming students do not. By having an open-access, free textbook, even the students who are not registered for GT 1000 can benefit from the resources and materials in the text designed to ensure our first-year students have a successful transition to the university. Our campus partners will also benefit, as they can ensure that the materials being presented in GT 1000 are providing our incoming students with accurate, up-to-date information. Additionally, while some of the information in the textbook will be specific to resources at Georgia Tech, other parts of the textbook—such as the sections focused on career development skills and academic success skills—will be useful for students regardless of institute affiliation. An open access text would therefore also benefit students at institutions outside of Georgia Tech.

A successful transformation of the current textbook will benefit enrolled first-year students, student team leaders, course instructors, and campus partners at Georgia Tech. A successfully transformed open textbook can also benefit by being a resource for other USG schools, as well as any other institutions across the country and world.

1.3 TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

The transformation will begin with a thorough review of all current textbook information. Materials that are redundant, extraneous, or out-of-date will be removed from the current textbook. We will need to identify any materials whose copyright is not currently held by Georgia Tech and will need to eliminate these materials from the text. Next, we will identify campus partners who can contribute new materials from the text in order to replace any necessary chapters, activities, or resources. New course materials will be created by the GT 1000 program director, as well as by campus partner program directors and coordinators. While much of this stage of the project will focus on the text portion of the eBook, we will also begin working to create activities, resources, and digital learning objects that can be utilized alongside the traditional text. Resources may include: videos, presentations, assignments, activities, and projects.

GT 1000 instructors are currently provided with a template syllabus that includes suggested readings for each class meeting, so these will need to be revised and updated to reflect the new textbook. In addition, all instructors have access to resource site through our Learning Management System, T-Square (Sakai). This site, like the current textbook, would greatly benefit from streamlining, updating, and a more user-friendly design. We would move the current resources from T-Square to the Center for Academic Enrichment website, which would not only improve the usability of the materials, but would also ensure easily accessible IT support for the electronic materials hosted online.

Open access will be provided through moving the materials from a log-in required site (T-Square) to an open website through the Center for Academic Enrichment, which oversees the GT 1000 program. All contributors will also be asked to provide a Creative Commons Attribution license to ensure open access of materials.

Team members for this project include Dr. Lacy Hodges, Assistant Director of the Center for Academic Enrichment and the program director for GT 1000, and Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian, and Seth Porter, Co-Coordinator of Library Instruction. Dr. Hodges will be responsible for overseeing the creation of content for the textbook as well as for communicating with administration, instructors, team leaders, and students to ensure materials for the textbook fit with course goals and learning outcomes. Mr. Rascoe will assist in the coordination of Creative Commons Attribution licenses for all included content and will ensure that all materials are appropriately attributed and licensed. Mr. Porter will provide guidance for the design and implementation of assessment techniques for the textbook, and will assist in designing both quantitative and qualitative assessment measures as well as in the analysis of these measures. Additionally, because all team members also serve as GT 1000 instructors, the team will be able to directly observe the usability and effectiveness of the text in the GT 1000 course throughout the academic year.

1.4 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASURES

The effectiveness and use of the open source textbook will be assessed in the following ways:

Quantitative Assessments

Pre- and post-semester learning outcome assessment

GT 1000 includes six learning outcomes that all students enrolled in the class should be able to reliably demonstrate upon successful completion of the course. The pre- and post-assessment survey includes questions focused on assessing student ability/knowledge for all six learning outcomes.

All students enrolled in GT 1000 are asked to complete both the pre- and post-semester surveys, though neither survey is required for students in the course. All students who complete either survey are required to include their Georgia Tech ID number. This allows us to match pre- and post-semester survey responses by students and to analyze learning outcome transformation by particular students.

By comparing the pre- and post-semester survey responses for individual students, we will be able to assess how successfully the students in the course are learning the specified outcomes. Additionally, questions will be included on the post-semester survey that asks students to identify if and how the textbook was used in their section of GT 1000. This will allow us to assess the textbook's specific impact on the learning outcomes.

Instructor Textbook Use Survey

All instructors will be asked to complete a post-semester survey regarding their use of the textbook. We currently have data from 2014-2016 regarding how often instructors used the previous version of the textbook, so we can create a comparison of the change in textbook usage with the introduction of the new textbook. This will allow us to analyze instructor buy-in for the textbook, as well as how many sections of GT 1000 are using the textbook as part of their curriculum.

Questions will also be asked regarding individual aspects of the textbook and how often they were used in sections of GT 1000. This data will allow us to assess the usage of various elements of the textbook (readings, videos, activities, etc.) across sections of GT 1000.

Qualitative Assessment

Focus groups

Focus groups will be formed for each of the three cohorts who may benefit from the textbook: current GT 1000 students, instructors, and team leaders. The focus groups will meet twice each semester (Fall and Spring) and will be asked to provide feedback on the use of the textbook in their section of GT 1000. These focus groups will allow the Center for Academic Enrichment to measure the usefulness of the GT 1000 textbook for a variety of interested groups.

Feedback survey

Surveys will be sent to GT 1000 students, instructors, and team leaders asking for their opinion regarding the textbook. The survey will be sent at the end of each semester (Fall and Spring) and will ask both closed and open-ended questions regarding the user's opinion of the textbook. Included questions will address the ease of use of the textbook and associated materials, the usefulness of the textbook, and suggestions for improving the textbook and associated resources. This survey will be separate from the learning assessment and textbook use surveys.

1.5 TIMELINE

May 2017: Textbook review begins; contact campus partners to update materials; outline of tool kit and new materials; web developer begins back-end work on tool kit

June 2017: Updated materials due to GT 1000 program director; Project Team compiles and develops all materials online

July 2017: Instructors introduced to new materials during Annual GT 1000 Instructor Training and Workshops

August 2017: Materials go live online through Center for Academic Enrichment website; Pre-Semester GT 1000 survey released to students to assess current Learning Outcome objective knowledge and skills

September-November 2017: Focus groups are assembled and meet monthly to discuss use of textbook in GT 1000 classes. Three focus groups will be formed: one for instructors, one for GT 1000 students, and one for team leaders.

December 2017: Post-Semester Assessment distributed to all GT 1000 instructors, students, and team leaders.

January-February 2018: Fall post-semester data quantitative and qualitative data is analyzed and compiled, including the pre- and post-semester learning outcome assessment.

April 2018: Post-Semester Assessment distributed to all Spring GT 1000 instructors, students, and team leaders

May 2018: Spring & Fall post-semester data is analyzed and compiled; final report is written evaluating success and efficacy of new textbook mode.

1.6 BUDGET

Web Developers (Graduate Students)

\$14/hr, 30 hr/week, 26 weeks (Summer and Fall 2017): \$10,920.00

Textbook Materials Coordinators (Undergraduate Students)

\$10/hr, 20 hr/week, 11 weeks (Summer 2017): \$2,200.00

Supplies for Assessment workshops (Fall 2017, Spring 2018)

Instructor Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Student Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Team Leader Assessment workshops (4): \$400

Travel & Expenses: \$800

Total Budget: \$15,120.00

1.7 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

GT 1000 is offered in both Fall and Spring every academic year, and will continue to be offered to all incoming freshman. The open-access e-text would be maintained by the Center for Academic Enrichment, as it will be hosted on our departmental website. Funding will follow the “Institutional Method” explained by Stephen Downes in his article “Sustainable Models for Open Educational Resources” (1). Because GT 1000 is a fundamental course for all Georgia Tech students, any required funding necessary to update or maintain the text would be funded by the institution as a regular part of the GT 1000 program. Updates and revisions to materials can also occur through the Center for Academic Enrichment’s leveraging of existing resources, such as the Georgia Tech library’s and/or Georgia Tech Cable Network’s multimedia services to create updated videos.

The materials and resources would be maintained by the director of the GT 1000 program as a regular part of the program each year. The program director would collaborate with campus partners regularly and often to ensure the content of all available materials is accurate and up-to-date, and would revise materials as needed. This would help to ensure that the materials are trusted and authoritative as the designated campus offices would serve as a kind of editorial board for their individual content. Additional resources would also be created by GT 1000 instructors, thus working to ensure that many of the consumers of these materials are also the creators of the materials, which often creates a more sustainable model for OER (1). The GT 1000 program director would also collaborate with the Office of Information Technology’s web developer in order to ensure the technological elements of the text were maintained.

In order to continue to revise the content of the text and make sure it is relevant and up-to-date for incoming students, we will continue to assess the resources and materials through the use of regular assessment workshops. Advisory groups will be formed each academic year for instructors, GT 1000 students, and team leaders. These groups will meet twice a semester in order to provide feedback regarding both the content and structure of the materials available. We will also continue to include the eBook and resources in our pre- and post-assessment surveys for instructors, students, and team leaders. This will allow us to continue to update the materials for the class and to ensure all materials and resources are meeting the needs of all groups involved in GT 1000.

Updates to the materials will not only include content changes, but may also consist of changes in the method of delivery for particular materials, including creation of digital learning objects such as videos, tutorials, and other multimedia resources.

1.8 REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

References

1. S. Downes, "Models for Sustainable Open Educational Resources", *Interdisciplinary Journal of Knowledge and Learning Objects*, vol. 3, 2007. <https://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/36781698.pdf>
2. C. Vaz de Carvalho, P. Escudeiro, M. Caiero Rodriguez, and M. Llamas Nistal, "Sustainability Strategies for Open Educational Resources and Repositories", *Latin American Conference on Learning Objectives and Technology (LACLO)*, 2016. <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7751806/>

Syllabus

GT 1000 Fall 2017



WELCOME TO GT 1000! This seminar course is designed to help you make a successful transition to college by becoming better acquainted with the academic and social environments here at Georgia Tech. Through the course, you will acquire strategies that promote academic, social, and professional success!

Learning Outcomes

This is a highly interactive course that requires active student participation and working collaboratively in small groups. After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Manage the university environment (including campus offices and resources).
2. Develop a personal study strategy.
3. Describe the skills and activities for growth in a major and career.
4. Develop a resume & cover letter.
5. Communicate reflectively on the first-year college experience.
6. Participate as an effective team member.

Class Schedule and Location:

Mondays, 1:55-2:45pm in CULC 323. Scheduled field trips will be noted on the syllabus and/or announced on T-Square

Grading:

Grading for the course will be based on earning a maximum of 1000 points, broken down as follows:

| <u>Assignment:</u> | <u>Points</u> |
|--|---------------|
| Class Attendance and Participation | 300 |
| Resume and Cover Letter Project | 200 |
| Major Exploration Project | 200 |
| Getting to Know Georgia Tech Group Project | 200 |
| LASSI & Reflection | 100 |
| Total | 1000 |

Grade Scale:

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following:

- A: 900 – 1000 Points
- B: 800 – 899 Points
- C: 700 – 799 Points
- D: 600 – 699 Points
- F: < 600 Points

Required Materials

GT 1000 OER Textbook: <http://pwp.gatech.edu/gt1000-textbook>
Planner (can be either a physical planner or electronic)

Technology

We will be using T-Square, <http://www.t-square.gatech.edu>. You will need your GT ID and password to log in.

Description of Course Assignments

Attendance and Participation (300 Points)

Full attendance at each class session is required. Full attendance means arriving at class ON TIME and staying until class is dismissed. If you're more than 5 minutes late or leave before class ends, you'll be marked absent, so be sure to arrive to class on time. Being an active participant in the class means that you're participating in any activities we're doing in class, that you've come to class prepared (including having completed any assigned readings), and that you're awake, alert, and focused on our class. If you're using your cell phone, tablet, or laptop for anything other than in-class activities, you'll not receive participation points for the day.

Resume and Cover Letter Project (200 Points)

You will write a cover letter and resume to be used later for co-op jobs, internships, or other employment. As part of this assignment, you will learn how to use CareerBuzz and locate at least one internship or co-op you would be interested in applying for and will create a LinkedIn Profile. More details will be given later in the semester.

Major Exploration Project (200 Points)

One of the most important decisions you face during your first year at Tech is what to major in. You may already know exactly what you want to study, or you may have no idea (or more likely- somewhere in between).

Regardless of where you stand, it is important to learn more about your major and your path to graduation. For the Major Exploration Project, you will complete a degree map showing your path to graduation and will write a short reflection on your path to graduation.

Getting to Know Georgia Tech Group Project (200 Points)

In groups of up to four people, you will create a poster presentation on one Georgia Tech Resource Office or Department. All groups will be given a poster template, and will be required to meet as a team at least twice outside of class before the assignment is due. All posters will be presented by the respective groups during class. The group project has two grade components: individual and team. More details about this assignment and the grading process will be given later in the semester.

LASSI & Reflection (100 Points)

You will be asked to complete the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) as one of your assignments and reflect on your strengths and areas that need work. As soon as you take the LASSI (which should take about 20 minutes), you will submit it and immediately receive your results via email. Your results will be charted on 10 scales, with a key on how to interpret them at the bottom of the chart; there is also an attached page with more information about each scale and what it means to your academic life. After taking the LASSI, you'll write a 200-300 word reflection on your strengths and areas of improvement.

Course Expectations and Guidelines:

1. The Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code applies to all work submitted in this course. To review the Honor Code, please visit <http://www.honor.gatech.edu>.
2. Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations to participate fully in the course activities or meet course requirements are encouraged to register with the ADAPTS Disability services at 404.894.2564 or <http://adapts.gatech.edu>. Please contact me ahead of time to discuss any issues related to disabilities.
3. You are expected to check your e-mail and T-Square daily. Important class announcements and information will be posted to T-Square. You are responsible for all materials posted.
4. Grades will be posted to T-Square throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of your submitted assignments and grade progress throughout the semester.
5. GT 1000 is designed to be informative, helpful, and fun! However, the class does carry one credit towards your degree. For that reason, it is important that all assignments you submit be high-quality. Please double check your work for spelling and simple grammatical errors.
6. You can expect that as your GT 1000 instructor, I will come to class each day ready to engage you in learning about Georgia Tech and learning how to be a successful college student. Each class will be structured to encourage your active participation, so please come to class ready to participate and have fun.
7. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Assignments can be turned in up to one week after the due date. Late assignments will be penalized 10 points per day.
8. Appropriate classroom behavior is expected at all times. This means that you should be respectful of your classmates, your TAs, and your instructors.

- 9.** Unless we're using them as part of an in-class activity, your laptops, cell phones, and tablets should be on silent and out of sight. Be present and aware in the class—you'll have plenty of time to text your friends during the other 23 hours and 10 minutes of the day you're not in our class.
- 10.** No food in the classroom. Drinks are fine, but make sure you throw away (or recycle!) any bottles, Starbucks cups, soda cans, or other disposable drinking containers before you leave the classroom.

GT 1000 Fall 2017 Weekly Schedule

| Class Session | Overview | Readings (Complete Before Class) | Homework & Assignments Due |
|----------------------|--|--|---|
| M 8/21 | Session 1: What is GT 1000? & Solar Eclipse | | Complete the pre-semester survey (link on T-Square) |
| M 8/28 | Session 2: Getting Involved at Georgia Tech; Getting to Know GT Project & Module 1 | Communication Skills: " Interacting with Faculty " & " Communicating through Email " | |
| M 9/4 | NO CLASS (Labor Day) | | |
| M 9/11 | Session 3: Time Management | Academic Success: " Time Management " & " LASSI " | Due in Class: LASSI Results |
| M 9/18 | Session 4: Personal Study Strategies & Values (Module 2) | Academic Success: " Study Strategies that Work " | Due in Class: LASSI Results |
| M 9/25 | Session 5: Getting to Know GT Project (Module 4) | | Due in Class & T-Square: LASSI Reflection |
| M 10/2 | Session 6: Teambuilding (Module 5) | | Due on T-Square: Group Meeting 1 Worksheet |
| M 10/9 | NO CLASS (Fall Break) | | |
| M 10/16 | Session 7: Presentation Skills (Module 6) | Communication Skills: " Creating Effective Presentations " & " Group Presentations " | Due in Class & T-Square: Group Meeting 2 Worksheet Getting to Know Georgia Tech Presentation |
| M 10/23 | Session 8: Mapping Your Major Bring Your Laptop to Class | Majors: " Get to Know Your Major " & " Resources for Major Exploration " | |
| M 10/30 | Session 9: Team Presentations | | Due in Class & T-Square: Team Presentations |
| M 11/6 | Session 10: Career Development Skills | Career Development: All sections | Due in Class : Degree Map & Reflection |
| M 11/13 | Session 11: Resume Workshop | Careers: " Resumes " | Due in Class : Resume Rough Draft |

| | | | |
|---------|---|--|---|
| M 11/20 | Session 12: Cover Letter Workshop | Careers: " Cover Letters " | Due in Class : Cover Letter Rough Draft |
| M 11/27 | Session 13: Undergraduate Research; OIE | | Due in Class & T-Square: Resume and Cover Letter |
| M 12/4 | Session 14: Preparing for Finals & Facing Challenges (Module 3) | | |
| M 12/11 | EXAM WEEK | | No final exam for GT 1000 :-) |

Final Report

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Final Report

To submit your Final Report, go to the Final Report submission page on the ALG website:

http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/site/final_report_submission

Final report submission requires four files:

- This completed narrative document
- Syllabus or syllabi
 - (if multiple files, compress into one .zip folder)
- Qualitative/Quantitative Measures data files
 - (if multiple files, compress into one .zip folder)
- Photo of your team or a class of your students w/ at least one team member, minimum resolution 800x600px
 - (nearly all smartphones take photos larger than this size by default)

Follow the instructions on the webpage for uploading your documents. Based on receipt of this report, ALG will process the final payment for your grant. ALG will follow up in the future with post-project grantee surveys and may also request your participation in a publication, presentation, or other event.

General Information

Date: May 25, 2018

Grant Round: 9

Grant Number: 319

Institution Name(s): Georgia Institute of Technology

Project Lead: Lacy Hodges

Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each):

Lacy Hodges, Assistant Director, Center for Academic Enrichment, lacy.hodges@gatech.edu

Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian & Aerospace Engineering Librarian, Georgia Tech Library, fred.rascoe@library.gatech.edu

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: GT 1000: First-Year Seminar

Semester Project Began: Fall 2017

Final Semester of Implementation: Fall 2018

Total Number of Students Affected During Project: 1,916

1. Narrative

The biggest outcome of this project was moving away from a third-party publisher who controlled the content and delivery methods of our textbook to an internally created text that we are free to change, update, and revise at any time. The no-cost textbook was available to students beginning in Fall 2017 and have now had two semesters of use from the OER textbook. While we still have a number of improvements to make in terms of format, content, and delivery methods, the OER project has made the course textbook a more manageable resource for both instructors and program staff.

While we didn't see any significant change in the number of sections that used the textbook, the students who didn't use it this semester at least didn't have to pay to not use the book. Our intention is to continue improving and marketing the text in order to increase buy-in and use but saving our students from having to purchase a book they didn't use is very much a step in the right direction. We also didn't see a change in the performance of our students, as our survey results for learning outcomes is consistent with previous years the class has been taught with the for-cost textbook. This is a particularly challenging element to assess for our students, as we have a very low DFW rate (about 1%) in GT 1000 and high retention rate for first-year students in both GT 1000 and across the Institute (97%). We are hoping to develop greater self-reflection and professional skills in our students; however, we do not currently have a means to assess these skills and are working on assessment measures for this.

As part of this project, our team members were able to attend the 37th Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience in San Antonio, TX in February 2018. We presented a conference session on this project and discussed our experiences in creating the version of the text used in 2017-18 as well as how other institutions might be able to pursue similar projects. This was an excellent opportunity to both share our project (and our OER textbook) with colleagues from across the country, but also gave us valuable feedback about other institutions' experiences with first-year seminar textbooks.

One major challenge for our project was the revision of the GT 1000 course curriculum in Fall 2017-Spring 2018. We were tasked by the Institute to revise the curriculum for the course as part of an Institute-wide revision of how we support student mental health. Because of this, we were unable to hire student assistants to compile additional materials for the text, as it was unclear what the curriculum for the class would be moving forward. We elected to put collecting new materials and redesigning much of our current materials on hold, as we didn't want to create materials that wouldn't be used moving forward. Our revised curriculum—with new learning outcomes and required assignments—was not finalized until April 2018, so we were unable to fulfill this part of our project.

Another challenge was implementing the book across 100+ sections of the course as we had not yet begun to make the changes when we held our yearly instructor workshop in June. Because of this, our instructors didn't have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the text prior to their classes; the result seemed to be that they ended up not using the text at all. The turnaround time made it incredibly challenging to create, implement, and assess the project effectively, but it did provide us the impetus and resources needed to get our project off the ground and begin to be more intentional about this aspect of the class.

One of the key lessons learned in this project was how to reframe my idea of what a textbook is and what it means to use a textbook in 2018. Our original approach was to simply upload all our text and materials to a website, assuming that students would be able to navigate it easily since it mimicked the format of other institute sites. However, we found that this wasn't the case, as many students' responses to survey questions indicated they didn't know how to access the book or that it was difficult to find content in the book. They also expected a more interactive format—not just having the book online but including templates and videos and more interactive materials. While we knew this would be important to the text, we weren't familiar enough with digital best practices to realize how to approach these issues.

This has also led to the greatest impact on instruction, as we are learning how to reconsider how to best deliver our materials to the current generation of first-year students. I have been working closely with Georgia Tech's Center for Teaching and Learning as part of their Teaching with Technology Partners program to learn more about these best practices. As a result of the project, I have reconsidered content delivery methods as well as how to integrate out-of-class videos and readings. I have also had to think more critically about faculty training and development; the faculty had a somewhat difficult time adapting to the commercial eBook we used beginning in 2014 and many of them are still not comfortable using a non-traditional text. Being more intentional not only about training faculty on the use of the text, but on how we introduce them to the concept of an online OER has also impacted our first-year seminar program.

2. Quotes

- “Try to make the textbook more interesting for students, and emphasize the relevance of it's information.”
- “I think this would be most effective if the information given was written in a more concise way. There were time when I felt like the pages rambled rather than giving me the tips that I needed to be successful just straight up. Maybe if included in the textbook were links to to pdf files that turned the useful information into a poster, it would be more effective. I know personally there are things that I would like to be able to reference quickly and efficiently and opening up the textbook and searching through the pages is not the most effective way to do this. If you were to do this, I would suggest

employing students to turn the necessary information into simple posters/flyers that can be easily accessed. Students know how to best reach other students. So it would be beneficial for them to do something like this.”

- “I thought it was pretty easy to use, pretty simple, and short, I didn't use it that much, but some stuff was actually pretty helpful. In particular, I think of the things I'll remember from the textbook, I think the one that was pretty helpful was how to study for classes, like preview, go to class, then review. Do homework and stuff. So, that stood out to me as pretty helpful in the textbook.”

The first two quotes above were taken from our post-semester student survey for GT 1000. The overall feedback we received from the student users of the textbook was that the format was not engaging and the organization of the textbook made it difficult to locate certain materials.

We also held a focus group for students; the third quote was taken from a student participant in that focus group.

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

3a. Uniform Measurements Questions

Student Opinion of Materials

Was the overall student opinion about the materials used in the course positive, neutral, or negative?

Total number of students affected in this project: 1,916

- Positive: 47% of 85 number of respondents
- Neutral: 47% of 85 number of respondents
- Negative: 6% of 85 number of respondents
- There were 362 total respondents to our post-semester surveys (Fall 2017 and Spring 2018), but only 85 of those respondents included responses about the value of the materials in the textbook. The other respondents indicated that they did not use the textbook.

Student Learning Outcomes and Grades

Was the overall comparative impact on student performance in terms of learning outcomes and grades in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?

Choose One:

- Positive: Higher performance outcomes measured over previous semester(s)
- Neutral: Same performance outcomes over previous semester(s)
- Negative: Lower performance outcomes over previous semester(s)

Student Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) Rates

Was the overall comparative impact on Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) rates in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?

Positive

Drop/Fail/Withdraw Rate:

Depending on what you and your institution can measure, this may also be known as a drop/failure rate or a withdraw/failure rate.

0.9% of students, out of a total 1,916 students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation (this is for both Fall 2017 & Spring 2018 as the majority of our students enroll in the class in the fall semester).

Choose One:

- Positive: This is a lower percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
- Neutral: This is the same percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
- Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

3b. Measures Narrative

The data we collected to assess the impact of the textbook transformation included:

- D/F/W Rates for all GT 1000 classes for each semester from Spring 2009 through Spring 2018
- Post-semester student survey responses regarding:
 - Student success in learning outcomes
 - Student feedback on textbook materials

- Focus groups with GT 1000 instructors and students

GT 1000 is a course with traditionally low DFW rates, but we did see a positive impact on DFW rates in 2017-18. The large majority of our students enroll in the course in Fall, rather than Spring (Fall 2017 enrollment: 1,881; Spring 2018 enrollment: 36), and the no-cost textbook was available for both semester. Due to the imbalanced enrollment numbers in Fall vs. Spring, the DFW rates include both semesters, as Fall DFW rates are more representative of program rates than the small cohort who takes the course in the Spring. The DFW rate for GT 1000 in 2017-18 was 0.9%; in earlier years, this percentage was closer to 1.5%. However, due to the low buy in of the textbook, it's unclear whether these rates were in any way impacted by the implementation of the OER textbook.

Our post-semester survey analysis showed neutral impact on student learning outcomes from 2016-17 to 2017-18, showing no clear impact from the adoption of the no-cost textbook. In our post-semester survey, we asked students to rank their confidence on skills related to the six course learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes of GT 1000 for 2017-18 stated that, after successfully completing the course, students should be able to:

1. Identify campus resources (safety, academic support, student organizations) that can be incorporated into strategies for success at Georgia Tech.
2. Create a personal study strategy based on time management skills and learning strengths.
3. Evaluate major/career paths based on such things as majors, personal goals, interests, and strengths.
4. Prepare a resume and cover letter applicable to internships, co-ops, study abroad programs or leadership positions (as appropriate)
5. Write reflectively on topics related to college major, Project One, and first year college experience.
6. Participate as an effective member of a group to deliver a professional presentation.

It is worth noting that the version of the textbook used by our students was put together very quickly in order to be used in Fall 2017. The result was that the materials were text-heavy, with few digital learning materials, and were uploaded to a very basic website.

Our surveys indicated lower use than expected of the textbook, but this may be due to the late availability of the text for Fall 2017 use. Instructors didn't have adequate training on using OER textbooks in their teaching and had little time to review the new materials before incorporating them into their syllabus. Instructors also found it difficult to adjust to the format of the book, noting that it the book was difficult to search or to identify by page.

In their focus group, our instructors also indicated that the textbook was not particularly suited for students to easily use. Responses in our instructor focus group indicated that the textbook was used more as an instructor reference/resource manual than as a text for students;

instructors appreciated that the text was now free but stated that the link was too long and difficult to remember and that it didn't really function as a textbook for the students. This was reflected in student responses from our post-semester survey in which students said they found the online text difficult to navigate and use.

Our student focus group had very low turnout (only two students attended), and both students indicated that they hadn't used the textbook much in their GT 1000 class. Like the instructors, the students found the online text somewhat unwieldy and more suited for instructors than students. One key finding from both focus groups was a general sense of confusion about what constitutes a "textbook"; as we continue to revise and update the text, we will focus not only on the content of the materials included, but the delivery method as well. Because the GT 1000 program staff has limited technological skills, we will need to consider how best to create and deliver interactive materials while ensuring the online text is fairly simple to update.

4. Sustainability Plan

The course materials will be offered via a new website beginning in Fall 2018. We have found that the current site is not robust enough to handle the new digital learning objects we hope to include and has limited functionality. We have created two possible sites to host the new materials, both hosted within the Georgia Tech servers but which are open to all visitors/users: a Drupal 7.0 based site and a WordPress based site.

The grant provided funding for a graduate student assistant to help create the Drupal site back-end, but because this platform is not as well known to program staff and the Institute's Center for Teaching and Learning technology specialists, we've also created a WordPress back-up site. The preferred plan would be to use the Drupal site, as it is more consistent with other Georgia Tech official sites (which use Drupal), but for maintenance and updating purposes, we may need to move to the WordPress site. We will be working with both sites during Summer 2018 to see which version is more sustainable and efficient for hosting the materials.

We are also making key changes to the content available and to the delivery of the content. The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education recently approved a course redesign for the GT 1000 curriculum, so we are also in the process of ensuring the materials available through the OER textbook align with the new course learning outcomes and assignments. Our partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning will also continue as we move forward, with the CTL technology specialists providing technical support (if we move to WordPress) and information about best practices for delivery of digital content.

Because of the shift in the curriculum, our current textbook materials are out of date beginning in Summer 2018, when the new curriculum goes into effect. We will revise this curriculum moving forward, both in terms of content and delivery methods. During 2017-18, we used grant funding for salary for a graduate student assistant, who built a new, more robust website for

the online textbook. The focus of this was solely on back-end development, as the new curriculum was being developed so we didn't have content to include in the site. We will use our remaining funds in 2018-19 to update the text and include this material on the newly built websites. We will use the remaining funds on salary for Graphic Design Graduate Student Assistant to design delivery of digital materials as well as for Undergraduate Student Assistants to compile materials based on the revised GT 1000 curriculum.

We were also able to purchase licenses for Articulate 360 and Adobe Captivate using this grant, which will assist in creating new interactive digital learning objects as well as adapting our current objects. These technologies will be particularly useful from a Sustainability standpoint, as they allow us to create more interactive digital learning materials with little technical knowledge or background. The licenses for these programs are affordable enough that we can continue to update our licenses using our yearly budgeted funds. This software will also make creating videos and updating content much simpler; once we have created the full content based on our revised learning outcomes being implemented in Summer 2018, it should be fairly easy to update any of our materials using Articulate 360 and Captivate.

5. Future Plans

This project has proven to be much more complex than I originally imagined, in large part because I wasn't familiar with best practices for online delivery of course materials. Originally, the major goal was to make the text no-cost for our students, instructors, and peer leaders, with the idea that if the text was openly accessible, it would be used more. However, we have not found that to be the case. While the textbook users appreciated that the resource was now available at no cost, we still have very low buy-in in terms of actual GT 1000 class usage of the text.

Based on the feedback we gathered from our assessments, we are now working to create a more interactive text, one that is based on best practices for digital learning materials and is aligned with how students access materials online. Additionally, the feedback from our textbook reflected a larger issue with the GT 1000 curriculum, namely that many students found the course packed with too much material, on too many topics, many of which were fairly basic and easy to find information about elsewhere. This feedback from students has resulted in a redesign of the GT 1000 curriculum; the curriculum is shifting away from retention-based strategies (as our first- to second-year retention rates have remained steady at 97% for the last three years) and towards holistic student development. This shift in the curriculum is also the result of larger Institute-driven initiatives and part of a strategy to improve overall student well-being on our campus.

The materials that we are working on to include in the updated text are mostly images, videos, and interactive materials. Because the GT 1000 program is so large and is taught by a large number of instructors, all of whom have different teaching strategies and all of whom use the textbook differently (if at all), we also need to improve faculty development on the topic of

digital learning materials and better train them on how to use the OER text in their section. A large part of this will be reframing what it means to have a “textbook”—and possibly rebranding the OER so that expectations of a certain kind of resource (a traditional textbook) do not interfere with the use or delivery of our materials.

Our team was able to present on this project at a conference this year, which allowed us to learn more about how first-year seminars at other institutions address the “textbook” issue at their schools. First-year seminar textbooks are often commercial custom texts that are particularly tailored to the needs of the institution; this makes them an excellent candidate for OER resources. Yet, there are few OER texts targeted at first-year seminars. Our team plans to continue not only revising our own materials but working to promote OER usage in other first-year seminars by promoting our Creative Commons licensed materials for use by other institutions and sharing our experiences and challenges in creating the OER textbook for GT 1000.

7. Description of Photograph

- Lacy Hodges, Assistant Director of the Center for Academic Enrichment & Director of the GT 1000 program
- Fred Rascoe, Scholarly Communication Librarian & Aerospace Engineering Librarian & GT 1000 Instructor