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Political Science

Spring 2018

American Government (GGC)

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Budryte, Dovile; Boykin, Scott; Lewkowitz, Michael; and Young, Laura, "American Government (GGC)" (2018). *Political Science Grants Collections*. 3.

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Grants Collection

Georgia Gwinnett College



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OF GEORGIA

Dovile Budryte, Scott Boykin, Michael Lewkowicz, and Laura Young

American Government



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.



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Initial Proposal

Application Details

Manage Application: ALG Textbook Transformation Grants

Award Cycle: Round 6

Internal Submission Deadline: Monday, August 1, 2016

Application Title: 240

Application ID: #001133

Submitter First Name: Cathy

Submitter Last Name: Hakes

Submitter Title: Director

Submitter Email Address: chakes@ggc.edu

Submitter Phone Number: 678-407-5875

Submitter Campus Role: Sponsored Programs Office

Applicant First Name: Dovile

Applicant Last Name: Budryte

Co-Applicant Name(s): Scott Boykin, Eric Wilk, Michael Lewkowicz

Applicant Email Address: dbudryte@ggc.edu

Applicant Phone Number: 678-478-5275

Primary Appointment Title: Professor of Political Science and Assistant Dean

Institution Name(s): Georgia Gwinnett College

Submission Date: Monday, August 1, 2016

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

Scott Boykin, Associate Professor of Political Science, School of Liberal Arts,
sboykin@ggc.edu

Eric Wilk, Assistant Professor of Political Science, School of Liberal Arts, ewilk@ggc.edu

Michael Lewkowicz, Assistant Professor of Political Science, School of Liberal Arts,
mlewkowi@ggc.edu

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

Dr. Adolfo Santos, Dean, School of Liberal Arts, Georgia Gwinnett College

Proposal Title: 240

Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered:

American Government, POLS 1101, every semester, Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017

Final Semester of Instruction: Fall 2017

Average Number of Students per Course Section: 28

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 22

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 616

List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or required, & cost for each item): Karen J. O'Connor, Larry J. Sabato, and Alixandra B. Yanus, Essentials of American Government: Roots and Reform, 2014 Election Edition (12th Edition): Pearson, 2016. Cost: \$179. Required Charles S. Bullock and Ronald Keith Gaddie. Georgia Politics in a State of Change. 2nd Edition. Pearson, 2013. Cost: \$36.60. Required

Proposal Category: No-or-Low-Cost to Students Learning Materials

Requested Amount of Funding: \$20,800

Original per Student Cost: \$215.60

Post-Proposal Projected Student Cost: \$0

Projected Per Student Savings: \$215.60

Projected Total Annual Student Savings: \$132,809.60

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

(1) Desire to Learn (D2L)

(2) Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs (CCEIA), a shared site and free websites offered by professional organizations, such as the American Political Science Association and the International Studies Association

(3) ALG repository for new materials

(4) GGC Library-recommended sites

Project Goals:

The goals of the project are:

1. Decrease the financial burden of students enrolled in POLS 1101 by providing no-cost textbooks.
2. Increase retention by revising the course by incorporating engaging group projects and interactive activities (using sources other than textbooks). The relevant literature suggests that positive group experiences contribute to student learning, retention and overall college success (Astin, 1997; Tinto, 1998; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2006; Eberly Center, n.d.)
3. Improve the study of US and state government by incorporating activities to promote the understanding of diversity and global perspectives.

Statement of Transformation:

Transformation Description. POLS 1101 has one of the more expensive required textbooks in the School of Liberal Arts. As a required course by all students, the cost is quite prohibitive. More importantly, it is critical that we address the dynamic nature of the course and the fact that GGC is a multi-cultural college. The POLS 1101's course materials should portray the ever evolving nature of a government that is responding to oftentimes volatile national, local and global events. When textbooks are followed closely, the dynamic nature of this course is often lost, and faculty supplement their textbooks with materials, such as news releases, YouTube videos, and other online links related to global events, often on an ad hoc basis.

The project posits that the resulting no-cost to student textbook and more timely, engaging materials (textbook and supplemental materials) will increase retention among POLS 1101 students. For instance, in fall 2015, when 1,344 students were enrolled in POLS 1101, the percentage of students who were not able to earn a "C" or above was 20%. The objective is to see a decrease in these rates and an increase in the number of students earning a "C" or above and enjoying the course.

The proposed plan is to pilot a revised textbook that is solely composed of online materials that the team members will collect and arrange. The materials will still follow the chapters that are typically found in POLS 1101 courses; however, the (1) online materials will be from online textbook chapters culled from Galileo, USG libraries, and Open Educational Resources and (2) supplemental materials will come from GGC's online subscriptions from news sources such as

Politico, The Economist, Wall Street Journal, Atlanta Journal and Constitution, New York Times, and the L.A. Times, to name a few. In addition, we plan to use educational materials (including short videos and podcasts) available from the websites of the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs (CCEIA), Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), and other institutions committed to globalized education and videos available from Galileo (including a new source of films and documentaries, Kanopy).

Stakeholders affected by the transformation. Stakeholders affected by the transformation will be over 600 students in 22 sections who are expected to take the POLS 1101 course by the end of the project. In addition, the team will make the revised textbook and accompanying materials available to 12 full-time and 11 part-time political science faculty, as well as USG faculty members who can access the materials through the ALG repository. Materials will also be made available to the faculty outside of USG through the websites hosted by professional organizations. GGC plans to share them with international partners (universities) as well.

Impact of this transformation on stakeholders and on course success. Students will not be required to purchase an expensive textbook and will be able to obtain high quality reading materials and multimedia to facilitate learning in POLS 1101 at no cost to them.

In addition, as discussed in the goal statements, the transformation will empower the participating faculty to construct high impact, student-centered activities that could lead to deeper learning, retention and overall college success. The team also intends to include materials with international and multicultural topics, thus contributing to the students' greater understanding of world and local events.

Project's Transformative impact. First and foremost, GGC students will obtain high quality readings to facilitate their learning about American and Georgia government at no cost to them.

Impact on the course:

- 1) The transformation will include hands-on participatory activities; this will help community building and eventually will contribute to better student-faculty interactions;
- 2) The transformation will include development of materials with international and multicultural topics. This will help GGC students and participating faculty to develop global and multicultural awareness.
- 3) Students who come from minority groups and immigrant families (GGC is the most diverse campus in the Southern USA) are likely to be more interested in course materials that include international and multicultural topics.

Impact on the program (there are no departments at GGC) and other courses:

- 1) POLS 1101 is a pre-requisite for other upper level POLS courses. The team expects that including interesting materials on international and multicultural topics will prepare the students for other POLS courses with similar foci (e.g., POLS 2400 Current Global Issues, POLS 3400

International Relations, POLS 4000 International Organizations, POLS 4001 International Development and others);

2) The proposed transformation includes team building activities. The team anticipates that this approach will retain more students at GGC and attract them to the POLS program.

Transformation Action Plan:

New course materials selection and identification. Upon approval of the grant proposal, the four team members will meet to analyze the relevant institutional goals and learning objectives for POLS 1101 and the internationalization expectations of GGC's Quality Enhancement Program (GGC's main institutional initiative) to specify the features of materials to be collected that will advance these goals, objectives, and the QEP. The course includes the following major topics: the U.S. and Georgia Constitutions, federalism, civil liberties and civil rights, Congress, the Presidency, the Judiciary, political parties, elections, interest groups, domestic policy, and foreign policy. Each team member will cover two to three of these topics by finding appropriate reading materials from publicly available online sources for students studying these topics.

Additional readings and other materials dealing with internationalization and multiculturalism will be integrated into the course. Participatory activities will be added to increase student interaction. A brief description of these activities and expectations for the students will be outlined in the Syllabi for POLS 1101.

Course and Syllabus Redesign Phase. The team will cull sources of materials, which will include U.S., foreign government, and non-governmental organizations' websites, news items, and websites of political parties, interest groups, and public policy foundations. The GGC library will be asked to assist in creating a page of links and pdf files that is made available to the public on the Library's publicly-available page on the GGC web site.

The compiled materials (revised textbook and supplemental materials) will be piloted to eight sections of POLS 1101 to be taught by Drs. Budryte, Wilk, and Lewkowicz in spring 2017. The revised textbook will be piloted in the remaining fourteen POLS 1101 sections, taught by all four team members, in summer and fall 2017.

Team Member Roles. Drs. Dovile Budryte and Scott Boykin will serve as the leaders of the project. They will oversee the selection of the materials, cooperation with the other colleagues and the library for the development of activities and the implementation of assessment. Drs. Lewkowicz and Wilk will help to select the material and will participate in the project by adopting the new materials.

All four personnel will act as subject matter experts and instructors of record. Book chapters/topics taught in POLS 1101 will be assigned to each member, and each will obtain open source, no-cost materials. Dr. Budryte will be responsible for materials related to

American foreign policy, comparative politics, federalism, and the GA constitution and government. Dr. Boykin will focus on the Constitution, the Judiciary, and the Presidency. Dr. Lewkowicz will work on interest groups, political parties, voting, and elections. Dr. Wilk will be responsible for Congress, public opinion, and campaigns.

Each team member has solid knowledge of the literature in each of these areas. In many cases, all four team members may have the opportunity to substantively contribute to a particular subject matter. Materials will be collected from online sources, such as Merlot, Galileo, and J-Stor, which contain peer-reviewed articles that cover each of these areas. Team members also have access to subject matter-specific texts (such as the Presidency) that provide numerous citations to other available sources. The team members will locate and integrate relevant multimedia sources (such as videos and podcasts) into their sections.

Plan for providing access. The team will cooperate with the Library and consult other faculty and staff to link the materials to the suitable participatory activities and applicable service learning. The team will publicize the availability of the materials to the School of Liberal Arts faculty in spring 2017. Drs. Budryte and Boykin will be responsible for these activities.

During fall 2016, the team will start collecting the materials and developing relevant activities. The materials will be posted on D2L sites, including a D2L site that can be accessed by all POLS faculty. Any new materials created under a Creative Commons License will also be accessible to the public through the Galileo Open Learning Materials and the ALG repository. Additional opportunities to publicize materials via professional organizations (the American Political Science Association and the International Studies Association) will be used.

Quantitative & Qualitative Measures: The Project Goals and their Measurements are:

GOAL 1. Decrease the financial burden of students enrolled in POLS 1101 by providing no-cost textbooks

Quantitative:

- * Use D2L tools to check whether the students are accessing the materials and using them for class activities.
- * Monitor the number of POLS 1101 sections taught by team members and number of students enrolled and completing the course.

Qualitative:

 - * Focus groups will be created, and students will be asked about the impact of no-cost materials to their course completion.

GOAL 2. Increase retention by revising the course by incorporating engaging group projects and interactive activities.

Quantitative:

 - * Use a baseline assessment quiz comparing the results in classes where no transformation to be funded by this grant took place with the classes affected by the transformation. The main goal of this assessment quiz is to test the very basic knowledge of US government.
 - * Collect data on dropout, fail, and withdrawal rates in the classes where the transformation is implemented and compare these results with the classes where no transformation took place. The team will track the grades across sections and compare those with and without the new textbook.

Qualitative:

 - * Organize focus groups with students in the classes where the transformation is implemented and record their answers focusing on their perceptions of learning and relating to the other students.
 - * Use learning objectives to determine the overall improvements in student learning.

Quantitative and Qualitative:

The main course objectives of POLS 1101 are to introduce the students to 4 subject areas that address the state's legislative requirements and survey the general subfield of American politics. The students taking this course are expected to understand the U.S. Constitution, the Georgia Constitution, the functioning of the branches of American government and political institutions, and political behavior in the USA. The questions on the pre- and post-test will target at least

one of these areas, and open-ended questions will be included to address the impact of no-cost materials. GOAL 3. Improve the study of US and state government by incorporating activities to promote the understanding of diversity and global perspectives. Quantitative: Utilize the course evaluation tools developed by GGC's goal teams consisting of faculty and staff to assess the quality of the transformed courses. These tools (rubrics) attempt to assess whether the students are being exposed to diverse cultures and global perspectives. Qualitative: * Utilize the course evaluation tools developed by the team to assess the quality of the course. * Organize focus groups with students in the classes where the transformation is implemented and record their answers on the new course.

Timeline:

Courses will be taught in spring 2017, summer 2017, and fall 2017. The transformation action timeline for this project is as follows:

8/22/2016: Notification

9/21/2016: Required Kickoff Meeting

- 1) September-October 2016: Develop an assessment plan to measure the learning of relevant concepts in POLS 1101; develop questionnaires for the student focus groups and gather data about the ways in which students in POLS 1101 use textbooks and other assigned materials;
- 2) October 2016: Retrieve data from the previous years (POLS 1101 baseline assessment quiz); analyze this data;
- 3) October-December 2016: Develop activities to be used in spring 2017, summer 2017 and fall 2017 to replace the textbooks; develop open content textbook on D2L: find encyclopedia articles on the main concepts, supporting current news events and their analysis; relevant video and audio materials; prepare court case descriptions; develop relevant in-class assignments; the instructors of record will load the reading materials and/or links to web resources on the D2L learning management system;
- 4) Spring 2017: Apply the open content textbook and related materials in eight selected POLS 1101 sections; proctor the baseline quiz in the beginning and the end of the semester, proctor the questionnaires about the use of materials; conduct focus groups and assess the learning of the main concepts in POLS 1101;
- 5) March and May 2017: Proctor the questionnaire in selected POLS 1101 sections about the ways in which the students use the textbooks and other materials;

- 6) May 2017: Analyze the assessment data on the use of the open content textbook and related materials; revise these materials if needed;
- 7) May 2017: Conduct the focus groups in the sections that are not using the textbooks; inquire about interaction in groups and learning in diverse contexts.
- Summer 2017 and fall 2017: Repeat steps 4-7.

Budget:

\$5,000 salary support for Dr. Budryte
\$5,000 salary support for Dr. Boykin
\$5,000 salary support for Dr. Lewkowicz
\$5,000 salary support for Dr. Wilk
\$800 travel support for Dr. Budryte and/or Dr. Boykin to attend the meeting on the project
Total: \$20,800

Sustainability Plan:

The course materials will be reusable and will be improved through periodic updates by the team members so as to incorporate current events that will stimulate and facilitate student interest in the subject. As a core course (not only for Georgia Gwinnett College, but also the University System of Georgia), numerous sections of Political Science 1101 will continue to be offered during each of the spring, summer and fall semesters. Thus, at the conclusion of the project, team members will inform other faculty members (full-time and part-time) of the availability of these materials and will encourage our colleagues to utilize the materials in their course sections.

The faculty members who are proposing this project have been interested in re-thinking the teaching of government in undergraduate college courses for several years. This year, they will publish a collection of essays on teaching, and this proposal builds on their previous work to include diverse perspectives into teaching. If funded, the project will lead to new publications.

As the letters of support demonstrate, the team expects continued institutional support for the project since the transformed course: (1) emphasizes GGC's goal to internationalize its courses; (2) provides a multi-cultural perspective to the study of the U.S. government; and (3) eliminates costs for the students. All of these factors contribute to helping the college retain and graduate its students.

REFERENCES

Astin, A. (1993). *What matters in college? Four Critical Years Revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Budryte, Dovile, and Scott A. Boykin, editors. *Engaging Difference: Teaching Humanities and Social Sciences in Multicultural Environments*, a collection of essays on teaching, forthcoming in 2016, Rowman and Littlefield Education. 3 out of 4 project participants have contributed chapters to this book.

Eberly Center, Carnegie Mellon University. What are the Benefits of Group Work? <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/design/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/benefits.html>, accessed on November 23, 2015.

National Survey of Student Engagement Report. (2006). http://nsse.iub.edu/NSSE_2006_Annual_Report/docs/NSSE_2006_Annual_Report.pdf, accessed on November 23, 2015.

Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



July 22, 2016

1000 University Center Lane
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
Phone: 678.407.5200
Fax: 678.407.5014
www.ggc.edu

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants
GALILEO
University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear ALG Review Committee:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the proposal, "POLS 1101: Bringing the Government Textbooks To Life at GGC," submitted by Drs. Dovile Budryte, Scott Boykin, Michael Lewkowicz, and Eric Wilk from Georgia Gwinnett College's (GGC) School of Liberal Arts.

POLS 1101, a Top 100 USG Undergraduate Course, will transform our American Government courses into no-cost-to student learning materials classes, resulting in a significant amount of student savings without compromising the quality of instruction or our commitment to an internationalized general education curriculum. The faculty who are proposing this grant have significant experience teaching the course that is targeted in the proposal. I believe the effort of this project to be sustainable over the long term, and am excited at the potential financial savings our students would experience.

The GGC Office of Research and Sponsored Programs will be responsible for the receipt and distribution of any award funds based upon the proposal budget. If the proposed project is successful, GGC will act accordingly to institutionalize the project to lower costs to students. If you have any questions regarding this proposal please contact the primary investigator, Dr. Dovile Budryte at (678) 478-5275 or by email at dbudryte@ggc.edu.

Thank you for this opportunity to assist our students and others in obtaining an affordable quality learning opportunity through participation in the ALGTT grant program.

Sincerely

T.J. Arant, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost



School of Liberal Arts
Georgia Gwinnett College
1000 University Center Lane
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
Phone: 678.407.5601
www.ggc.edu

Dr. Adolfo Santos
Dean of the School of Liberal Arts
July 21, 2016

Affordable Learning Georgia
2500 Daniels Bridge Rd.
Building 300
Athens, GA 30606

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to express my support for Dr. Dovile Budryte who is applying for a Textbook Transformation Grant. She plans to work with three of her colleagues in Political Science, Drs. Scott Boykin, Michael Lewkowitz, and Eric Wilk, on preparing useful and student-friendly materials for multiple sections of POLS 1101 Introduction to American Government. These materials will be of no cost to the students, and this will save our students significant amounts of money.

As noted in the grant proposal, Georgia Gwinnett College is an open access institution, and many of our students experience financial challenges. Therefore, this initiative will be appreciated by many students who lack funds to buy expensive textbooks. Dr. Budryte has developed a workable plan to use materials such as encyclopedia articles, news essays and journal articles to prepare interesting and engaging materials. In addition, the team plans to develop interactive student activities to accompany these materials. There is evidence suggesting that such activities may contribute to better retention.

In addition, Dr. Budryte and her colleagues plan to include activities that will be structured to promote global awareness of our students. This is an important goal because currently GGC is engaged in internationalization of our curriculum. Consequently, we welcome faculty initiatives that are consistent with our institutional goals.

Finally, Dr. Budryte is fully committed to student success. In FY 2015, Dr. Budryte has won the USG Excellence in Teaching award. This makes me believe that she and her team will produce excellent results.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with additional questions about this letter.

Regards,

Adolfo Santos
Dean of SLA



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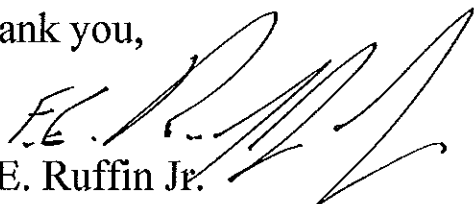
July 20, 2016

To the evaluation committee:

This is in support of an application for an Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant to support the project "Bringing the Government Textbooks to Life at GGC." The GGC Library has the full capability to provide support and resources for this course. The Library is ready to partner with the Political Science faculty in any way that will help bring this innovative course into fruition.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need further information.

Thank you,



F. E. Ruffin Jr.
Dean of Library Services
Georgia Gwinnett College Library

Syllabus

Course Number POLS 1101
Section
Course Title American Government
Meeting Time
Meeting Location
Term and Year
Professor
Office
Email:
Cell Phone:

REQUIRED TEXTS (OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES)

Glen Krutz and Sylvie Waskiewicz, **American Government**, OpenStax, ISBN-10 1938168178. Available for free from <https://openstax.org/details/american-government>

Arnold Fleischmann and Carol Pierannunzi, **Georgia Constitution and Government**, 6th edition. Available for free from <http://testing.kennesaw.edu/students/Georgia%20Constitution-US%20And%20GA%20Constitution.pdf>

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS

As assigned by the instructor (see the syllabus and follow weekly email messages)

PREREQUISITES

Read 098

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Covering the essential facts of national government in the United States, with some attention given to the state government, including the State of Georgia, this course satisfies state law, requiring examination on US and Georgia Constitutions.

YOUR PROFESSOR

Institutional and Course Policies and Procedures

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

Georgia Gwinnett College will provide reasonable accommodation to employees, applicants for employment, students, and patrons who have physical and/or mental disabilities, in accordance with applicable statutes. Georgia Gwinnett College will take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment persons who are qualified disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam Era, or other covered veterans. If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Georgia Gwinnett College students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic

integrity and are expected to encourage others to do the same. Further, students are expected to take responsible action when there is reason to suspect dishonesty on the part of others. While it is not possible to list all acts of academic dishonesty, examples include knowingly performing, attempting to perform, or assisting another in performing any act of academic dishonesty; cheating; plagiarism; collusion; submitting previously submitted material; misrepresentation or falsification of material; misrepresentation of circumstances such as illness, conflicting responsibilities. Additional details on academic integrity are found in the college catalogue.

Academic dishonesty carries severe penalties ranging from a grade of “0” on the affected assignment to dismissal from Georgia Gwinnett College. Each faculty member at Georgia Gwinnett College bears the responsibility for assigning penalties for cases of academic dishonesty. Students may appeal a penalty as outlined in the Student Handbook.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

View the GGC Safety and Emergency Communications web page for information important to you. To avoid confusion and rumor ensure you (1) sign up for RAVE alert text notification (2) download the LiveSafe app for iPhone or Android. (3) View the 15 minute Active Shooter Video. You are the additional eyes and ears for first responders. Follow the adage, “If you see something, say something” to a GGC employee. Your community needs your increased vigilance and awareness.

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS MISSION

The School of Liberal Arts provides an innovative, multidisciplinary, student-centered, flexible curriculum that prepares the student for further study or work in a global economy. The School seeks to develop the student’s learning through faculty engagement in cross-disciplinary teaching, research and service with a flexible curriculum that responds to increased globalization.

ACADEMIC RESPECT

Students are expected to abide by class policies and procedures and to treat faculty and other students in a professional, respectful manner. Students are expected to be familiar with the student conduct code published in the Student Handbook.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The classroom experience is a vital component of the college learning experience. Interaction with instructors and with other students is a necessary component of the learning process. Students are expected to attend regularly and promptly all class meetings and academic appointments. Students who are absent from classes bear the responsibility of notifying their instructors and keeping up with class assignments in conjunction with instructor provisions in the course syllabus. An individual instructor bears the decision as to whether a student’s absence is excused or unexcused and whether work will be permitted to be made up; the decision of the instructor in this case is final.

Students who are absent because of participation in college-approved activities (such as field trips and extracurricular events) will be permitted to make up the work missed during their college-approved absences. Individual instructors may establish additional attendance requirements appropriate to their course’s context, e.g., lab attendance.

A student whose class schedule would otherwise prevent him or her from voting will be permitted an excused absence for the interval reasonably required for voting.

COURSE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED

- 1) Attendance and participation are essential for success in this class. If you need to leave class early or plan to arrive late, please inform me before class. Please avoid leaving class in the middle of the session. If you are late or if you leave early without prior notification, you may be counted as absent. **PLEASE NOTE: THE PARTICIPATION GRADE WILL BE AFFECTED BY MISSED CLASS TIME** (unless the absence is excused and make-up work completed).
- 2) It is crucial that an atmosphere of respect prevails and that we support each other as we tackle challenging ideas. Excellent participation is respectful and thoughtful participation.
- 3) Please make sure to have access to the two textbooks in class; this will help to complete in class assignments. It is highly recommended to bring notes on the assigned readings and electronic copies of the assigned readings to class as well.
- 4) Additional assignments, readings and video material will be added on a regular basis. Please check the Brightspace (D2L) and ggc.edu e-mail regularly. I will send reminders every week about the assignments for the upcoming week. **THERE IS AN EXPECTATION TO FOLLOW THE NEWS RELATED TO US AND GEORGIA GOVERNMENTS.**
- 5) Please minimize unnecessary disruptions in class. Please turn off your cell phones and other devices when class is in session.
- 6) Please feel free to ask questions about the assignments before the due date.
- 7) You may request extensions for the assignments by sending an email message to me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Late penalties may be applied.
- 8) If you experience trouble with online assignments, including quizzes, please take a screen shot immediately if you would like to make up the assignment. Please consider contacting GGC Help Desk at helpdesk@ggc.edu or call 678 407 5611 for technical help.
- 9) Help with writing and tutoring are available from the Academic Enhancement Center; please call 678 407 5191 or email **aec@ggc.edu** for an appointment.
- 10) Please allow a reasonable amount of time for grading essays and papers.
- 11) There will be no make-up assignments unless there is a serious emergency. Make-up in-class assignments (including quizzes and tests) will be scheduled (in very rare cases) only for students directly involved in documented emergencies.
- 12) All writing assignments must be spell checked and edited. If you use additional sources, then a "Works Cited" page is required. Do not use Wikipedia as the main source.

Please consult the following GGC library website for help with citations:
<http://libguides.ggc.edu/citations>.

This website includes references to APA, MLA and Turabian, all of which are acceptable styles of documentation in this class.

COURSE CHANGES

The course syllabus provides a general plan for this course. The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including changes to assignments, projects, case studies, examinations, etc., to accommodate the needs of the class as a whole and fulfill the goals of the course.

IMPORTANT DATES

Drop/add ends:

Test 1 (midterm):

Midterm grades due:

Withdrawal deadline with a "W":

Test 2:

The last class:

Final exam:

Grading and Course Curriculum

1. Three in-class tests: 400 points, or 40%
Test 1: 100 points
Tests 2 and 3: 150 points each
2. 10 weekly online quizzes: 100 points, or 10%
3. Group project: 100 points, or 10%
4. Assignments (in-class and homework): 250 points, or 25%
5. Out-of-class event (attendance and essay): 50 points, or 5%
6. Participation and attendance: 100 points, or 10%

A: 90% – 100% (Excellent)

B: 80% – 89% (Good)

C: 70% – 79% (Fair)

D: 60% – 69% (Poor)

F: below 60% (Failure)

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

1. Three Exams (400 points, 40 % of the grade)

The exams will include multiple choice, true/false and essay questions testing your knowledge of the material presented in class and the assigned readings. The final exam will be comprehensive.

2. Ten Online Quizzes (100 points, 10 % of the grade)

Multiple choice and true/false quizzes will be posted on Brightspace/D2L (due before class on Thursdays). The quizzes will be available after classes on Tuesdays, unless noted differently in the weekly email communication.

3. Group Project: 100 points, or 10%

You will be asked to put together a brief presentation (approximately 15 minutes long) researching and answering an assigned question. Your grade for this project will by and large depend on your individual contributions to the project. **YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SUBMIT A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED WHILE CONDUCTING YOUR OWN RESEARCH (IN YOUR INDIVIDUAL ESSAY)** and an individual contract, which will have to be prepared in consultation with the other group members. The group will be asked to briefly meet with me to discuss the progress of the project at least one week before the presentation date.

Additional instructions and a copy of the contract will be posted online. **YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO ACCESS AND USE GALILEO DATABASES (INCLUDING GALE OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS IN CONTEXT)**. I will have to approve your presentation before you can present it to class. The following BBC article called "How to Avoid 'Death by Powerpoint'" gives useful suggestions on what constitutes a successful presentation: <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-35038429>

4. Assignments (in class and homework): 250 points, or 25%

Homework assignments will be announced in class and posted on Brightspace/D2L. They will be explained in weekly email messages.

Unannounced assignments (relevant to the assigned readings and material covered in class) will be given in class throughout the semester. Some of these exercises will be collected and graded. Therefore, regular attendance is crucially important.

Additional homework (related to the material covered in class) will be added regularly.

5. Out-of-class event (attendance and essay): 50 points, or 5%

Relevant campus and off campus events will be announced in class regularly and communicated via email. A brief (2 paragraphs) reaction essay about the event is due one week after the event via Brightspace/D2L ("Assignments" folder). The essay should briefly summarize the event and express your own perspective on what was said during the event.

If you choose to attend an event that is of interest to you, please make sure to get my approval before attending it.

One event per semester is required. If you attend additional events and write brief reaction essays, you will earn extra credit (10 points for each additional event, unless otherwise noted).

6. Participation and attendance: 100 points, or 10%

Students are expected to attend class. This grade will be primarily based on your attendance grade. In addition, you are expected to do the assigned readings and follow the current events. Some readings are going to be distributed via email. Unannounced assignments (relevant to the assigned readings and material covered in class) will be given in class throughout the semester. Some of these exercises will be collected and graded.

Here are the criteria for grading participation:

A (90%-100%): EXCELLENT

Demonstrates excellent preparation: analyzes the assigned material exceptionally well, relating it to the other readings and his or her personal experience.

Contributes in a very significant way to class discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, and suggests alternative ways of approaching material.

Completes all assigned exercises. No unexcused absences.

B (80%-89%): GOOD

Demonstrates good preparation: knows the assigned reading well, has developed his or her perspective.

Contributes well to discussion on a regular basis: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.

Completes most assigned exercises. Does not miss more than 2 class meetings without an acceptable excuse.

C (70-79%): COMPETENT

Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic material covered in class and has done some reading, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.

Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes when called on.

Completes most assigned exercises. Attends at least 70% of all class meetings.

D (60-69%): BELOW SATISFACTORY

Present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on.

Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion and class activities.

Completes some in-class exercises. Attends at least 60% of all class meetings.

F (50-59%): FAILING

Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion and class activities.

Completes fewer than 50% of assigned activities. Attends fewer than 59% of all class meetings.

CURRICULUM

COURSE OBJECTIVES: THE GOALS OF THIS COURSE ARE:

- 1) Understand the key characteristics of the national government in the United States, with some attention given to state government, including the state of Georgia;
- 2) Analyze current national politics in a global context;
- 3) Practice the skills necessary to navigate the national and state governments;
- 4) Identify various models of government and different types of political systems;
- 5) Understand how the principles of limited government, democracy, and constitutionalism operate in the American political system.

COURSE OUTCOMES STUDENTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS COURSE WILL:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the key characteristics of the national government in the United States and the State of Georgia;
- 2) Demonstrate awareness of current national political issues in a global context;

- 3) Demonstrate the skills necessary to navigate the national and state governments;
- 4) Demonstrate an understanding of various models of government and different types of political systems;
- 5) Demonstrate an understanding of how the principles of limited government, democracy, and constitutionalism operate in the American political system.

ASSESSMENT OF COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:

Objective 1, outcome 1: Exams, quizzes, in-class assignments, homework

Objective 2, outcome 2: Exams, quizzes, in-class assignments, homework, group project

Objective 3, outcome 3: In-class assignments, homework, group project

Objective 4, outcome 4: Exams, quizzes, in-class assignments, homework

Objective 5, outcome 5: Exams, quizzes, in-class assignments, homework

COLLEGE-WIDE INTEGRATED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE GOALS (IEES):

Course objectives meet the following BOLD-FACED college-wide Integrated Educational Experience goals:

IEE1: CLEARLY COMMUNICATE IDEAS IN WRITTEN AND ORAL FORM.

IEE2: DEMONSTRATE CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING IN INTER- AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CONTEXTS.

IEE3: DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

IEE4: DEMONSTRATE AN ABILITY TO COLLABORATE IN DIVERSE AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS.

IEE5: DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES.

IEE6: DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF MORAL AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES.

IEE7: DEMONSTRATE AND APPLY LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES.

IEE8: DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO REASON QUANTITATIVELY.

Technology Covenant

COURSE MATERIALS AND GRADING

Technology will be used to deliver content, provide resources, assess learning, and facilitate interaction, both within this classroom and in the larger learning community. You can expect to access the course materials and grades via Brightspace (D2L). Students should check Brightspace (D2L) regularly, as course changes will always be announced and recorded on the course site.

COMMUNICATION

Outside of class time, I want to have face-to-face conversations with you, when possible. However, we may need to establish a time and place via email or by phone. Please feel free to email (preferred) or call me at XXX for brief conferences or to schedule a face-to-face meeting with me.

If contacted via email, expect me to respond within 24 hours to your message, if I am unable to respond immediately. I reserve the right not to respond to emails sent after 5 pm until the next day. On weekends or when I am away from campus, my response may be irregular. Please avoid sending text messages to me.

When corresponding by email, I will communicate with you using only your GGC email. You should check your GGC email every day. Emails from commercial domains (yahoo.com, gmail.com, hotmail.com, etc.) will not receive replies due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Expectations of Students

All students at GGC need to have access to a computer. If you do not have one, computer labs are available on campus. I expect students to access course or individual communications within 1-2 days, excluding weekends.

Technology Changes

This covenant provides a general guideline for the course. I reserve the right to make periodic and/or necessary changes to the covenant, including: technology use and communication channels, in order to accommodate the needs of the class as a whole and fulfill the goals of the course.

Course Schedule

Please note: Additional readings and videos will be added. Please check your GGC email for the updates. I reserve the right to change the schedule if needed.

Week 1

Chapter 1 “American Government and Civic Engagement”

Ideology Activity: Quizzes that Assess Participants’ Ideological Leanings: The World’s Smallest Ideology Quiz: <https://www.theadvocates.org/quiz/quiz.php>

Political Compass:

<https://www.politicalcompass.org/test>

Political Typology:

<http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/>

Examples of various ideologies:

Liberalism: Elizabeth Warren:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tv6Gw8nZ5o>

Conservatism: Ted Cruz:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PILUdrLeE8U>

Libertarianism: Gary Johnson:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viP1WzIYPM0&t=39s>

Benzine, Craig. Introduction: Crash Course in US Government and Politics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrk4oY7UxpQ>

Week 2

Comparison: Georgia Constitution and US Constitution

Chapter 2 “The Constitution and Its Origins”

pp. 1-19 in Georgia Government book

US Constitution:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CDOC-110hdoc50/pdf/CDOC-110hdoc50.pdf>

Constitution of the State of Georgia:

http://sos.ga.gov/admin/files/Constitution_2013_Final_Printed.pdf

US Declaration of Independence:

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

The Federalist Papers:

<https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers>

A comparative Constitution activity

<https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/DPI403%20Fall09/12%20DPI403%20%20Constitutions.pdf>

Transition from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCCmuftyj8A&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtOfse2ncvfffeelTrqvhrz8H&index=5>

Signing of the US Constitution:

<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/u-s-constitution-signed>

Week 3

Chapter 3 “American Federalism”

Constitutional Battleground State (PBS video):

<http://www.pbs.org/video/constitution-usa-peter-sagal-constitutional-battle-ground-state/>

Marijuana Policy Project:

<https://www.mpp.org/>

A comparative activity: The EU

https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en

Week 4

Chapter 4 “Civil Liberties”

DC v. Heller:

<http://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/554/570.html>

Film “Constitution USA with Peter Sagal: It is a Free Country” (available from Films On Demand, Galileo)

Film “Spying on the Homefront” (Frontline):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJ0fOZ8PALk>

Week 5

Chapter 5 “Civil Rights”

Documents: US Bill of Rights:

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript>

Universal Declaration of Rights:

<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

Films “All the Way,” “The Butler”

Documentary “The Women Who Made America”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcH2ppft2Gw>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAic_v6L7N0

MLK speeches and other documents:

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive>

Mendez v. Westminster:

<http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/background-mendez-v-westminster-re-enactment>

Video Mendez v. Westminster:

<https://gpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/osi04.soc.ush.civil.mendez/mendez-v-westminster-desegregating-californias-schools/#.WihCRHlryM8>

National Public Radio. Code Switch.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/>

Group assignment (using Gale Opposing Viewpoints, Galileo)

Group 1: Should the US government defend human rights worldwide? Why or why not? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoints entry is “human rights”)

Group 2: What are the problems currently faced by the prison system in the United States? How should they be addressed? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoints entry is “prisons”)

Week 6

Chapter 6 “The Politics of Public Opinion”

Chapter 8 “The Media”

The Daily Show with John Stewart:

<http://www.cc.com/video-clips/0qqodj/the-daily-show-with-jon-stewart-health-care--the-ultimate-last-final-push>

War of the Worlds:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzC3Fg_rJjM

(start at 18:11 and play for 2 – 3 minutes)

Orson Wells interview:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfNsCcOHsNI&feature=related>

(start at 2:12 and play to the end)

Group project using Gale Opposing Viewpoints (Galileo):

Group 3: What is the relationship between the mass media and politics? How would you describe the influence of media on different branches of government? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoints entry is “politics and media”)

Week 7

Chapter 9 “Political Parties”

Chapter 10 “Interest Groups and Lobbying”

Evolution of Political Parties:

Republicans: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8VOM8ET1WU>

Democrats: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6R0NvVr164>

Money and Politics:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tu32CCA_Ig

Current party platforms:

<https://www.gop.com/platform/>

<https://www.democrats.org/party-platform>

Interest groups: Environment

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/meet-teen-suing-oregon-climate-change/>

Week 8

Chapter 7 “Voting and Elections”

Primary elections explained:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_95I_1rZils

Winner take all system explained:

<http://youtu.be/s7tWHJfhiyo>

Electoral college explained:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUS9mM8Xbbw>

Critique of the electoral college:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wC42HgLA4k>

Electoral college tie:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHEDXzOfENI&t=1s>

Federalist paper 68:

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed68.asp

Voter turnout database:

<https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout>

Group activity using Gale Opposing Viewpoints (Galileo database):

Group 4: Should the Electoral College be abolished? Why or why not? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoints entry is “electoral college”)

Week 9

Chapter 11 “Congress”

Comparison: US Congress and Georgia General Assembly
Pp. 20-24, Georgia Government book

Finding one’s own representatives:

<https://votesmart.org/>

Overview of legislative process:

<https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process>

Schoolhouse rock:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Otbml6WlQPo>

Redistricting (a PBS video):

<http://video.pbs.org/video/2191859524/>

The redistricting game:

<http://www.redistrictinggame.org/game.php>

Speaker of the House (Paul Ryan):

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RepPaulRyan>

Week 10

Chapter 12 “The Presidency”

Compare the powers of US President and Georgia Governor
Pp. 24-28, Georgia Government book

How do the Presidents get their job done? Crash course politics #14

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vnuFJSMYkY>

Presidential job approval ratings:

<http://news.gallup.com/interactives/185273/presidential-job-approval-center.aspx>

Week 11

Chapter 15 “The Bureaucracy”

Prisons (Pelican Bay State Prison):

<http://www.pba.org/filmfestival/2017-festival/our-voices-are-rarely-heard/>

FDIC (financial education):

www.fdic.gov/education

Week 12

Chapter 13 “The Courts”

Comparison: SCOTUS with Georgia Supreme Court

Supreme Court of Georgia:

<https://www.gasupreme.us/>

Elected judges (HBO):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poL7l-Uk3l8Activity>

Sotomayor and Thomas (a comparison exercise): “For Sotomayor and Thomas, Paths Diverge at Race”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/07/us/politics/07affirm.html?pagewanted=3&hp>

Sonya Sotomayor:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=445m99Lx_Yo

Justice Thomas Clarence:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFSqG0y-gIA>

Group activity using Gale Opposing Viewpoints:

Group 5: What should be the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court? Is neutrality possible and/or desirable? Why or why not? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoints entry is “judicial activism”)

Week 13

Chapter 14 “State and Local Government”

Elected judges (HBO):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poL7l-Uk3l8>

Week 14

Chapter 16 “Domestic Policy”

Group activity using Gale Opposing Viewpoints:

Group 6: What is the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act? What role did the courts play in opposing and/or supporting this legislation? (The relevant Gale Opposing Viewpoint entry is “health care legislation”)

Week 15

Chapter 17 “Foreign Policy”

Benzine, Craig. Introduction: Crash Course in US Government and Politics, video #50

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMhIQNkO_Y0

Isolationism: George Washington Farewell Address

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp

Council on Foreign Relations video (based on Richard Haass’ book *A World In Disarray*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAqkfbGJhI&feature=youtu.be>

Final Report

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Final Report

Date: December 19, 2017

Grant Number: 240

Institution Name(s): Georgia Gwinnett College

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

Dovile Budryte, Professor of Political Science, dbudryte@ggc.edu

Scott Boykin, Associate Professor of Political Science, sboykin@ggc.edu

Michael Lewkowicz, Assistant Professor of Political Science, mlewkowi@ggc.edu

Laura Young, Assistant Professor of Political Science, lyoung6@ggc.edu

Project Lead: Dovile Budryte

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: American Government

Semester Project Began: Fall 2016

Semester(s) of Implementation: Spring 2017, Summer 2017, Fall 2017

Average Number of Students Per Course Section: 28

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation: 8 (Fall 2017)

22 (Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017)

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation: 235 (Fall 2017; some sections had more than 28 students)

Approximate number for Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017 is 627.

1. Narrative

A. Describe the key outcomes, whether positive, negative, or interesting, of your project.

Include:

- Summary of your transformation experience, including challenges and accomplishments

The biggest challenge faced was developing activities using Open Educational Resources that were interesting, time-appropriate, and had a significant impact on the ability of students to understand the concepts. While attention getters are a great way to get students interested, role-playing/simulations produced better comprehension of the material, but are much harder to develop.

All sections used the same free Open Stax textbook (Glen Krutz and Sylvie Waskiewicz, **American Government**, OpenStax, ISBN-10 1938168178). Overall, the students appreciated using a free educational resource; however, our focus groups' results were mixed. Some groups considered the free textbook to be one of the most useful resources, while others thought that it was one of the least helpful.

- Transformative impacts on your instruction

Our team made a conscious decision to link the use of Open Educational Resources to active learning (developing engaging activities). Preparing class lectures where activities drawing on Open Educational Resources were used was easier since self-learning among the students was taking place as they took part in the activities. It also allowed for more discussion and less lecture since students had personal experience engaging with the concepts/topics.

- Transformative impacts on your students and their performance

Students were more engaged in class and were more likely to attend class lectures because the classes were more interactive (they included activities drawing on Open Educational Resources). Several students commented the activities helped them better understand the material, and kept the material interesting.

B. Describe lessons learned, including any things you would do differently next time.

The activities made the class more engaging and kept students interested. However, in the future, we would incorporate more reflection essays and similar exercises about the activities to make certain students are able to connect the activities with the concepts/topics covered in the course. It would also be useful to make the students reflect on the value of Open Educational Resources as well as the activities that use these resources.

2. Quotes

- Provide three quotes from students evaluating their experience with the no-cost learning materials.

Fall 2017, Section 3: Dr. Budryte

“Useful--textbook: Background info on topics we talked about in class as well as review/vocab.”

Fall 2017, Section 5: Dr. Lewkowicz

“The textbook was useful for the readings and studying for tests.”

Fall 2017, Section 34: Dr. Budryte

"The textbook was useful because it provided all the information, and it helped re-explain the material."

Fall 2017, Section 37: Dr. Young

"The textbook was a helpful resource because if we needed additional info, it did provide it."

Fall 2017, Section 39: Dr. Boykin

"The two most useful were the textbook's glossary and also its chapter highlights."

Note: All sections participating in the project used the same free Open Stax textbook (Glen Krutz and Sylvie Waskiewicz, **American Government**, OpenStax, ISBN-10 1938168178

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

3a. Overall Measurements

Student Opinion of Materials

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

DATA FOR SPRING 2017, SUMMER 2017 and FALL 2017 (focus groups)

Total number of students affected in this project: 627

Fall 2017: 235 Students

Please note: These percentages are approximate, based on composite focus group responses in Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017. The question was open-ended, with each group volunteering participants' consensus as to which materials were most beneficial in engaging their understanding and interest in the course, and which materials were least useful. The data below reflects the percentages of focus groups that included the Open Education Resources (e.g. textbooks) as the most beneficial, the percentages of groups that included Open Educational Resources as least beneficial, and the percentages of focus groups that did not mention Open Educational Resources at all.

In Spring 2017, one of our colleagues withdrew from the project. His sections did not include focus groups.

- Most beneficial: 47.62 % of 84 focus groups
- Did not mention: 20.24 % of 84 focus groups
- Negative: 30.95 % of approximately 84 focus groups

Spring 2017: Total 31 focus groups

Most beneficial: 44.4% of focus groups

Did not mention: 25.9% of focus groups

Least beneficial: 29.6% of focus groups

Summer 2017: Total 16 focus groups

Most beneficial: 37.5% of focus groups

Did not mention: 18.8% of focus groups

Least beneficial: 37.5% of focus groups

Summer 2017: Total: 41 focus groups

Most beneficial: 53.7% of focus groups

Did not mention: 17.1% of focus groups

Least beneficial: 29.3% of focus groups

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?

Student learning outcomes in POLS 1101 courses include the following:

- 1) Understand the key characteristics of the national government in the United States, with some attention given to state government, including the state of Georgia;
- 2) Analyze current national politics in a global context;
- 3) Practice the skills necessary to navigate the national and state governments;
- 4) Identify various models of government and different types of political systems; and
- 5) Understand how the principles of limited government, democracy, and constitutionalism operate in the American political system.

Our focus group questionnaire included one additional outcome, drawing on the following question: “Based on what you’ve learned this semester, briefly describe three ways in which the U.S. political system performs in accommodating an increasingly diverse society.” The student answers in Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017 semesters included references to specific legislation (for example, the Voting Rights Act or the Civil Rights Act), groups (for example, interest groups), and relevant concepts in political science. We cannot detect any major differences when comparing the answers in these semesters.

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?

Drop/Fail/Withdraw Rate:

FALL 2017:

17.87% of students, out of a total 235 students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

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)

We do not have adequate data for drops for Summer 2017, but the failure rates appear to be the same. In Spring 2017, the D/F/W rate was slightly less than in Fall 2017; however, there were no evening or Friday afternoon classes in the pool in Spring 2017. In addition, the sections taught by our colleague who withdrew from the project are not included in the calculation.

3b. Narrative

As noted in the attached syllabus, POLS 1101 American Government can be described as “Covering the essential facts of national government in the United States, with some attention given to the state government, including the State of Georgia, this course satisfies state law, requiring examination on US and Georgia Constitutions.” As noted in the previous section, the course has the following goals:

- 1) Understand the key characteristics of the national government in the United States, with some attention given to state government, including the state of Georgia;
- 2) Analyze current national politics in a global context;
- 3) Practice the skills necessary to navigate the national and state governments;
- 4) Identify various models of government and different types of political systems; and
- 5) Understand how the principles of limited government, democracy, and constitutionalism operate in the American political system.

Our focus group questionnaire included one additional outcome, drawing on the following question: “Based on what you’ve learned this semester, briefly describe three ways in which the U.S. political system performs in accommodating an increasingly diverse society.” In other words, we wanted to make sure that the activities developed using Open Educational Resources help us to engage our diverse student body and address questions related to diversity.

One measure that was used in all sections that participated in this project—the Baseline assessment quiz—was developed with the main goals of POLS 1101 in mind. Thus, it included some basic questions about the key characteristics of the US government. We proctored this baseline assessment quiz in the beginning and the end of each semester (Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017). In cooperation with our colleagues in other POLS 1101 sections, we included some control groups (i.e., sections that did not use Open Educational Resources), to determine any significant differences in learning. As the attached tables suggest (please see “Baseline—Final Assessment Summary”), there is no significant difference between the sections that used expensive textbooks and the sections that used Open Educational Resources. In all sections, the final scores (collected when the baseline assessment test was proctored in the end of the semester) were better when compared with the initial scores. In sections that used Open Educational Resources, the improvement was by 1.49%, and in the control groups this number was 1.54%, suggesting that the difference is insignificant.

In addition to the Baseline assessment quiz, we used focus groups ranging from three to six students per group depending on the size of the class. In each of these groups, students were asked to come to a consensus on three sets of questions addressing the ability of the US

political system to accommodate diversity, as well as students' perceptions about online materials used in the course and the usefulness of various activities.

Relating to the latter topics, we asked the following questions:

- 1) "Which two online materials (textbook and other) were the most useful in engaging your understanding and interest in the course? Which two were the least useful? Be as specific as possible and make sure to identify which materials are the most useful and which are the least useful."

- 2) "Which two in-class activities in the course have contributed the most to your knowledge of how the U.S. political system matters in your life? Which two in-class activities have contributed the least? As with the previous question, you should be as specific as possible and make sure to identify which activities contribute the most and which contribute the least."

Student participation in focus groups was voluntary; furthermore, students who were younger than 18 were asked not to sign waivers and not to participate in assessment activities. We are attaching summaries of the focus group data.

According to our interpretation of this data, a plurality of groups reached a consensus to include the free textbooks as one of the most useful sets of material. When students offered additional positive comments, they often remarked on the utility of an additional source of material, particularly when it came to prepare for quizzes and exams. Students also commented on the significance of the glossary and chapter highlights in helping them to understand the material.

Nonetheless, there were some negative responses to the OpenStax textbook as well, as some groups identifying that item as one of the least useful resources used in class. This may be attributed to the unwillingness of the students to read relatively lengthy chapters assigned by the instructors, preferring to use lecture notes, online materials, and other strategies instead of reading the textbook.

It should be noted that the number of positive and negative mentions of the OpenStax textbook varied across sections and instructors suggesting that some instructors were more adept at integrating the online resource with their approach to teaching the course.

In addition to the online textbook, students also mentioned a variety of online materials as most useful, including quizzes, online discussion forums, and links to online videos. Some students mentioned that search engines such as GALILEO Scholar as least useful as they were hard to navigate. Furthermore, the inclusion of PowerPoint presentations supporting lecture material had mixed results. Some students commented on how useful the presentations were

in helping students to catch up with the lecture material. On the other hand, other students commented on the lack of context given to some of the material in the slides.

In regard to the question on in-class activities, students tended to respond positively. Students commented that simulations enhanced their understanding of the material, while group activities assisted them in understanding alternative perspectives on the course material and current events.

However, student evaluations of activities were not uniformly positive, as students commented on how some activities seemed rushed. Furthermore, the question regarding activities often generated puzzlement among students, as they could not remember any specific activity.

We included adequate measures of Drop/Withdrawal/Fail rates only in Fall 2017 semester. This rate is 17.87%, and, from what we gather, is like the other survey courses at an open access institution. The number of students who failed the courses using Open Educational Resources ranged from 2-4 students per course, and this is a similar rate to the courses taught in Summer 2017 and Spring 2017.

In sum, we conclude that there seem to be no significant differences in the measurements of learning in the courses that use Open Educational Materials versus expensive textbooks. We make this conclusion drawing on our Baseline assessment quiz results, primarily. Our focus group data suggests that there is a good potential to better develop activities using Open Educational Resources, including free textbooks.

4. Sustainability Plan

The project participants intend to continue to use the activities developed using Open Educational Resources as well as the free textbooks in the future. We have already attracted interest from our colleagues teaching POLS 1101. Some of our colleagues are already using Open Educational Materials that we use (e.g., the textbook). They are interested in adopting the activities developed for this project as well.

5. Future Plans

Linking Open Educational Resources to active learning, as we did in this project, made the project participants appreciate active learning, especially in an Open Access Institution. Some of the activities (e.g., simulations) developed by the project participant can be revised and adapted for use in other classes. Thus, for example, one project participant developed two course simulations dealing with domestic policy making and foreign policy making. Another project participant intends to slightly revise the foreign policy making activity and use it in her class on US Foreign Policy. As discussed in the previous section, the project participants feel

that this project had a significant influence on our approach to teaching and will help us to focus on developing new active learning activities in the future.

We have one publication and three conference presentations resulting from this project:

“Bringing the Study of American Government to Life in a Diverse Classroom: Internationalization and Individualization” by Michael Lewkowicz, Laura Young, Dovile Budryte, and Scott Boykin in *Handbook of Research on Curriculum Internationalization and the Future of Global Education*, edited by Semire Dikli, Richard Rawls and Brian Etheridge, IGI Global, 2017 (in print).

Budryte, Dovile and Scott Boykin, “Bringing the Study of American Government to Life in a Diverse Classroom: Internationalization and Personalization via Open Educational Resources,” University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference, Athens, GA, April 2017.

Lewkowicz, Michael, "Bringing the Study of American Government to Life in a Diverse Classroom: Internationalization and Individualization," MPSA (Midwest Political Science Association) Annual Meeting, April 2017.

Lewkowicz, Michael, "Utilizing Non-Traditional Materials in Teaching Survey American Government Courses," accepted for presentation at the MPSA 2018 Annual Meeting.

6. Description of Photograph

(Left-right): Dr. Dovile Budryte, team lead and Professor of Political Science, Dr. Scott Boykin, project participant and Associate Professor of Political Science, Dr. Laura Young, project participant and Assistant Professor of Political Science, Dr. Michael Lewkowicz, project participant and Assistant Professor of Political Science, Georgia Gwinnett College