



Evelina Sterling and Daniel Farr

Social Problems



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 9

Internal Submission Deadline: Sunday, April 30, 2017

Application Title: 313

Application ID: #001731

Submitter First Name: Daniel

Submitter Last Name: Farr

Submitter Title: Lecturer of Sociology

Submitter Email Address: dfarr4@kennesaw.edu

Submitter Phone Number: 470-578-7970

Submitter Campus Role: Proposal Investigator (Primary or additional)

Applicant First Name: Evelina

Applicant Last Name: Sterling

Co-Applicant Name: Daniel Farr

Applicant Email Address: esterlin@kennesaw.edu

Applicant Phone Number: 470-578-4828

Primary Appointment Title: Assistant Professor of Sociology

Institution Name(s): Kennesaw State University

Submission Date: Monday, May 1, 2017

Proposal Title: 313

Final Semester of Instruction: Spring 2018

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

Evelina Sterling, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Sociology, Kennesaw State University, esterlin@kennesaw.edu

Daniel Farr, Ph.D., Lecturer of Sociology, Kennesaw State University, dfarr4@kennesaw.edu

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

Dr. Dawn Baunach, Chair, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, Kennesaw State

Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered:

Social Problems, Soci2251, course offered Spring, Summer, Fall semester. Typically offered both online and face-to-face each semester. The focus of this transformation is the online format -- thus upcoming numbers will focus therein.

**Average Number of
Students per Course
Section:**

30

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

3

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

90

**List the original course
materials for students
(including title, whether
optional or required, & cost
for each item):**

Social Problems, 13th ed. Eitzen, Baca Zinn,
and Smith. Pearson. 2013. required text.
\$185.95

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

**Requested Amount of
Funding:**

\$10,800

Original per Student Cost: \$185.95

**Post-Proposal Projected
Student Cost:**

\$0

**Projected Per Student
Savings:**

\$185.95

**Projected Total Annual
Student Savings:**

\$16,735.50

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

Brightspace D2L - online course teaching platform.

Project Goals:

goal for this transformation is to reduce student costs while simultaneously maintaining high academic standards and rigor. The use of no-cost course materials will support the USG initiative to reduce student debt. The overall goal of student savings via the transformation of three online sections of Social Problems offered per year (spring, summer, fall) will result

in an annual savings of at least \$16,735 per year.

This project will identify a no-cost textbook as the foundational source material for a newly transformed online course. Adoption of a new textbook will necessitate the restructuring of the online course and the development of new course content materials, including: powerpoints, instructional lectures, writing assignments, discussion activities, ungraded student self-assessments, and graded assessments. It should be noted that the initially identified open-source textbook is not accompanied by ancillary resources, thus all instructional materials will be teacher developed (including lectures, lecture notes, powerpoints, test question banks).

Student success will be supported with a newly transformed online course designed around the no-cost digital course materials. The instructional materials, centered upon an open-source textbook, will be accessible by students within the online course platform, Desire2Learn (D2L), on their desktop computers, and mobile devices. Any additional instructional resources added to the course will also be no-cost to students.

The newly developed online course will receive Quality Matters (QM) peer-review to assure quality of structure.

Pedagogical transformation of the course will be centrally focused upon the course content and materials. The newly designed course will be informed by online best practices.

Through student assessment feedback, modifications to instructional technique, student learning activities, and assessments will be on-going.

Statement of Transformation:

1. This transformation is focused upon the development of a newly redesigned online QM-approved course based upon no-cost course materials. Within the creation of a new online course, which is expected to be taught three times annually (spring, summer, fall), the textbook will be sub-divided into course modules based on each major chapter (for example, gender inequality, the changing family, poverty, etc). Each module will be inclusive of several key components: a student work checklist, student learning objectives, the chapter reading, a Power Point presentation/lecture, a non-graded student learning self-assessment, a discussion board, and a graded assessment of student learning. Additionally, specific modules will include optional readings/articles, links to relevant sources/web resources, films, periodic exams, and written assessment activities and their supportive resources. All course materials will be no-cost to students. Course modules will encourage student-to-student, student-to-instructor, and student-to-content interactions and engagement.
2. The central stakeholders of this transformation are students, faculty, and the online sociology program.
3. Students remain central stakeholders of this transformation in that they benefit from cost savings in this newly transformed course. Students will also be informative of continued refinement and revision of the course in coming semesters as each cohort's feedback fosters changes to the class.

The transformation of this course will increase student success as all students will have access to the no-cost textbook and course materials. Currently, due to textbook costs, as many as 65% of students choose to forgo buying textbooks due to cost (USPIRG, 2014). Among such students, 94% indicated the concern that a lack of textbook access would hurt their course grade (USPIRG, 2014). The high cost of course texts results in academic ripples of poor student grades, course withdrawals, delayed degree completion, difficulties progressing in one's major, and may reduce the number of courses a student is able to enroll in during a semester. Indeed, 82% of students believe they would do significantly better in a course if their textbook were available online for free (USPIRG, 2014).

As course developers and instructors, we remain invested in maintaining academic rigor while also assuring the material remains current and relevant to the field of Sociology. Simultaneously, we are also concerned about the success of our students. We continuously seek to reduce withdrawal/fail/repeat rates for our classes and support appropriate progress towards the timely completion of student's degree program.

As online instructors we are also invested in the sharing learning outcomes from this endeavor with colleagues to encourage transformation of additional offerings of this course to no-cost resources.

The online sociology program remains a vested stakeholder in this process. The online sociology program was the first of its kind in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kennesaw State University and strives to remain a model of online learning best practices and the pursuit of student success. Having a newly developed no-cost QM-approved online section of Soci2251 will provide the opportunity for this new format to be taught by other instructors in the program. This is a particularly salient point for the sustainability of the online program and this course, as additional instructors teach this course online in the future.

Finally, the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department as a whole remains a stakeholder in this process as well. Although Sociology has a fully online degree program option, our successful adoption of no-cost materials may serve as a model for the Criminal Justice program as they consider the option of a fully online major.

4. This grant will support a complete transformation of this course, through the revision of course content and offering of a new QM-approved class for online instruction. The use of a new online Soci2251 will impact both the online program and the department—as student success in this course increases, student program progress rates improve, retention improves, and graduation rates will increase. This course will further the department's reputation in student cost-reduction as this will be the second course in the online program to be transformed to no-cost course materials. Institutionally, and within this college, this course will serve as a model of course cost reduction and the student success that is supported by such transformations.

Transformation Action Plan:

1. One open-source textbook has already been identified and reviewed for the purposes of this course redesign. Additional no-cost options, such as article collections and other open-source texts will also be sought using Google, word of mouth, conference networking, colleague consultation, and outreach via appropriate Sociology email listservs. Once various options are identified, they will be reviewed to determine the most effective option for this course. Selection will be based upon major topics covered, order of topic offering, how current the content is, and the reading level of the content. The review and selection of this material will be jointly shared by two full-time faculty in the department, Dr. Daniel Farr and Dr. Evelina Sterling with input from colleagues.

Should a ready built open-source textbook be selected, any gaps or shortcomings of that text will be identified. Additional no-cost resources, such as academic articles, will then be integrated into the course content to fill these gaps. The adoption of new course texts will require the development of new lectures and resources for the online environment, centrally via new Power Point presentation lectures and videos.

2. With the adoption of a new textbook, the online section of this course will require an entire redesign for Quality Matters review. The redesign of this course will include the restructuring of the chapter modules, revision of learning goals, creation of new instructional/lecture materials, the writing of questions for non-graded student assessments as well as graded assessments for student evaluation, and the development of new learning activities such as discussion board prompts and course writing assignments.

3. Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling will equally share in the development of all course material and the design of the online course. Both Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling are subject matter experts in Sociology. Dr. Farr has taught this course online and in the face-to-face environment. Both grant participants will serve as instructional designers for this new class. Each has participated in three College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) Distance Learning workshops (Build a Web, Skills Update, and Advanced Skills Update). Each workshop ranges in length from one to two semesters. No additional workshops are available with a specific focus upon online teaching in the CHSS. Between the two, they have successfully developed and received QM approval for a variety of online courses, totaling eight courses. Additionally, Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling are both approved reviewers for the Kennesaw State Quality Matters approval process, demonstrating their comprehensive understanding of effective online course design. In their current roles, both Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling were hired to positions centrally intended to support the online program and are expected to continue to actively participate in course design and instruction therein.

4. Access to the newly adopted no-cost course materials will be facilitated through the online instructional platform used by the USG system, Desire2Learn Brightspace. This will allow

students enrolled in the course easy access to all instructional materials.

Quantitative & Qualitative**Measures:**

1. We will evaluate the textbook transformation's effectiveness by student success and student perceptions of the redesigned Social Problems course. To do so, we will examine the following quantitative measures: the number of students who withdraw, fail, or earn a D in the course (a grade of C or better is required to fulfill major requirement); final grade distributions (mean, median, mode); select test questions that assess proficiency of course learning outcomes; mid-semester student course evaluations; students' course evaluations (quantitative scores); and an end of semester survey focused upon student feedback about the newly adopted course materials. Additionally, we will consult with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Distance Learning office to develop additional tools (both quantitative and qualitative) for assessing learning outcomes. The intention is to compare student knowledge at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the course to determine the effectiveness of the new course text's impact on learning.

2. This collected quantitative data will be analyzed on its own merits, but will also be contrasted with data points from recent semesters of the course, before the adoption of no-cost materials. Centrally, comparisons of the withdrawal and fail rates, as well as grade outcomes will be contrasted with recently taught online sections of this course to assess the impact of transforming to no-cost course materials.

3. Qualitative assessment will be accomplished with the use of students' course evaluations (qualitative feedback), qualitative responses in the mid-semester evaluations, and qualitative comments within the end of semester survey on the newly adopted course materials.

4. Appropriate IRB approval will be sought for the above described assessments. In terms of evaluation, we are most interested in assessing course and teaching effectiveness. More specifically, we seek to determine 1) is the course delivering what it promised in terms of affordable learning?; 2) how effective were the instructional materials and pedagogy involving the open-access text

in helping students learn the subject matter?; 3) how effective were course activities in improving the ability of students to use their newly acquired knowledge of social problems?; 4) which of the instruction-related materials and assignments, including the open-access text, were most helpful in meeting learning objectives?; 5) how did students evaluate this course and instructors compared to other courses?; and 6) what additional observations did students offer when responding to open-ended questions about the use of this new course material?

Timeline:

May 2017 – Spring 2018

May - June 2017:

Notification of award.

Attend Kick-Off Meeting June 5, 2017.

Review textbook options and explore additional supplementary resources.

Review online teaching literature for new ideas, innovations, and resources.

Based on material review, select specific no-cost text/material for course redesign.

Determine which topics to cover and in what order.

June - July 2017:

Collaboratively establish basic course outline, format, and structure.

Divide specific course development and module/topic responsibilities between Farr and Sterling; the chapters/modules of the course will be equally divided.

Farr and Sterling develop preliminary instructional resources for new online course.

Farr and Sterling design schedule for administration of course material for Fall 2017 semester.

August - Dec 2017:

Farr and Sterling will complete assigned module learning materials.

Farr and Sterling will review each other's developed course content and provide feedback for revision to assure course consistency.

Revision and finalization of instructional content will be completed.

Farr and Sterling will develop assessment questions for their assigned chapters/modules.

Each will review, comment upon, and develop additional assessment questions for each other's chapters/modules to assure assessment consistency across the course.

Online course will be finalized and submitted for institutional QM review.

July 2017:

In consultation with Distance Learning, quantitative and qualitative assessment tools will be developed for the fall administration of the course. IRB approval for appropriate evaluative tools will be sought.

Jan - April 2018:

The newly developed course will be offered to students in Spring 2018 by Dr. Farr or Sterling. During semester, assessments as described will be administered.

Final evaluation, assessment, and reporting of data outlined in Section 1.4 will be completed by Farr and Sterling.

Data will be shared with colleagues and administrators at KSU and may be presented in appropriate upcoming conferences or meetings.

Budget:

The requested total budget is \$10,800 (\$5,000 x 2 team members + \$800 for overall project expenses and travel).

Salary compensation for Daniel Farr = \$5,000

Salary compensation for Evelina Sterling = \$5,000

Overall project expenses and travel costs = \$800

Sustainability Plan:

As previously indicated, both Farr and Sterling are active in the online Sociology program and are expected to offer this course on a regular basis in the future. This course is a requirement of sociology majors and is typically offered online in spring, summer, and fall semesters.

Current enrollment for this course caps at 30 students per section, with one section offered per semester. It is possible that the enrollment numbers will increase in the future, but it is not expected to ever decrease. Institutionally, there are current efforts to significantly increase online offerings/seats in lower division courses.

As individual instructors, we will offer this no-cost-to-students course in future sections of online Social Problems. Both Drs. Sterling and Farr will use this no-cost format when offering this course online and will also translate this course to the face-to-face environment when taught by either. This course will additionally be shared with all other online instructors who may teach this course as an opportunity to support affordable student learning.

In an effort to maintain and continuously improve this course and its materials, we will meet at the end of each semester to assess if changes should be made for the next semester. Any

such changes will be based upon student feedback and our own evaluations of what is working (or not working) in the course. Adjustments in course content and material will be made to reflect changes in the field, as appropriate.



April 4, 2017

Dear Members of the Proposal Review Committee:

I am writing to support Dr. Dan Farr's and Dr. Evelina Sterling's proposal to create low cost to students learning materials for Sociology 2251: Social Problems. This course is an important part of the online sociology major, which supports 100+ online students. But this course and transformation will not only benefit online sociology majors. It will provide more flexible and affordable options for f2f students needing flexibility. Also, we have four additional online majors either online or coming online in fall 2017 that this course will support in providing a relevant and beneficial elective, thereby speeding up graduation time for students across the university while reducing student debt load.

This course is an excellent class for transformation with a no cost textbook option. By replacing the current textbook with no cost to students resources, Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling will save students in their social problems courses \$192.00 each, for a possible savings, if three sections of 30 students each are taught per year, of \$16,735.50.

At Kennesaw State University, faculty in the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department share their online courses with their colleagues, and it is possible that this course with no cost to students learning materials will benefit even more students as other faculty also teach the course using Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling's innovations. Dr. Farr and Dr. Sterling understand that an important part of facilitating wider adoption of this textbook is creating robust and valuable support materials—quizzes in the lms to go along with the textbook, easily replicable assignments with grading rubrics, and PowerPoints (to create voiceover lectures) that bridge the gap between the course goals and the textbook readings. They have the skills to create high quality support materials for this textbook transformation project.

At KSU, online courses go through a Quality Matters re-review every three years, and course materials are updated. Therefore, sustainability is built into the course design. As such, sustainability will not be a challenge for these talented professors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tamara Powell".

Dr. Tamara Powell, KSU Affordable Learning Georgia Champion and
Director, College of Humanities and Social Sciences Office of Distance Education



College of Humanities
and Social Sciences
Department of Sociology
and Criminal Justice

March 22, 2017

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Office of Distance Education

To the Members of the Review Committee:

I write this letter to offer my full support to the proposal for the Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation grant submitted by Dr. Evelina Sterling and Dr. Daniel Farr. The grant proposal seeks to identify and implement the use of no-cost course instructional materials for SOCI 2251: Social Problems. Social Problems is one of the three main lower-division Sociology courses offered by the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Each semester the department offers multiple sections of the course, some online, reaching over 100 students each semester. The current textbook costs nearly \$200. By having a quality, low cost textbook available to instructors, students could save \$16,735 at KSU alone!

These savings would be available to all faculty teaching the social problems course; Drs. Sterling and Farr plan to make the no cost textbook available to all instructors. As part of the ALG website, all materials developed with these funds are publicly available. Therefore, instructors at other institutions, most of which offer a Social Problems course in their Sociology departments, will have access to the textbook. Students across the state will be able to benefit from a low cost Social Problems textbook.

Drs. Sterling and Farr are superbly qualified to work on this project. They are eminent and experienced scholars and instructors. I can think of none better to take on this important task. In fact, Dr. Farr has previously and successfully developed an Introduction to Sociology (SOCI 1101) course through an ALG grant. In summary, I fully support this proposal and strongly encourage the committee to fund it.

Sincerely,

Dawn Michelle Baunach, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology
Chair, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice

Syllabus

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

SPRING 2018

Soci2251/W01, CRN#10728
Office: Pilcher Bldg., Rm. #143
Office hours: by appointment

Instructor: Evelina Sterling
Email: within D2L *preferred*; esterlin@kennesaw.edu
Phone: 470-578-4828

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

This class is an online class using Desire2Learn (D2L).

KSU uses D2L for all online courses.

A short video to introduce online students to D2L is available at

<http://youtu.be/9CO1BRI-E6E>

<http://youtu.be/lqBRHEXhs5A>

(***Please note, D2L has just recently been updated to a new version... so these introductions may not be super current, but offer a basic introduction).

ITS is offering Desire2Learn support and training for students is available at:

<http://uits.kennesaw.edu/support/training.php>

The basic information about KSU Distance Learning can be found at the following. Please read important information and see if you are IT savvy and prepared under “Students” “Online Readiness Assessment”:

<http://www.kennesaw.edu/distancelearning.shtml>

If you want to see how ready you are for a fully online class see:

<http://kennesaw-1021.smartermeasure.com/login>

[login with your net id and password]

For IT help for students and on campus lab hours:

<http://its.kennesaw.edu/students.htm>

To contact IT with a specific question email

studenthelpdesk@kennesaw.edu

Course Catalog Description:

- An overview of current social problems facing American society with attention to developing insights into the conceptual analysis of meaningful solutions. *Prerequisites:* Soci 1101

Broader Course Description:

This course will examine a diverse set of social issues (e.g., crime, racism, sexism, political policy, etc.) within a sociological framework. We will examine the contexts in which we define certain circumstances and social behaviors/practices as “problematic”. What we think of as social problems and issues has varied over time and will continue to do so. We will examine what are regarded as the primary social problems and issues facing the U.S. today, both as a nation and culture, as well as an actor within a global community.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Students will analyze a number of social problems utilizing different theoretical frameworks
- Students will utilize the sociological imagination when analyzing society's social problems
- Students will analyze and interpret empirical data/research that is relevant to and explanatory of current social problems.
- Students will examine and critique different proposed solutions and offer alternatives to society's social problems.
- Students will be able to think critically about how their actions have an effect on society.

Online “Office Hours”: I will not be holding scheduled online hours, but am certainly willing to schedule an office, online, or phone appointment to speak with you individually as needed.

Email: Email will be the best way to reach me—the best way to email me is within D2L itself. However, you may also email via the general email system (esterlin@kennesaw.edu) if needed (but please reference your specific course). Also, please note, I am able to reply to emails from KSU student email addresses – if you email me from a “personal” email I may not be able to reply. The reason to not reply to personal emails is to protect your privacy – what if you were being stalked and someone were trying to find out if you were in my course, for example. Throughout the work week I typically will be checking email daily and will likely respond to student emails within 24 hours. I do not check D2L or email as frequently during weekends, but am likely to do so intermittently. Should you email on a Friday afternoon, it is possible you will not hear back until Monday. If you email and do not hear back from me within an appropriate amount of time (approximately 36-48 hours), you may email again (however, accusatory or “angry” tone will not be helpful to your situation – please be professional and appropriate). Generally speaking, I am email responsive and will be back to you quickly.

Should you like to schedule an appointment to meet at my office or speak via the phone, please email a request in advance. Please note, if you request to speak to me “ASAP” or “tomorrow” that may not be possible given my work and life obligations – but I’m happy to get something on the calendar to speak with and mentor you.

Email etiquette: Email is an extremely important component in an online course and may be one of the few impressions I have of you. Please be conscious of the language and manner in which you email – components that are appropriate include: using an email subject (usually helpful to reference which course you are in!), an appropriate greeting (“Yo Prof” is not appropriate, LOL), basic body of your inquiry/etc (tip: most professors are not particularly keen on “Get back to me ASAP”; avoid ‘texting’ type short hand; also, it is usually appropriate to end with a “thank you” of some sort); a signature/name sign off. Obviously, some of the above aspects (particularly the course—as it comes clearly linked to your D2L class), but please do seek to be appropriate and professional, doing so leaves a positive impression.

I realize for many of you this will all seem obvious – unfortunately, I’ve interacted with many students who struggle with these basic skills. I regard these interactions not as just your impression to me, but as a means to mentor you through appropriate interactions you will likely have with future bosses/etc. Incidentally, generally speaking, the “end” of an email interaction situation is typically left to the “superior” actor – which for example in a dynamic of email

exchanges with faculty or a boss it might go as: student email professor question, professor responds, student emails thanks (now the professor needn't reply). This is basic etiquette for email interactions and speaks positively to the student/employee actor.

Netiquette" is network etiquette, the do's and don'ts of online communication. Netiquette covers both common courtesy online and the informal "rules of the road" of cyberspace. This page provides links to both summary and detail information about Netiquette for your browsing pleasure. <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

REQUIRED TEXT:

ONLINE Textbook: Social Problems: Continuity and Change

ISBN: 978-1-946135-23-0

<http://open.lib.umn.edu/socialproblems/>

**Additional readings will be posted on D2L – everything that is posted in the appropriate chapter modules is expected material/content to be addressed by student. The only material or content that is not required is clearly marked “OPTIONAL” in the title of the link/content. All other content and discussion boards will be material that may be included in quiz and test assessments.

SUMMARY OF GRADING:

Learning Tool	Percentage
Online Introduction & Settings	5%
Discussion Board Participation (Weekly)	10%
Quizzes (1% per quiz; 15 of 17)	15%
Test 1 (Chpt 1-5 & 9)	20%
Test 2 (6-8, 10 & 11))	20%
Test 3 (Chpt 12-16)	20%
Social Problems Paper	10%
	100%

Grading Scale: Course grades will be assigned based upon final points earned, using course weights above listed.

A = 90-100

D = 60-69.9

B = 80-89.9

F = <59.9

C = 70-79.9

- Assignments submitted through D2L only
- ALL QUIZZES, TESTS, AND DISCUSSIONS ARE DUE by 11:59 pm ON THE DUE DATE
- LATE PAPERS and work are NOT ACCEPTED. To clarify,

I do not accept late work.

- Unfortunately, KSU ITS performs intermittent technology and system updates. These sometimes occur over weekends and may impede access to D2L. I have sought to post dates on your calendar, but unforeseen circumstances may arise and will be dealt with as needed.

Description of Learning Tools and Grading

Introduction (5%):

Discussion Board: You will offer a brief introduction to the class via the online discussion board – this introduction should be relatively concise, but offer a general introduction of yourself to the class. Generally speaking this would take the form of a solid paragraph and would engage some information about what you are majoring in (any minors), your status/year, career/job information if relevant, why you are “interested” in course, and at least two things about yourself (typically, students speak to family, pets, hobbies, etc.). Total posting should likely run 3-5 sentences.

Photo: Additionally, please post a photo to your D2L profile (this occurs in the main D2L page where you logged in – under “Profile” “Change Picture”). Seeing your photo helps me feel more connected to you as a student and helps me more readily recognize someone—particularly in receiving emails and reading the discussion boards. If for some reason you do not wish to post a personal picture of yourself, I am open to other images of personal significance, or you could create a “cartoon” version of yourself online if you wished.

Settings: In addition to posting a picture, I ask that you modify your D2L settings to simplify classroom interactions and processes. Primarily, I am looking to have you set up so that when you reply to discussion threads, you do not automatically include the prior postings (it makes for very long discussion postings). I am also looking for your emails to include any prior email interactions—this is particularly helpful if we have an email exchange, to see what was previously stated or discussed. To modify discussion settings, again on main D2L page – under “Account Settings”, “Discussions”, under “Reply Settings” uncheck “Include original post in reply” and “Save”; to then modify Email Settings (still under “Account Settings”), under “Email” tab, check “Include original message in email replies”, you may now “Save and Close”. (These are easy adjustments!) After you have adjusted the settings, you should reply to my email to demonstrate that you now have the correct email setup. If you’ve added the class during drop/add, please email me to be sure I can get an email to you for you to reply to!

Note: Failure to adjust the discussion board settings, will result in a one-time warning from instructor. Later postings with included original messages will not receive credit. (Late submissions will not be accepted for credit)

Discussion Board (General) (10%): Participation will be based upon your preparedness, discussion of readings, and intelligent class dialogue on the discussion board. Participation may consist of multiple approaches: critical and thoughtful responses to faculty initiated discussion prompts, created discussion threads exploring additional topics/themes introduced within or relevant to course readings/topics, links to youtube videos/news articles/etc and prompts to initiate relevant discussion. Your posting *should not* be pure opinion – you should be speaking sociologically. If you wish to argue something “good” or “bad”, focus on social evidence to support reasoning. Relying upon religious texts solely (of whatever form) is not appropriate foundational support for arguments within a sociological realm – although it may be appropriate to speak to generalized religiosity in a particularly context and the implications therein upon various social issues. Avoid dialogue such as “I like your posting” or other simplistic commentary.

Postings that essentially are “verbal nods” to another’s postings (ie. “Suzanne, I totally agree with you!”) are ineffective and not appropriate. It is also ineffective to purely quote from

the text or to restate other's postings—we are all reading the same materials; effective and appropriate deployment of course concepts/terms within context demonstrates understanding and engagement. I encourage you to post within each chapter's discussion – you are not required to reply to the posted “prompt”, but may build and create new threads of discussion—ideas that emerged to you as you read, perhaps links to articles or youtube videos relating to content, etc. Basically, you may reply to the idea prompt, or create new dialogue – much as would happen in a face-to-face classroom. One never knows what ideas may emerge... new ideas make for far more interesting and engaging dialogue and thought as related to our readings!

You will be expected to participate in all discussion boards. For each discussion you should start a new thread of your own discussion and then should also reply to at least one classmate (once you post your first thread, you should see other's threads to which you can reply... unless you are the first to post, of course). Postings to the discussion board after the noted deadlines in course calendar will not be granted credit as they are “late”. You are expected to participate frequently given the short semester time span. These four scores will be averaged to provide your final participation score. Thus, you are expected to remain an active and effective online participant throughout the semester to secure a strong grade in this component.

You are welcome to participate in additional discussion boards beyond the minimum. You may reply to multiple threads in any discussion (you are not limited to posting only one response). You will be assessed in your discussion posting based upon the quality of your posting and of your response posting(s).

Participation scores will be disseminated in 5 points increments (ie. 100, 95, 90, 85...). Exceptional participation may result in “**extra credit**”, via participation score of 105 or 110.

Note, your introductory discussion board posting will not be counted towards this aspect of your course grade.

Quizzes (15%): There will be a quiz per chapter (and syllabus/course start material). These quizzes will center primarily upon your textbook reading, but may also include questions from your additional readings and films. Quizzes will consist of 10 multiple-choice questions and will be timed to 20 minutes. This time limit should allow the opportunity to briefly “look up” some information from the readings, but is clearly not enough time to look up every answer, unless you have adequately read and prepared for the quiz. There will be 19 quizzes over the course of the semester – a syllabus/introduction quiz and a quiz aligning with each textbook chapter. *You will get TWO chances to complete each quiz. Please note that given the randomization of the quiz questions, you may receive different questions for each quiz attempt.*

As I understand the system, a time clock will appear to you when you take the quiz– but I believe it only shows “minutes” not “seconds”. Thusly, once your time clock hits 15 minutes you better hurry up and finish! If your quiz time exceeds this time your grade will be adjusted to count only the questions answered (saved) correctly in the first 10 minutes.

Quizzes are available each week from Tuesday until Monday at 11:59 pm. Please keep up with the weekly quizzes as no make ups will be provided.

Immediately after taking a quiz you should see a preliminary grade. Once the quiz period has ended I will review quizzes for any problems and to make grade adjustments as needed. At which time you will then also have the opportunity to review your quiz. Typically, the quiz should be available for review on the day after the entire quiz period ends at 12:01am. Within the quiz review (accessed by clicking into “quizzes” at the top of the main page and the little triangle button by each quiz name to bring up a dropdown menu...) you will have access to any questions

you answered incorrectly [you can also click to get a rough idea of where in the textbook this question is roughly drawn from, or from what article or film].

At the end of the semester, the 3 lowest quiz grades will be dropped and the remaining quiz grades will be averaged for your quiz total score. Thus, 16 quiz grades will be applied to your course grade.

Please note, collaboration on quizzes is a form of academic dishonesty and if noted will be pursued, per below “Plagiarism and Cheating” policies.

Syllabus quiz: This semester I am actually going to try something different with the syllabus quiz – it will have MORE questions (25 questions) than typical quizzes, but it will have a TWO HOUR time limit (as I have to put in a time limit in the system) and up to 10 attempts (again, system requires a number-can’t just say unlimited)! Essentially, you can retake the quiz as many times as you wish to potentially earn a 100. This is the ONLY quiz that will be set up like this. This is setup in this fashion to reinforce and clarify all course structure, expectations, and content to hopefully guide you to greater success in the course and a freebie quiz grade!

Unlike other quizzes, you should also be able to go into your quiz review (immediately, I hope) after taking the quiz to see what questions you answered incorrectly—hmmm... if you can take the quiz multiple times and can review the questions you are getting incorrect, seems to me everyone should ideally be able to earn a 100! [assuming I’ve done the D2L settings correctly!.. if not, please do email me so I can try to work it out!]

Tests (20% each = 60% total): Each of these tests will entail approximately one-third of the course content in a singular exam structure. The exams will likely consist of all multiple-choice questions from the six affiliated chapters. The test will likely consist of 51 multiple choice questions, worth a possible 102 points (100 points, plus a 2 points “bonus” question). Rather than a specific bonus question (I always hated getting to the bonus question and being clueless!), I allow you to miss any question on the test and still earn a 100.

The questions on the test will be spread roughly equally across the chapters and appear randomly distributed among the chapters (ie. You will not have the first 8 questions on chapter 1; next 8 on chapter 2; --- they will be randomly assigned across chapters throughout the exam). Also, once you complete a 10-question “section,” you will not be allowed to go back and change answers.

The test will be limited to 75 minutes in length total. Please be sure to SAVE as you go! Each test will be available for the entire week (Tuesday until Monday) of each exam week (Weeks #5, #10, and #16); however, once you start the exam, you must complete it in a single 75 minute session so please plan accordingly.

Please note, the system will post a preliminary grade upon exam completion – this is a preliminary grade that will only be affirmed after the completion and review of the test by the instructor after the end of the test period. (Unfortunately, due to system settings it will appear as an awkward % with decimals... I will manually adjust these to reflect the correct total grade after the exam).

Please also note, collaboration on tests is a form of academic dishonesty and if noted will be pursued, per below “Plagiarism and Cheating” policies.

WORDS OF CAUTION: (1) As an instructor, I take academic honesty and plagiarism very seriously. Your papers will be assessed closely on these matters, using originality detection software. As is clarified below, if concerns of plagiarism emerge, the matter will be pursued as outlined.

(2) Students are responsible for the document that is uploaded and submitted to the instructor. You are responsible to adhering to the file formats that are supported by D2L (MS Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, Acrobat PDF, HTML, RTF, and Plain text). Incomplete or “draft” versions of papers, if submitted, account to the content the instructor must assess --- if this were a face-to-face course, and you handed me a paper and then returned to me two days later with the “correct” version I would be unable to accept the corrected version without grade penalty (as described for late papers), thus I must take a firm line on this issue. Additionally, it is student responsibility to submit a file that is correct—submitting a “corrupted” file will not allow for resubmission of a secondary file. Unfortunately, some students have, in the past, used either of these tactics with hopes of extra time to complete an assignment; as such, I must accept the file submitted (to the Dropbox) at face value—unless a corrected version is provided in a timely fashion (with grade lateness penalty if necessary).

Social Problems Paper (10%): Each student must write a 2-3 page paper addressing a specific social problem which will be due during Week #9. Detailed instructions will be posted in D2L during Week #5. This paper will involve selecting a specific social problem, discussing its impact on society (why is it a social problem), analyzing what is said in the media about this problem, and comparing this narrative to what the research indicates.

Extra Credit: At the moment there is no intended extra credit opportunity. However, as noted under the discussion boards, there is some opportunity therein.

Should an extra credit opportunity be offered, it will be announced in the module “updates and deadlines” sections.

Further instructional information is presented in weekly modules so please check D2L regularly.

Plagiarism and Cheating are unacceptable behaviors. If you are found to have cheated or submitted uncited or plagiarized work you will be sent directly for formal procedures with Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI) office. If instructor allegations are affirmed by the SCAI office you will fail this course. Thereafter, presuming reenrollment into internship, you will need to locate a new internship location and you will be limited to a maximum of 3 credits of internship. Additional penalty may be implemented by the SCAI office, in keeping to their procedural policies.

If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism you should consult the undergraduate catalog & handbooks. You may also wish to consult the SCAI website at <https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/>. I particularly encourage review of the KSU Student Code of Conduct at <https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct>.

A section of particular importance:

Plagiarism and Cheating

No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

Academic Integrity Statement

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

Due Dates & Make-up exams/quizzes:

Make-up exams will only be allowed in extreme circumstances with appropriate documentation such as: 1) documented illness (a note from a physician indicating your inability to take an exam due to illness or medical treatment), 2) written certification of a death in the family, 3) written certification (from court or police, through the Dean's office, or other appropriate offices) is provided for rare events (not covered by 1 or 2) that would make attendance of the exam impossible. A note from one's "mother," "friend," etc. is NOT sufficient. If in doubt, speak with me.

Please contact professor privately for all personal hardships.

Student Disability Services

Kennesaw State University welcomes all students, recognizing that variations of abilities contribute to a richly diverse campus life. Prospective students are encouraged to visit the university -- explore the campus and talk with faculty, staff and current students. Find out that KSU is the place for you.

<http://sss.kennesaw.edu/sds> Kennesaw Campus: 470-578-2666; Marietta Campus: 678-915-7244

Student Success Services (SSS): The SSS center (Kennesaw Hall, Room 2401; phone: 770-423-6600) provides year-round counseling, advising, and testing services. For incoming students, First Year, Transfer and Parent Orientation services are also available. They have recently added a program devoted to Alcohol and Drug Education & Prevention and a Collegiate Recovery Center. The SSS website is <http://www.kennesaw.edu/studentsuccess/>

KSU's Student Development Center: The Student Development Center (Carmichael Student Center, Suite 267; phone: 770-423-6443) provides information of particular interest to adult learners, minority students, multicultural and international students, and disabled students; and provides links to opportunities for student community service and a peer mentor program. The Student Development website is http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/home/home.html

KSU's English as a Second Language (ESL) Study and Tutorial Center: The ESL Study and Tutorial Center (Library, Room 442) offers tutoring in writing a paper, reviewing grammar, reading, and preparing for the Regents' tests. Appointments are usually necessary. For an appointment, contact David Schmidt at (770) 423-6377, or dschmidt@kennesaw.edu. The ESL Study and Tutorial Center website is <http://www.kennesaw.edu/uc/esl/>

Writing Center: "The KSU Writing Center helps students in all majors improve their writing. Experienced, friendly writing assistants help with topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit writingcenter.kennesaw.edu or stop by English Building, Room 242 (Kennesaw campus) or Johnson Library, Room 121 (Marietta campus)."
<http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter>

NOTE: If you use campus computers, please do not save your work on the computers. Use a usb drive or email it to yourself. Computers are periodically wiped clean and your work will be lost. This is not an excused reason to not turn in papers on time.

OVERALL COURSE OUTLINE – Social Problems Spring 2017

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus throughout the semester as needed

Week (Tuesdays-Mondays)	Module	Assignments Due ALL Assignments must be completed before 11:59 pm on Mondays
PART 1: Inequality		
Week 1: 1/8-1/15	Introduction, Syllabus, and Chapter 1: Understanding Social Problems	Syllabus Quiz Introductions Assignment Discussion Board #1 Quiz #1
Week 2: 1/16-1/22	Chapter 2: Poverty & Chapter 3: Racial and Ethnic Inequality	Discussion Board #2 & #3 Quiz #2 & #3
Week 3: 1/23-1/29	Chapter 4: Gender Inequality	Discussion Board #4 Quiz #4
Week 4: 1/30-2/5	Chapter 5: Sexual Orientation and Inequality and Chapter 6: Sexual Behaviors	Discussion Board #5 & #6 Quiz #5 & #6
Week 5: 2/6-2/12	EXAM #1	EXAM—Chapters 1-5 and 9 <i>Social Problems Paper Instructors Posted</i>
PART 2: Aging, Crime, Family & Education		
Week 6: 2/13-2/19	Chapter 6: Aging and Ageism	Discussion Board #7 Quiz #7
Week 7: 2/20 – 2/26	Chapter 7: Alcohol & Other Drugs and Chapter 8: Crime and Criminal Justice	Discussion Board #8 & #9 Quiz #8 & #9
Week 8: 2/27-3/5	Chapter 10: The Changing Family	Discussion Board #10 Quiz #10
Week 9: 3/6-3/12	Chapter 11: Schools and Education	Discussion Board #11 Quiz #11 SOCIAL PROBLEMS PAPER DUE
Week 10: 3/13-3/19	EXAM #2	EXAM—Chapters 6, 7, 8 10, and 11
PART 3: Work, Health, Location, Environment and War		
Week 11: 3/20-3/26	Chapter 12: Work and the Economy	Discussion Board #12 Quiz #12
Week 12: 3/27-4/2	Chapter 13: Health and Healthcare	Discussion Board #13 Quiz #13
SPRING BREAK: 4/3-4/9		
Week 13: 4/10-4/16	Chapter 14: Urban and Rural Problems	Discussion Board #14 Quiz #14
Week 14: 4/17-4/23	Chapter 15: Population and the Environment	Discussion Board #15 Quiz #15
Week 15: 4/26-4/30	Chapter 16: War and Terrorism	Discussion Board #16 Quiz #16
Week 16: 5/1-5/6	EXAM #3	EXAM—Chapters 12-16

Final Report

ALG Grant Final Report

Date: May 18, 2018

Grant Round: 9

Grant Number: #313

Institution: Kennesaw State University

Project lead: Evelina Sterling

Team Members:

- Evelina Sterling, Asst. Professor of Sociology, Dept. of Sociology and Criminal Justice
- Daniel Farr, Lecturer of Sociology, Dept. of Sociology and Criminal Justice

Course Name & Number: Social Problems Soci2251

Semester program began: Summer 2017

Final Semester of Implementation: Fall 2018

Total number of students Affected During Project: 29

1. Narrative

The overall outcome of student learning with the adoption of this new Open Source textbook (Social Problems: Continuity and Change; ISBN: 978-1-946135-23-0) has been demonstrated a relatively neutral overall grade change from prior recent online offerings of this course. However, one may interpret this as a positive outcome in that a similar percentage of students passed the course with free teaching materials (as compared to potentially costly textbooks). Additionally, when surveyed, the students in this course reported positive interpretations of the text and particularly appreciated the choice of a no-cost text (see charts).

This new text was adopted for use in a newly redesigned online section of SOCI 2251: Social Problems in Spring 2018. The newly developed online course received positive student responses overall (with 94% of evaluation respondents reporting “strongly agree” or “agree” to “Overall the content of this course contributed to my knowledge and intellectual skills.”). One of the challenges that accompanied this transformation was the significant effort involved in developing PowerPoint presentations/lectures to accompany the text material. This text did not have any ancillary resources available to instructors.

At the end of the semester a survey was administered to the course, with approximately half the class responding (55.2%). While a chart below breaks down survey responses specifically, a brief summary highlights the positive impressions students had of this text. It is useful to note that all respondents were using the text at least once a week, with nearly 1/3 using it 3+ times a week and another nearly 1/3 using it 2-3 times per week; as such, this feedback is from students who were actively engaging with the textbook. Most students found the text easy to use (50% rating it very easy; with approximately

70% rating it at least slightly easy). Many found the text interesting (~44% very interesting; ~88% finding it at least slightly interesting). Everyone found the text at least slightly clear, with the majority (75%) rating it as very clear. The visual appeal of the text was not as strongly rated, but was positive overall, with approximately 88% indicating it was at least slightly appealing—although 12.5% indicated it was slightly unappealing. The overall quality was well received with nearly 94% of students rating it as slightly good or better (81% reporting very good or somewhat good quality). Finally, 87.5% indicated they preferred the no-cost free online textbook to a traditional paper textbook. Overall, the survey indicated an approximately 80-90% positive response to the text by students in the course.

Student learning outcomes appear to be stable/positive, as demonstrated by grade outcomes and by fail/withdrawal rates. These findings will be explored below.

At this stage, we do not foresee any major changes likely to occur with the next offering of this course. Student outcomes and the course organization/structure appear to have been successful.

2. Student quotes

Of the sixteen survey respondents, when asked “What suggestions would you give about improvements/changes that should be made to this course?”, nine provided written responses that were positive or indicated “no changes”/“none I enjoyed this course!”/etc.

Examples:

“I enjoyed the text and the layout. I do wish that it did not introduce the subject as draw out as it does and would just get to the facts. The introductions do make you interested though and help with any misunderstood background information. Overall it is an interesting and convenient text.”

“Although I did say I prefer a traditional text book, cost wise, the free online textbook was more affordable and convenient.”

Other comments addressed aspects about course notes, powerpoints, assessments primarily, however one did offer critique of the text:

“The information in the textbook was a little dated. New editions for every year would be beneficial.”

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

Overall Measurements

Student Opinion of Materials

Total number of students affected in this project (first semester of implementation): 29

Positive: Overall, positive – see charts for details.

Student Survey (16 participants; 55.2% of class)

Question	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Slightly easy	Neither difficult nor easy	Slightly Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Very difficult
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How would you rate the ease of using the online textbook in this course?	50%	12.50%	6.25%	12.50%	18.75%	-	-
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	Very interesting	Somewhat interesting	Slightly interesting	Neither interesting nor uninteresting	slightly interesting	somewhat uninteresting	very uninteresting
How engaging/interesting is the writing of the online textbook?	43.75%	31.25%	12.50%	6.25%	-	-	6.25%

	Very clear	Somewhat clear	slightly clear	neither clear nor unclear	slightly unclear	somewhat unclear	very unclear
How understandable is the writing of the online textbook?	75.00%	18.75%	6.25%	-	-	-	-

	Very appealing	Somewhat appealing	Slightly appealing	neither appealing nor unappealing	Slightly unappealing	Somewhat unappealing	very unappealing
Overall, how would you rate the visual appeal of the online textbook (e.g., layout, colors, cover, etc.)?	37.50%	18.75%	31.25%	-	12.50%	-	-

	More than 3 times per week	2-3 times per week	Once a week	Once every two weeks	Once a month	Once a semester	Never
How frequently did you use the online textbook in this course?	31.25%	31.25%	37.50%	-	-	-	-

	Very good quality	Somewhat good quality	Slightly good quality	Neither good nor poor quality	Slightly poor quality	Somewhat poor quality	Very poor quality
Rate the overall level of the quality of the online textbook you used in this course.	50%	31.25%	12.50%	6.25%	-	-	-

	Traditional paper textbook	No-cost free online textbook
If given the choice between a traditional paper textbook and a no-cost free online textbook, which type of text do you prefer?	12.50%	87.50%

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: 29

- Positive: 94 % of 16 number of respondents
- Neutral: 6 % of 16 number of respondents
- Negative: 0 % of 16 number of respondents

Student Learning Outcomes and Grades

For comparison purposes, comparisons were made to other online offerings of this course, since Spring 2016. In nearly all of the semesters, one section of Soci 2251 were offered online.

This was the first semester of implementation for the ALG transformed online course. Grade outcomes as compared to other semesters was consistent.

Across the six sections of the course assessed, three were taught by part-time faculty and three by full-time faculty members. Across the six sections, the mean percentage of passing with a C or higher was 93%, with a median of 92%. Our no-cost transformation yields a 93% success rate of C or higher – with the remaining 7% accounted for by two students who withdrew from the course. This outcome largely aligned with the outcomes of most other courses of recent semesters.

Of particular note of comparison is Farr's Sp'16 course. This transformation course was informed by the course structure largely established in Farr's online course environment, with the central transformations being the transition to no-cost text and an increased utilization of film/digital content to support course discussions. In both courses, approximately 90% of students passed with a C or better and the only students not to have withdrawn from the course – no students earned D or F grades. In comparison 3 of 4 other online offerings (informed by a different online course structure) had more students earn grade of D or F (3.6-6.6%). One of the 4 had a distinctly high grade distribution where all students earned grades of A or B—an unusual grade outcome.

	A	B	C	D	F	W	%C or higher
Sp'16 - Farr (FT)	30.0%	53.3%	3.7%	-	-	10.0%	90%
FI'16 - PT A	73.3%	16.8%	-	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	90.10%
Sp'17 - PT B	43.3%	36.8%	6.6%	6.6%	-	6.6%	86.70%
Sum'17 - FT A	42.9%	32.1%	21.4%	3.6%	-	-	96.40%
FI'17 - PT A	70.0%	30.0%	-	-	-	-	100%
Sp'18 - Sterling (FT) – ALG COURSE	20.7%	37.9%	34.4%	-	-	7.0%	93%

PT = Part-time instructor

FT = Full-time instructor

No section in
Sum'16

- **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?**
- ☐ 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

Unfortunately, drop rates are not a measure we can obtain across the semesters – “drops” only occur during the drop/add period at the start of semester. At that time, given the high number of online courses offered at our university, students are making regular changes to their schedule in pursuit of the most favorable choice.

Statistics comparing this semester’s implementation of ALG transformation demonstrates a neutral outcome. It appears that for most instructors, the Fail/D grade outcome runs between 6.6% and 10%. Our ALG transformation is consistent with a 7% withdraw rate.

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:

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

10 % of students, out of a total 29 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)

Narrative

As previously noted, grade outcomes were consistent with most other online offerings of this course, as were the F/W rates.

One distinction found in this experience was the high levels of assessment completion found across the students in the course (who did not withdraw). Both Sterling and Farr have taught high numbers of online courses in recent years and shared in the experience that on average 3-4 students in an online course (of ~30) seem to fade away from participation—neglecting assessments and becoming inconsistent with participation. However, in this course Sterling witnessed a high level of consistent participation.

Among quizzes for example, across 19 quizzes, ~70% students completed all quizzes; 18% completed all but one, and the remaining 12% missed 2-3 quizzes. This was high, consistent quiz participation.

Among 18 discussion boards, 48% participated in all, 33% completed all but one or two, and the remaining 19% participated in all expect three or four.

Among the three tests, 100% of the 27 students (those who did not withdraw) participated in all exams.

Finally, 100% of students (n=27) also submitted the course paper.

The HIGH level of participation in assessments by all students in the course is distinct from other courses we have taught.

It is impossible to distinguish if this high level of participation is the result of the no-cost transformation, instructor skill, or mere change of student enrollment. However, neither Sterling nor Farr has ever had a course of this size with such high level of consistent participation. Given that both the course structure and Sterling's instruction were consistent with prior instructional experience in this course itself and in other similar level courses at KSU, we believe there is some positive interaction occurring via the inclusion of the no-cost text. It is possible that students who might not typically purchase books were positively impacted by this no-cost scenario. Herein, it may also be the mobile-accessibility of the text that is at play---student can access the text and course content anywhere they can access D2L.

Sustainability Plan

Kennesaw State University is a QM-subscribing institution, and all online courses at KSU must pass the internal Quality Matters process to be taught. We also require that courses be re-reviewed everything 3 years. This online sociology course will be reviewed for quality and student success and revised as needed on the normal 3-year QM schedule.

Future Plans

The experience of adopting a no-cost, Open source textbook for this course has encouraged us to more actively pursue the development of additional courses based on no-cost instructional materials. This was the second course in the department to be transformed by Farr --- Introduction to Sociology, Soci1101 being previously supported by ALG for a no-cost adoption.

The findings of this experience will be shared with the department to encourage more online instructors to adopt the use of this no-cost instructional materials based online course section.

Currently, there are no plans to present or publish findings from this experience. This said, based on this positive experience, Farr has applied and received another ALG grant to transform another course in the department, CRJU1101: Introduction to Criminal Justice, to no-cost materials with another colleague.

This has been a positive and rewarding experience and students have certainly indicated that they were quite pleased with taking a course that did not use a costly textbook!

Description of Photograph



Daniel Farr & Evelina Sterling