

Application Details

Manage Application: ALG Textbook Transformation Grants Round 8

Award Cycle: Round 8

Internal Submission Deadline: Sunday, December 11, 2016

Application Title: 285

Application ID: #001292

Submitter First Name: Constantin

Submitter Last Name: Ogloblin

Submitter Title: Associate Professor of Economics

Submitter Email Address: coglobli@georgiasouthern.edu

Submitter Phone Number: (330) 524-5134

Submitter Campus Role: Proposal Investigator (Primary or additional)

Applicant First Name: Constantin

Applicant Last Name: Ogloblin

Co-Applicant Name(s): --

Applicant Email Address: coglobli@georgiasouthern.edu

Applicant Phone Number: (330) 524-5134

Primary Appointment Title: Associate Professor of Economics

Institution Name(s): Georgia Southern University

Submission Date: Monday, December 12, 2016

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

Constantin Ogloblin, Ph.D. (PI)
Associate Professor of Economics
coglobli@georgiasouthern.edu

William Levernier, Ph.D.
Professor of Economics
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John Brown, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Economics
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John King, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Economics
jking@georgiasouthern.edu

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

Rand Ressler, Ph.D.
Department Chair and Professor of Economics
Department of Finance and Economics
Georgia Southern University

Proposal Title: 285

Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered:

ECON 2106 Business Economics. Summer 2017, Fall 2017.

Average Number of Students per Course Section: 45

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 24

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year: 1,040

List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or required, & cost for each item): Microeconomics by Michael Parkin Required \$197.90
Microeconomics by Karlan and Morduch Required \$232.00
Microeconomics: Principles and Applications by Hall and Lieberman Recommended \$252.20

Requested Amount of Funding: \$20,800

Original per Student Cost: \$228

Post-Proposal Projected Student Cost: \$29

Projected Per Student Savings: \$199

Projected Total Annual Student Savings: \$206,960

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

Folio (Georgia Southern University's customized version of Desire2Learn/Brightspace)

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

Final Semester of Instruction: Fall 2017

Project Goals:

The main goal of the project is to make student learning more affordable. Given the current estimated average textbook cost of \$228 per student and the proposed price of the course package that we intend to develop (\$29), the cost of the course materials will be reduced by \$199 per student. And considering that on average 1,040 students take the course during an academic year, the total student savings from the project are estimated at \$206,960 per academic year. Moreover, a large portion of the proceeds from the course package sales will be used for scholarships, to further help students cover their costs and reward their achievements.

The second goal is to ensure consistency in the course topic coverage, learning objectives, and assessment standards while maintaining instructors' academic freedom and encouraging diversity of teaching styles. Using the list of course topics recommended by the Department based on the course learning objectives, the team will develop core course modules that could be easily customized by instructors to suit their individual teaching styles and accommodate their preferences with regard to more in-depth coverage of certain topics and adding optional content to the course.

The third goal is to improve teaching and learning effectiveness and efficiency. This is consistent with and supported by the second goal. Developing the course content with the learning objectives in mind will ensure better targeting student learning outcomes. And providing instructors with the opportunity to adjust their course materials to make the best use of their expertise in specific areas and best suit their teaching styles will certainly ensure more effective teaching. We believe that none of the commercial textbooks currently on the market is able to achieve this goal to the extent that the proposed project can. Another big advantage of the proposed course package over the traditional texts is that its digital content and links to open sources can be easily modified to reflect the latest developments in the field and current events. Finally, higher efficiency of the proposed course package will be ensured by the fact that it will be delivered entirely through Folio, the learning management system adopted

university-wide. Students are familiar with the system and trained to use it, so they won't need to waste valuable course time learning how to use various platforms for course resources offered by commercial publishers. The same is true about instructors, many of whom have gone through training at the University's Center for Teaching and Technology and are certified users of Folio.

Statement of Transformation:

The team intends to develop a low-cost-to-students course package for ECON 2106 Business Economics, an area F core curriculum course required for business majors offered by the Department of Finance and Economics (typically ten sections per regular semester). The proposed course package will have a modular structure, suitable for both face-to-face and online courses, and include the following:

A digital text containing chapters on the core topics and, possibly, some optional chapters. The text will be based on OpenStax *Microeconomics*, which will be upgraded and modified to better target the course learning objectives, achieve the proper level of rigor, and ensure accuracy of the content.

Rich multimedia content, which includes open-source materials found on the Internet and elsewhere

Interactive presentations and other visual materials developed by the team.

Interactive self-learning and formative assessment tools for each core topic (mostly developed by the team).

Testing and summative assessment tools aligned with the course learning objectives, such as quiz and exam questions in various formats (multiple choice, multiple select, numeric answer, graphing, paragraph fill-in-the-blanks, multipart algorithmic, open-ended short answer, essay, etc.) and embedded questions for overall assessment of student learning outcomes.

The most important stakeholders are students. As indicated above, students will benefit from the transformation in several ways: (1) An average student is expected to save \$199 or 87% of the cost he/she pays for currently used course materials, with total students' savings of \$206,960 per academic year. (2) Students are expected to learn more successfully due to the higher quality and more focused and consistent course materials, as well as more effective learning tools that extensively use visualization and interaction. (3) Since all course materials will be based on the familiar Folio platform, students will be able to use their time more efficiently, focusing on the course, rather than spending time and effort on learning a course platform specific to a particular publisher. (4) A large portion of the proceeds from the course package sales will be used for scholarships, to help students cover their costs and reward them for success.

Instructors who teach the course will benefit from the thorough, relevant, and up-to-date course materials developed by their colleagues who will be open to their feedback and

constructive criticism. They will also gain from the effective ready-to-use teaching and assessment tools included in the proposed package, such as the rich multimedia content and interactive presentations. Finally, the proposed package will allow instructors to more fully utilize their potential as teachers and use their expertise in specific areas because they will be able to easily edit and customize it to best suit their individual teaching styles and topic coverage preferences.

Since the course is required for all business majors and is a prerequisite for the upper division economics courses required to complete the College of Business BBA and BA in economics programs, better student learning outcomes that are expected to result from the transformation will lead to higher progression and graduation rates and thus will benefit the College of Business and the University as well.

Transformation Action Plan:

The transformation action plan aims at developing a high-quality low-cost-to-students course package that would be adopted by the Department to use for all sections of the ECON 2106 Business Economics course. The team plans to develop all the materials listed in the Statement of Transformation.

All members of the team are subject matter experts who have been teaching the course for fifteen years or more. Two members of the team are trained and certified users of Folio and Quality Matters course reviewers. In addition, the primary investigator (PI) has more than ten years of experience in developing course materials for major textbook publishers (Pearson, Cengage, Worth, and others). These materials include the recently published *Study Guide with Practice Problems* for use with the innovative microeconomics text authored by three prominent economists from University of Chicago, the interactive online Problem Sets for courses in international economics published electronically using the Aplia (Cengage) platform, and other instructional materials that are used by instructors and students nationwide. In addition to his high proficiency in designing courses in Folio, the PI also has extensive experience in instructional design using advanced technology tools such as Adobe Creative Cloud suite, Adobe Captivate, Camtasia Studio, iSpring Presenter, and various HTML/CSS editors and other web design tools. The PI is committed to using this expertise and experience to implement the proposed plan.

All team members will participate in (1) selecting core course topics, (2) editing the OpenStax chapters and selecting other open-source content for the topics of their best expertise, (3) developing additional course materials for the topics of their best expertise, (4) reviewing the work of peer team members.

The PI will be responsible for (1) summarizing the team members' peer reviews and discussions, (2) putting together and editing the package as a whole, (3) creating digital course content using instructional design tools, (4) implementing the course in Folio, ensuring

consistency across the course modules and tools and overall consistent and aesthetic course design and delivery in line with the Quality Matters standards.

Students will automatically get full access to the Folio course, with all the resources included in the package available to them, after registering for the course and paying the \$29 course package fee.

Quantitative & Qualitative Measures: Data on students' results in the course (overall course percentage scores as well as scores on selected tests) will be collected by instructors and analyzed by the team using advanced statistical methods that will allow us to estimate the impact of the transformation on student success controlling for other factors. In addition, the achievement of the course learning objectives will be measured using special assessment questions embedded in the exams. Qualitative analysis of student experience will be based on student feedback through surveys (in class and via Folio), individual interviews, and focus groups.

Timeline:

The table below shows the timeline with the milestone dates through the end of the first semester the transformed course is offered.

Activity	Participants	Completion Date
Selecting core topics	All team members	2/6/2017
Editing the OpenStax text and selecting other open-source contents	All team members	3/6/2017
Developing additional course materials	All team members	3/20/2017
Peer reviews	All team members	4/3/2017
Summarizing peer reviews and team discussions	PI	4/10/2017
Assembling and editing the package as a whole	PI	4/24/2017
Implementing the course in Folio	PI	5/1/2017

Overall review of the Folio course	All team members	5/8/2017
Piloting the course package in selected course sections	Team members who teach the pilot sections	7/20/2017
Collecting quantitative and qualitative data	Team members who teach the course in the summer	7/20/2017

Budget:

Personnel	\$20,000
Travel expenses	\$800
Total amount requested	\$20,800

The Department will be responsible for receipt and distribution of funding. The Department Chair, in consultation with the PI, will determine how to distribute the personnel funds based on each team member's contribution to the project. Depending on the Department's teaching appointment needs, funds may be distributed as overload compensations, replacements of teaching load, or in other acceptable forms. The travel funds are designated for team members to attend the required in-person project kickoff meeting.

Sustainability Plan:

All team members are experienced and dedicated teachers who continuously work to improve their course contents. And all of them regularly teach the course designated for transformation under the proposed project. The PI has been developing high-quality course content and interactive learning and assessment tools and using these materials in his courses throughout his whole teaching career. He is highly devoted to the cause of affordable learning and is willing to take responsibility for continuous maintenance of the course package developed under the proposed project. The Department Chair will set up the Affordable Learning Committee, initially consisting of the team members, charged with ensuring sustainable offering of the course package in the ECON 2106 Business Economics course and considering possibilities for extending the project to other courses.

December 8, 2016

Dear Selection Committee,

I am wholeheartedly in support of Dr. Ogloblin's proposal pursuant to an Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant that would pertain to ECON 2106 Business Economics. Dr. Ogloblin has assembled a team of scholars who routinely teach ECON 2106, and are therefore familiar with both the content of the course as well as topics therein which students find particularly challenging. I believe this is a worthwhile grant which will yield a variety of benefits to our students.

The first benefit is in accordance with the overall purpose of the grant: learning the content of ECON 2106 will be much more affordable. The proposed cost to each student of the developed materials is \$29.00. This is less than 13 percent of the average cost of typical textbooks used for this course. Furthermore, given the number of students who enroll in ECON 2106, total savings to students are estimated to exceed \$200,000 per year.

A second benefit is that the product of the proposed grant will allow a degree of customization such that the reading materials and problems will be directly aligned with the course learning objectives and the expectations of the instructor. This should increase student success, and as a consequence, retention and progression rates.

A third benefit stems from the ease of updating course materials to ensure they are reflective of current economic events. Whether it be a crisis in the housing market, dynamic health insurance regulations, or an unanticipated shock to energy prices, Business Economics must be kept current to maximize relevancy. The ease of keeping course materials current is an added advantage of the proposed textbook transformation.

In addition to the Team Members all being regular instructors of ECON 2106, they are also involved with assurance of learning. Dr. Ogloblin has years of experience developing course materials and has undergone Quality Matters training. Dr. Levernier and Dr. King are the primary authors of our annual assessment reports for the economics undergraduate and graduate degrees, respectively. Thus they are familiar with and dedicated to aligning course materials to student learning objectives. Furthermore, all team members understand that assurance of learning requires an ongoing commitment on the part of faculty to continuously reassess all aspects of course delivery. I share this commitment and will remain supportive of such efforts.

Sincerely,



Rand W. Ressler, Chair
Department of Finance and Economics

DEVELOPING LOW-COST-TO-STUDENTS LEARNING MATERIALS INTEGRATED WITH FOLIO (D2L) FOR ECON 2106 BUSINESS ECONOMICS

1.1 Project Goals

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