

Application Title:

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Submitter First Name:

Joseph

Submitter Last Name:

Comeau

Submitter Title:

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Submitter Email Address:

joseph.comeau@gsw.edu

Submitter Phone Number:

229-931-4646

Submitter Campus Role:

Proposal Investigator (Primary or additional)

Applicant First Name:

Joseph

Applicant Last Name:

Comeau

Applicant Email Address:

joseph.comeau@gsw.edu

Applicant Phone Number:

229-931-4646

Primary Appointment Title:

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Institution Name(s):

Georgia Southwestern State University

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

Dr. Joseph Comeau, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Dept. of Psychology and Sociology,
joseph.comeau@gsw.edu

Dr. Judy Orton Grissett, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Dept. of Psychology and Sociology,
judy.grissett@gsw.edu

Dr. Jamie MacLennan, Associate Professor of Sociology, Dept. of Psychology and Sociology,
jamie.maclennan@gsw.edu

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

Charles Huffman, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Psychology and Sociology, Georgia Southwestern State University

Proposal Title:

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Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered:

1. SOCI 1160 Contemporary Social Problems, Spring 2016/Summer 2016/Fall 2016
2. SOCI 4440 Methods of Social Research, Spring 2016
3. PSYC 4431 Experimental Psychology, Spring 2016/Fall 2016

(Please note that the above numeration will be used throughout the proposal, when referring to information pertaining to each course.)

Final Semester of Instruction:

Fall 2016

Average Number of Students per Course Section:

1. 35; 2. 30; 3. 40

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year:

1. 3; 2. 1; 3. 2

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year:

215

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

1. Lauer, Robert H. and Jeanette C. Lauer. (2014). Social Problems and the Quality of Life (13/e). McGraw Hill Publishers. New York. ISBN: 139780078026867. Required. \$172.00
2. Babbie, Earl. R. (2014). The Basics of Social Research (6/e). Wadsworth/Cengage. Belmont, CA. ISBN: 9781133594147. Required. \$186.95
3. Beins, Bernard. Research Methods: A Tool for Life (3/e). Pearson Publishers. Boston, MA. ISBN: 9780205899531. Required. \$205.20

Proposal Categories:

No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials

Requested Amount of Funding:

16,800

Original per Student Cost:

1. Lauer & Lauer: \$172.00; 2. Babbie: \$186.95; 3. Beins: \$205.20

Post-Proposal Projected Student Cost:

\$0.00

Projected Per Student Savings:

1. \$172.00; 2. \$186.95; 3. \$205.20

Plan for Hosting Materials:

D2L

Project Goals:

The main purpose of this project is to provide affordable learning materials to students across three departmental courses: SOCI 1160 Contemporary Social Problems (one of the designated “Specific Top 50 Lower Division Courses”), SOCI 4440 Methods of Social Research, and PSYC 4431 Experimental Psychology. We will adopt three no-cost textbooks and collect student performance data, student feedback, and instructor feedback beginning Spring 2016. Our results will inform the adoption of no-cost texts in future course sections and possibly expand to other courses. We aim to better understand the benefits and challenges of adopting a no-cost textbook in a lower-division core and upper-division courses for majors. Finally, we intend to use this as an opportunity to share our experiences and promote the use of no-cost materials for classroom use at Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) and other institutions. More broadly, we plan to share our experiences and findings at regional or national conferences and through ALG information sessions, newsletter, and website.

Statement of Transformation:

- **Description of the transformation:** Conversion of purchased textbooks to free texts in all sections of SOCI 1160 Contemporary Social Problems, SOCI 4440 Methods of Social Research, and PSYC 4431 Experimental Psychology taught during spring, summer, and fall of 2016 at GSW, and anticipated continued use of these texts thereafter.
- **Stakeholders affected by the transformation:** Students, parents, faculty, and GSW.
- **The impact of this transformation on stakeholders and course success:** Rising textbook costs is a problem for college students. According to the not-for-profit organization, College Board, the average student spends \$1200 on textbooks and supplies each year (2014). A recent Wall Street Journal article states this cost is only increasing, as textbook publishers have increased their prices 6% per year over the last ten years (Mitchell, 2014). As a result, students may not purchase textbooks for their classes, causing students to receive lower grades or to withdraw

from a course, ultimately affecting the student and the university. As stakeholders affected by these problems, students, faculty, and university administrators at GSW may benefit from this project. Students, who may not purchase a textbook due to cost, or those who carry the financial burden of purchasing pricey textbooks, may find relief of financial stress, increased retention in courses, and improved grades due to having increased access to affordable learning materials. Faculty and administrators, who are impacted by students' retention and DFW rates (e.g., funding that depends on retention rates), may see improved retention and perhaps enrollment rates if affordable learning options are available to students.

- **Description of the transformative impact on the course, program, department, institutions, access institution, and/or multiple courses:** Our department has actively embraced the movement toward Open Educational Resources, as demonstrated by our department-wide adoption of OpenStax texts in our Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Sociology courses. The current proposal is a continuation of our department-wide commitment to offer our students high quality texts, at no cost. Overall, we believe that these efforts will continue to enhance student perceptions of our department, by demonstrating to our students that we are committed to taking proactive steps toward making college affordable. Additionally, our previous and ongoing involvement with ALG's Textbook Transformation Grants has helped to bring awareness of OERs to other departments on campus. We believe that the current proposal will contribute to this awareness at our own campus. Moreover, we intend to present the results of our project at regional and national conferences, thereby contributing to the awareness of OERs beyond our own campus.

Transformation Action Plan:

- **The identification, review, selection, and adoption/adaptation/creation of the new course materials:** The following texts will be adopted:
 1. SOCI 1160 Contemporary Social Problems: Social Problems: Continuity and Change, <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=141>
 2. SOCI 4440 Methods of Social Research: Principles of Sociological Inquiry: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods, <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=139>
 3. PSYC 4431 Experimental Psychology: Research Methods in Psychology, <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=75>

In addition to the above texts, each course may include some combination of articles, videos, content from websites, and content authored or developed by the instructors. These supplemental materials will all be made available at no additional cost to the student.

- **The course and syllabus instructional design/redesign necessary for the transformation:** The transformation associated with this plan will involve:
 1. Revising classroom learning activities to align with the new texts (lectures, PowerPoints, small group discussions, etc.).
 2. Revising course assignments to align with the new texts (written assignments, projects, etc.)

3. Revising assessment materials to align with new texts (quizzes, exams, etc.)
 4. Revising syllabi to reflect the changes to assigned text, assignments, and any other changes associated with the transformation to OERs.
- **The activities expected from each team member and their role(s):** Each team member will serve as a subject matter expert, course designer, and instructor for one of the courses included in the project. As such, each team member will be responsible for the redesign of all course materials associated with their assigned course including syllabi, lectures, classroom learning activities, PowerPoints, assignments, exams, and any other relevant course materials. The course assignments are as follows:
 1. SOCI 1160 Contemporary Social Problems: Dr. Comeau
 2. SOCI 4440 Methods of Social Research: Dr. MacLennan
 3. PSYC 4431 Experimental Psychology: Dr. Orton Grissett
 - **The plan for providing open access to the new materials:** All course materials will be made available through the Desire2Learn Learning Management System, the GSW library, department website, or some other method that is at no added cost to students.

Quantitative & Qualitative Measures:

The impact on student performance and experience will be evaluated with the following measures:

Student Performance

- We will collect DFW delta rates, retention rates, mid-term and final grades to measure student performance. Grades will be compared to previous semesters.

Student Perceptions

- To measure student willingness to use the textbook and their perceptions of no-cost textbooks, we will ask students:
 - “How satisfied are you with the textbook you used in this course?”
 - “How would you rate the ease of using the textbook in this course?”
 - “How engaging/interesting is the writing of the textbook?”
 - “How understandable is the writing of the textbook?”
 - “Overall, how would you rate the visual appeal of the textbook (e.g., layout, colors, cover)?”
 - “Rate the overall level of quality of the textbook you used in this course.”
 - “How frequently do you use the textbook in this course?”
 - “If given a choice between traditional paper textbook and a no-cost online textbook, which type of text do you prefer?”

Timeline:

September-November 2015:

- Attain IRB approval for Spring 2016 data collection
- Plan Spring 2016 course schedule
- Prepare Spring 2016 course materials (syllabus, assignments, PowerPoint presentations, materials, assessments)

December 2015

- Submit first status report
- Collect DFW reports for Spring 2016 comparison

January 2016

- Begin implementation of no-cost textbooks in SOCI 1160, SOCI 4440, PSYC 4431

March 2016

- Collect mid-term grades

May-June 2016

- Collect final grades
- Collect DFW reports
- Write and submit final report

Budget:

Joseph Comeau, subject matter expert, course designer, and instructor, Contemporary Social Problems (\$5000)

Jamie MacLennan, subject matter expert, course designer, and instructor, Methods of Social Research (\$5000)

Judy Orton Grissett, subject matter expert, course designer, and instructor, Experimental Psychology (\$5000)

Travel expenses for ALG "Kick-Off" meeting (\$800)

Travel expenses for academic conference presentations (\$1000)

Total = \$16,800

Sustainability Plan:

Beyond the timeline of this grant, we will continue to implement no-cost textbooks in these three departmental courses. Based on our estimates, this will result in an average savings of approximately \$186 per student, and a total savings of approximately \$40,000 per year. In order to sustain this implementation of no-cost texts, we will continually assess the fit of the material and consider adopting additional supplemental materials or other no-cost textbooks as we see fit. Further, Dr. Orton Grissett serves as GSW's Campus Champion for USG's Affordable Learning Georgia initiative, and it is her responsibility to provide resources and up-to-date information about open-source materials to GSW faculty. By continuing to utilize no-cost texts in our classrooms, Dr. Orton Grissett and colleagues will provide a model experience for other faculty on campus.