

Application Details

Manage Application: ALG Textbook Transformation Grants Round Five

Award Cycle: Round 5

Internal Submission Deadline: Tuesday, December 15, 2015

Application Title: 225

Submitter First Name: Christina

Submitter Last Name: Wolfe

Submitter Title: Assistant Professor of Sociology

Submitter Email Address: cwolfe@highlands.edu

Submitter Phone Number: 706-368-7622

Submitter Campus Role: Proposal Investigator (Primary or additional)

Applicant First Name: Christina

Applicant Last Name: Wolfe

Co-Applicant Name(s): Dr. J. Sean Callahan

Applicant Email Address: cwolfe@highlands.edu

Applicant Phone Number: 706-368-7622

Primary Appointment Title: Assistant Professor of Sociology

Institution Name(s): Georgia Highlands College

Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each. Include the applicant in this list.):

Ms. Christina M. Wolfe, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Division of Social Sciences, Business, and Education, cwolfe@highlands.edu

Dr. J. Sean Callahan, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of Diversity Initiatives, Division of Social Sciences, Business, and Education, scallaha@highlands.edu

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

Dr. Alan Nichols, Department Head, Division of Social Sciences, Business, and Education, anichols@highlands.edu

Proposal Title: 225

Course Names, Course Numbers, and Semesters Offered:

Final Semester of Instruction (This is your final semester of the project):	Fall 2016
Average Number of Students per Course Section:	28
Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year:	10
Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year:	280
List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or required, & cost for each item):	Required Course Materials Henslin, J. (2015). Essentials of Sociology, 11th ed., \$182.40 Optional Course Materials REVEL for Essentials of Sociology, 11th ed., \$65.00
Proposal Categories:	OpenStax Textbooks
Requested Amount of Funding:	\$10,800
Original per Student Cost:	\$247.40
Post-Proposal Projected Student Cost:	\$0
Projected Per Student Savings:	\$247.40
Plan for Hosting Materials:	D2L

Project Goals:

We intend to provide free, high quality learning materials for Georgia Highlands College students who take Introduction to Sociology (SOCI 1101) by converting from current purchased textbook and adopting the OpenStax's College Introduction to Sociology, 2nd ed., e-textbook.

We will develop and receive Quality Matters approval for SOCI 1101 sections taught fully online as well as via traditional face-to-face instruction based on the OpenStax text. This will provide opportunities for additional instructors at Georgia Highlands College to adopt the OpenStax text through provision of a master course template and materials.

By adopting Open Educational Resources (OER) materials, we expect to see an increase in enrollment and retention as well as completion rates of our students.

The adoption of free, open, high quality resources also makes higher education more affordable to a higher number of Georgia Highlands College students, thus contributing to the goals of Complete College Georgia.

To evaluate and assess the effectiveness of this conversion we will measure students' perceptions and experiences and course success rates with OER materials compared against courses not using OpenStax.

Statement of Transformation:

The recent push by the current administration to make community college free to anyone who wants to attend makes it imperative that the costs associated with pursuing a degree as affordable as possible (Mason, 2015). Georgia Highlands College (GHC) is an open access institution that offers high quality education at a reasonable price. Many of the students who attend GHC, however, come from backgrounds and are in life situations that impede them from purchasing the expensive learning materials. Many of these same students are also required to enroll and successfully complete SOCI 1101 (in Area F category). The market costs for the current textbook is \$182.40, which does not include the recommended supplemental materials which costs an additional \$65.00 for a total cost of \$247.40. This is an extremely expensive option for many of the students who attend this institution. As a result of this transformation, the collective savings for students in these ten sections is \$69,272 each academic year. Georgia Highlands College As the course is developed and more faculty adopt the redesigned course, the potential collective student savings is over \$200,000.

The families of our students are also impacted by this transformation, as many them use financial aid to help support households, pay for childcare, and for transportation to and from school. Introduction to Sociology is a required course for students in our Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Pre-Physical Therapy associates degree programs. Students in these programs are disproportionately female, and many are single parents and/or adult learners from low-income backgrounds who struggle to afford course materials. No-cost, high quality OER helps alleviate the deleterious factors that impede student success.

For example, students will have access to the OpenStax College e-textbook at the start of the semester, rather than two weeks into the semester (after they receive financial aid overpayment), and are able to complete readings, quizzes, and tests associated with the course in a timely manner, thus increasing retention, course success, and graduation rates. The conversion to Open Educational Resources would attract more students to take courses in our Sociology program. More broadly, this move towards no-cost, easily accessible learning materials supports the mission of GHC as an access institution. Sociology helps construct ways to understand and analyze the world. Increasing access to Sociology courses for our students in order to prepare them to thrive in a global society supports the institutional purpose and philosophy of Georgia Highlands College.

Transformation Action Plan:

The transformation action plan is comprised of three phases before course delivery in Fall 2016 (pre-planning, planning, and course redesign).

Pre-planning

This phase has already completed. OpenStax's College Introduction to Sociology, 2nd ed. e-textbook has been identified, reviewed, and selected as the primary textbook for SOCI 1101.

Planning and Course Redesign

These phases of the plan are already in progress. Activities, websites, articles, and videos are being identified and assessed for appropriateness and effectiveness as supplemental materials. The backward design process in Dee Fink's *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* and the American Association of Colleges and Universities' VALUE Rubric will guide course redesign. Fink's approach will provide the methodology for learning outcomes, while the VALUE rubric helps to support the development of integrative learning across the curriculum. Critical thinking and written communication are inherent components of this, and are skills students will use in both their educational and professional future.

This systematic reorganization, including the course syllabus revision, will occur during Summer 2016. Because this course is taught in both traditional and online formats, significant time will be allotted to course redesign, including creation and revision of instructional content and assessment materials. Ms. Wolfe is the instructor of record and will serve as subject matter expert and identify course materials and ensure course compliance with the Quality Matters rubric. Dr. Callahan will serve as instructional designer, assist in identifying course materials, and design modules for access in D2L. Both Ms. Wolfe and Dr. Callahan will serve co-Investigators and work together to evaluate and assess student success and experience, including quantitative and qualitative survey construction and distribution, protocol development, and data analysis.

Quantitative & Qualitative Measures: Quantitative and qualitative measures administered in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters of the 2016-2017 academic year will be used to gauge the impact on student success and experience. The quantitative assessment includes a pre- and post-survey to compare the perceived quality, experience, and satisfaction of students using OpenStax's Sociology and other online resources vs. previous semesters or classes using purchased textbook and materials. SPSS will be used to code and analyze data to determine if there is statistically significant difference in students' feelings toward the use of e-textbooks before and after course delivery. The achievement of learning outcomes, DFW rate delta, exam performance, and final course grades from sections using OpenStax will also be compared to previous-semester sections taught by Ms. Wolfe and same-semester sections taught by instructors using purchased textbooks with t-test comparison. Qualitatively, interviews and surveys will be used to gather information regarding students' comparisons of e-textbooks and materials and purchased textbooks. More specifically, this data will be analyzed for themes and patterns that help elucidate the effects of the adoption on student performance.

Timeline:

September 2015 to December 2015—Selected and reviewed OpenStax's College Introduction to Sociology, 2nd ed. e-textbook as an appropriate, high quality, OER

January 2016 to May 2016—Identify and locate no-cost, online, supplemental content materials

June 2016 to August 2016—Systematic course redesign to modules on D2L

July 2016—Course buyout/Overload begins for Ms. Wolfe and Dr. Callahan, if funded

Fall 2016—Redesigned course delivery of SOCI 1101, Data collection on student experience and success begins and continues throughout semester

December 2016-January 2017—Co-Investigators compile data and revise course per student

evaluations

Budget:

Christina M. Wolfe, Instructor of Record - \$5000

Sean Callahan - \$5000

Travel to Kick Off - \$800

Total - \$10,800

Sustainability Plan:

The larger scope of this project is to create a Quality Matters-approved master course template with modules consisting of assignments, activities, and rubrics that allow instructors to customize the content to their teaching style and economize the time they put into instruction. This would encourage faculty to adopt the redesigned course. The master course and modules will also be made available to faculty at other USG institutions. Course materials will be maintained by Ms. Wolfe for use into the foreseeable future.

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Rounds Three, Four, and Five

For Implementations Beginning Summer Semester 2015

Running Through Spring Semester 2017

Proposal Form with References and Attachments

Submitter Name	Christina M. Wolfe
Submitter Title	Assistant Professor of Sociology
Submitter Email	cwolfe@highlands.edu
Submitter Phone Number	706-368-7622
Submitter Campus Role	<i>Proposal Investigator</i>
Applicant Name	<i>Christina M. Wolfe, Co-Primary Investigator/Team Lead</i>
Applicant Email	cwolfe@highlands.edu
Applicant Phone Number	706-368-7622
Primary Appointment Title	Assistant Professor of Sociology
Institution Name(s)	Georgia Highlands College

Team Members	<i>Ms. Christina M. Wolfe, Assistant Professor of Sociology</i> <i>Dr. J. Sean Callahan, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of Diversity Initiatives,</i> scallaha@highlands.edu				
Sponsor, Title, Department, Institution	<i>Dr. Alan Nichols, Department Head, Division of Social Sciences, Business, and Education,</i> anichols@highlands.edu				
Proposal Title	Making SOCI 1101 Affordable One Instructor at a Time				
Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered	SOC1 1101, 10, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Summer 2017 and beyond				
Final Semester of Instruction	Course delivery will begin Fall 2016 and expected continue as long as the project is feasible and sensible.				
Average Number of Students Per Course Section	28	Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year	10	Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year	280
Award Category (pick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OpenStax Textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Top 50 Lower Division Courses				
List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or	Henslin, J. (2015). Essentials of Sociology, 11 th ed. Required Course Materials \$182.40 REVEL for Essentials of Sociology, 11 th ed.				

required, & cost for each item)	Optional Course Materials \$65.00
Original Per Student Cost	\$247.40
Post-Proposal Projected Per Student Cost	\$0
Projected Per Student Savings	100%
Plan for Hosting Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> OpenStax CNX <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2L <input type="checkbox"/> LibGuides <input type="checkbox"/> Other <hr/>
Requested Amount of Funding	\$10,800

1.1 REFERENCES

Open Educational Resources (OER) have proven a worthy response to the rising cost of textbooks. A review of the literature indicates substantial evidence for the success of the OER model; in fact, for community colleges in particular, the use of OER is considered a “best practice” (Myran, 2013).

For Georgia Highlands College specifically, the use of OER translates not only to cost savings for students, it is also closely aligned with the spirit embodied by the institution. Georgia Highlands College’s philosophy is that education should be accessible and affordable, and the ever-increasing cost of textbooks, for students already struggling to pay tuition, can add an extra, unnecessary burden—a burden that OER can alleviate.

For Georgia Highlands College’s SOCI 1101 students, the current text alone, at a cost of \$182.40, represents 74% of the tuition for the class. When recommended supplemental materials are included, these costs exceed that of tuition. This additional financial obligation is at worst, so costly as to be an impediment—over 23 percent of students in one study said they “had occasionally not registered for a particular course or section because of the high textbook costs,” and at best, an additional expense—one that 37 percent of students in the same study opted to forgo (Morris-Babb & Henderson, 2012).

The benefits of OER adoption go beyond the financial, extending to the curricular; the use of OER is considered “a success factor of positive teaching and learning practices” (Everard & Pierre, 2014). Additionally, a 2012 study found that the grades were higher for students in courses using OER compared to those using standard textbooks (Feldstein, Martin, Hudson, Warren, Hilton, & Wiley). A separate study assessing use of OER Psychology texts corroborated the positive effect on student grades, finding also an improvement in retention rates in classes that used open textbooks (Hilton & Laman, 2012). We expect to find a similar effect among Sociology courses. Given limited research on effects of OER Sociology text usage (Palmer & Schueths, 2013), our proposal stands to provide a significant contribution to literature supporting the positive impact of OER materials.

An increased rate of OER adoption will benefit students, who will see positive educational outcomes and higher affordability, and institutions, which will benefit from an increased rate of student retention.

References

Everard, A., & Pierre, K. S. (2014). A Case for Student Adoption of Open Textbooks. *Journal Of The Academy Of Business Education*, 1566-76.

Feldstein, A., Martin, M., Hudson, A., Warren, K., Hilton, J. I., & Wiley, D. (2012). Open Textbooks and Increased Student Access and Outcomes. *European Journal of Open, Distance And E-Learning*, (2),

Hilton, J., & Laman, C. (2012). One college’s use of an open psychology textbook.

Open Learning, 27(3), 265-272.

Mason, K. C. (2015, January 20). *Obama: Community college should be 'as free and universal in America as high school'*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/community-college-tuition-top-theme-state-union-speech/>

Morris-Babb, M., & Henderson, S. (2012). An Experiment in Open-Access Textbook Publishing: Changing the World One Textbook at a Time. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 43(2), 148-155.

Myran, G. (2013). The New Community College Business and Finance Model. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2013(162), 93-104.

Palmer, N., & Schueths, A. M. (2013). Online Teaching Communities within Sociology: A Counter Trend to the Marketization of Higher Education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18(7), 809-820.

1.2 LETTER OF SUPPORT

12/10/2015

To whom it may concern:

I write this letter as Dean of Social Sciences, Business, and Education at Georgia Highlands College in support of Christina Wolfe's proposal for an Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant in Rounds Three, Four, and Five for implementation beginning Summer Semester 2015; running through Spring Semester 2017.

Professor Wolfe is proposing to continue a project of replacing the standard textbook in her SOCI 1101 (Introduction to Sociology) course with OpenStax texts and LibGuides. This will result in a savings for students of nearly \$220 per student per course. I believe that this is an especially worthy undertaking here at Georgia Highlands, where many of our students depend on financial aid not only to meet the costs of their education but their living expenses as well. I would expect that continuing to adopt OER materials will help Georgia Highlands both in the areas of retention, a USG and Georgia Highlands initiative, and course completion, a long-standing USG goal. Currently, many students do not purchase expensive texts for courses and their performance suffers. By adopting the high-quality OpenStax text, a significant barrier to student performance and completion will be removed.

Professor Wolfe has a well-developed plan for shifting to the OpenStax text. I fully support this shift, and have encouraged other faculty in my Division to shift to OER, where available, for their courses. As an institution, Georgia Highlands strives to be at the forefront of the University System of Georgia's plans to make college affordable through lowering the cost of textbooks through use of OERs as well as seeking out low-cost texts. I believe Professor Wolfe is worthy of financial support as she works towards these ends and I strongly support her application for grant funding.

Best,

Dr. Alan Nichols
Dean, Division of Social Sciences, Business, and Education
Georgia Highlands College
3175 Cedartown Highway
Rome GA, 30161
706-368-7615
anichols@highlands.edu

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants
Rounds Three, Four, and Five
For Implementations Beginning Summer Semester 2015
Running Through Spring Semester 2017

Proposal Form and Narrative

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Requested Amount of Funding	\$10,800

NARRATIVE

1.1 PROJECT GOALS

We intend to provide free, high quality learning materials for Georgia Highlands College students who take Introduction to Sociology (SOCI 1101) by converting from current purchased textbook and adopting the OpenStax's College Introduction to Sociology, 2nd ed., e-textbook.

We will develop and receive Quality Matters approval for SOCI 1101 sections taught fully online as well as via traditional face-to-face instruction based on the OpenStax text. This will provide opportunities for additional instructors at Georgia Highlands College to adopt the OpenStax text through provision of a master course template and materials.

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To evaluate and assess the effectiveness of this conversion we will measure students' perceptions and experiences and course success rates with OER materials compared against courses not using OpenStax.

1.2 STATEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

The recent push by the current administration to make community college free to anyone who wants to attend makes it imperative that the costs associated with pursuing a degree as affordable as possible (Mason, 2015). Georgia Highlands College (GHC) is an open access institution that offers high quality education at a reasonable price. Many of the students who attend GHC, however, come from backgrounds and are in life situations that impede them from purchasing the expensive learning materials. Many of these same students are also required to enroll and successfully complete SOCI 1101 (in Area F category). The market costs for the current textbook is \$182.40, which does not include the recommended supplemental materials which costs an additional \$65.00 for a total cost of \$247.40. This is an extremely expensive option for many of the students who attend this institution. As a result of this transformation, the collective savings for students in these ten sections is \$69,272 each academic year. Georgia Highlands College As the course is developed and more faculty adopt the redesigned course, the potential collective student savings is over \$200,000.

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For example, students will have access to the OpenStax College e-textbook at the start of the semester, rather than two weeks into the semester (after they receive financial aid overpayment), and are able to complete readings, quizzes, and tests associated with the course in a timely manner, thus increasing retention, course success, and graduation rates. The conversion to Open Educational Resources would attract more students to take courses in our Sociology program. More broadly, this move towards no-cost, easily accessible learning materials supports the mission of GHC as an access institution. Sociology helps construct ways to understand and analyze the world. Increasing access to Sociology courses for our students in order to prepare them to thrive in a global society supports the institutional purpose and philosophy of Georgia Highlands College.

1.3 TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

The transformation action plan is comprised of three phases before course delivery in Fall 2016 (pre-planning, planning, and course redesign).

Pre-planning

This phase has already completed. OpenStax's College Introduction to Sociology, 2nd ed. e-textbook has been identified, reviewed, and selected as the primary textbook for SOCI 1101.

Planning and Course Redesign

These phases of the plan are already in progress. Activities, websites, articles, and videos are being identified and assessed for appropriateness and effectiveness as supplemental materials. The backward design process in Dee Fink's *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* and the American Association of Colleges and Universities' *VALUE Rubric* will guide course redesign. Fink's approach will provide the methodology for learning outcomes, while the VALUE rubric helps to support the development of integrative learning across the curriculum. Critical thinking and written communication are inherent components of this, and are skills students will use in both their educational and professional future.

This systematic reorganization, including the course syllabus revision, will occur during Summer 2016. Because this course is taught in both traditional and online formats, significant tie will be allotted to course redesign, including creation and revision of instructional content and assessment materials. Ms. Wolfe is the instructor of record and will serve as subject matter expert and identify course materials and ensure course compliance with the Quality Matters rubric. Dr. Callahan will serve as instructional designer, assist in identifying course materials, and design modules for access in D2L. Both Ms. Wolfe and Dr. Callahan will serve co-Investigators and work together to evaluate and assess student success and experience, including quantitative and qualitative survey construction and distribution, protocol development, and data analysis.

1.4 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASURES

Quantitative and qualitative measures administered in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters of the 2016-2017 academic year will be used to gauge the impact on student success and experience. The quantitative assessment includes a pre- and post-survey to compare the perceived quality, experience, and satisfaction of students using OpenStax's Sociology and other online resources vs. previous semesters or classes using purchased textbook and materials. SPSS will be used to code and analyze data to determine if there is statistically significant difference in students' feelings toward the use of e-textbooks before and after course delivery. The achievement of learning outcomes, DFW rate delta, exam performance, and final course grades from sections using OpenStax will also be compared to previous-semester sections taught by Ms. Wolfe and same-semester sections taught by instructors using purchased textbooks with t-test comparison. Qualitatively, interviews and surveys will be used to gather information regarding students' comparisons of e-textbooks and materials and purchased textbooks. More specifically, this data will be analyzed for themes and patterns that help elucidate the effects of the adoption on student performance.

1.5 TIMELINE

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December 2016-January 2016—Co-Investigators compile data and revise course per student evaluations

1.6 BUDGET

Christina M. Wolfe, Instructor of Record	\$5000
Sean Callahan	\$5000
<u>Travel to Kick Off</u>	<u>\$800</u>
Total	\$10,800

1.7 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The larger scope of this project is to create a Quality Matters-approved master course template with modules consisting of assignments, activities, and rubrics that allow instructors to customize the content to their teaching style and economize the time they put into instruction. This would encourage faculty to adopt the redesigned course. The master course and modules will also be made available to faculty at other USG institutions. Course materials will be maintained by Ms. Wolfe for use into the foreseeable future.