

**Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants  
Final Report**

**Date:** 5/20/2016

**Grant Number:** 130

**Institution Name(s):** Clayton State University

**Team Members**

Antoinette Miller, Professor of Psychology – antoinettemiller@clayton.edu

Mark Daddona, Associate Professor of Psychology – markdaddona@clayton.edu

Nichelle Gause, Instructor of Psychology – nichellegause@clayton.edu

Christina Grange, Assistant Professor of Psychology – christinagrang@clayton.edu

Samuel Maddox, Associate Professor of Psychology – samuelmaddox@clayton.edu

Eckart Werther, Assistant Professor of Psychology – eckartwerther@clayton.edu

**Project Lead:** Antoinette Miller, Professor of Psychology – antoinettemiller@clayton.edu

**Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:** Introduction to General Psychology – PSYC 1101

**Semester Project Began:** Fall 2015

**Semester(s) of Implementation:** Fall 2015, Spring 2016

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

Fall 2015: 30

Spring 2016: 36

**Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation:**

Fall 2015: 12

Spring 2016: 8

**Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation:**

Fall 2015: 359

Spring 2016: 284

## **Narrative**

### *Key Outcomes:*

The following includes input from team members Miller, Daddona, Gause, Grange, and Maddox. Team member Werther managed data collection and compilation of supporting materials for future sustainability efforts.

Our project goals were to:

- Lower cost of materials for students in PSYC 1101
- Maintain quality of content in the course materials.
- Improve overall student satisfaction with the courses.
- Improve retention, progression, and graduation rates.
- Inspire colleagues to emulate this project and lower material costs in other courses.

During the course of Fall 2015 (our initial pilot semester) and Spring 2016 (final semester of implementation), we delivered courses in multiple formats including fully seated, half-online (hybrid), and fully-online. Our student population ranged from Move On When Ready (MOWR) to traditional students to non-traditional and transfer students.

Making the transition from a print text with multiple ancillaries (including Power Point slides, test banks, online learning materials, etc.) appeared somewhat daunting at first, however was smoother for many of us than initially expected. Several of our sections had been previously developed to be “book-agnostic,” where the textbook was primarily used as the means for concept introduction and with significant supplementation from other sources (such as current events, television programs including Brain Games, and various online resources including YouTube and the American Psychological Association online materials). Previously adopted texts also had seemed somewhat more difficult for students to digest particularly in the fully online sections, and so having a more approachable text such as the OpenStax book was beneficial.

We felt more in control of our own instruction, since previous texts had been nearly overloaded with information in every chapter, and we often felt rushed to cover it all; the more focused nature of the OpenStax book was both a benefit and a challenge in this respect, since each instructor took a slightly different focus with the general psychology course. However, the ability to mold and create content within the text itself (while initially time consuming) allowed for more flexibility of instruction.

Its electronic (web-based or PDF) nature also permitted more in-class use of the text, since students were able to scroll through quickly and without the additional physical burden of carrying heavy texts to class. One of us regularly observed her students accessing the web-based or PDF version of the text via their computers, tablets and phones, which did present some distraction initially. Following some conversation, the instructor determined that it wasn't a liability for the students and represented a new way for technology to be used in the

classroom, and that access allowed her to hold her students accountable for the course content in a different and potentially better way than before.

Having ready access to the text did allow for the students to more fully engage with the material during coursework and study time. One of our sections incorporated significant group work and this access allowed for a “no-excuses” atmosphere that facilitated those discussions.

Collectively, we agreed that the text (with supplementation where we identified gaps) was sufficient for our needs and instructional styles and due to its reduced cost the superior option in comparison to its competitors. The students appreciated the opportunity of having the three options for the textbook: purchasing print version at an extremely low cost, downloading the PDF version, and accessing the online version. These options were especially appreciated by our students because many first-year students enroll in PSYC 1101, and at our institution the vast majority of their financial aid is used for tuition, fees, required on-campus housing, and the required meal plan. As a result, many of our first-year students simply are unable to purchase some of their traditional textbooks, and their course performance likely is affected by this.

Challenges encountered with this transition often rested with the computer “savviness” of our students; those that were more comfortable with technology clearly benefited from the online text, and it was clear to instructors through the student performance which were regularly accessing the text. Additionally, it seemed that there was some inconsistency in the page numbering between the three versions (online, PDF, print) of the text.

The relatively spare nature of the ancillaries (Power Points in particular) required some adjustment and pooling of resources across team members. Additionally, the test bank required reformatting (using Respondus or similar programs) to be imported into Desire2Learn or test creation software, although the number and breadth of questions was appreciated.

However, beginning from a relatively blank slate in instructional support did allow for us to step back and re-evaluate what we considered to be important and to think more creatively regarding how to approach topics and in-class/out-of-class activities.

Psychology faculty experienced multiple visits from several textbook sales representatives and received numerous introductory psychology textbooks in the mail this past year. Some of these textbooks were much more affordable than in the past due to reducing the number of chapters, offering loose-leaf versions, and simply reducing the price to be more competitive. However, the team decided to adopt the OpenStax textbook for at least one more year.

### *Lessons Learned*

Many of us did note the increased preparation time that comes with *not* having a robust set of instructional support materials to draw on while designing a course. When we met as a group to discuss our activities we realized that we had a wealth of materials already existing in our department that we’d developed over our collective years of teaching, and midway through the Fall 2015 term began pulling those together as a repository for future terms. We should have started doing that from the beginning!

Many of us also determined that increased student-to-student interactions appeared to facilitate their learning, but that it requires careful design and management. Online sections plan to incorporate synchronous chat as well as asynchronous discussion activities, and in-class discussion/group work will be reexamined.

We also realized relatively early on that students were not accessing the links embedded throughout the OpenStax text itself, and that we as instructors need to be more deliberate in directing students to those links.

### **Student Quotes**

- I was very grateful for the free textbook. I struggle every semester to provide books for myself. The Openstax free online book gave me the option of buying the hard copy, so using the online version was my choice and it helped me out a lot.
- Even though I did not download the free book online, It is a good thing that the university is providing free books because books are expensive and some students will be very appreciative. I also like that the textbooks were just \$38.50. That was very affordable and the book is actually well organized.
- Great resource. I liked it, I wish I had more time to use it during the semester. I saved it on my device for future reference.

### **Quantitative and Qualitative Measures**

#### **3a. Overall Measurements**

##### **Student Opinion of Materials**

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

Fall 2015 (Pilot semester)

Total number of students affected in this project: \_\_359 (175 completed survey)

Positive: \_\_77\_\_ % of \_\_175\_\_ number of respondents

Neutral: \_\_13\_\_ % of \_\_175\_\_ number of respondents

Negative: \_\_10\_\_ % of \_\_175\_\_ number of respondents

Spring 2016 (Final Semester)

Total number of students affected in this project: \_\_284 (178 completed survey)

Positive: \_\_77.42\_\_ % of \_\_178\_\_ number of respondents

Neutral: \_\_16.13\_\_ % of \_\_178\_\_ number of respondents

Negative: \_\_6.45\_\_ % of \_\_178\_\_ number of respondents

### **Student Learning Outcomes and Grades**

As noted previously, there were multiple course deliveries and instructors involved in our implementation of the OpenStax book. While we did not collect detailed outcome-specific information within our sections, for the most part our observations indicated that the students performed at least as well while using the OpenStax book as our previous hard-copy book.

We choose both positive and neutral since different sections reported different outcome performance.

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**

#### **Drop/Fail/Withdraw Rate:**

Fall 2015 (pilot semester):

15% of students, out of a total 359 students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Spring 2016 (final semester of implementation):

19.7% of students, out of a total 284 students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Overall:

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)

### **3b. Narrative**

Our quantitative measures included longitudinal tracking of DFW rates in the impacted courses prior to and following the OpenStax adoption, anticipating a reduction in DFW rates. We also asked students to complete a survey (text from Spring 2016 included) asking questions regarding the quality and utility of the text as well as additional information regarding how they used the book (online, PDF, or printed) and whether they would recommend it to fellow students.

We report our Fall 2015 (pilot) and Spring 2016 (final semester) D/F/W/WF rates separately below along with the past three similar academic terms, as well as the average across the Fall

and Spring semesters for the past four years. For the most part, we experienced a drop in D/F/W/WF rates compared to past semesters, and to past academic years.

PSYC1101 Average Fall Semester D/F/W/WF Rates		
Term	# of students	Average of D/F/W/WF Rate
Fall 2012	335	20.0%
Fall 2013	362	18.2%
Fall 2014	347	14.4%
Fall 2015	359	15.0%

PSYC1101 Average Spring Semester D/F/W/WF Rates		
Term	# of students	Average of D/F/W/WF Rate
Spring 2013	312	21.2%
Spring 2014	227	20.3%
Spring 2015	282	21.3%
Spring 2016	284	19.7%

PSYC1101 Average Fall and Spring D/F/W/WF Rates		
Term	# of students	Average of D/F/W/WF Rate
Fall 2012 & Spring 2013	647	20.6%
Fall 2013 & Spring 2014	589	19.2%
Fall 2014 & Spring 2015	629	17.8%
Fall 2015 & Spring 2016	643	17.4%

There was some variability in learning outcomes across our sections of PSYC 1101, although for the most part all shared some version of the following:

Course Objectives:

- An ability to apply the major theoretical perspectives (e.g. cognitive; behavioral; psychoanalytic; humanistic; biological).
- An understanding of the research methodologies used in psychology.
- Critical thinking skills through interpreting/critiquing research in the popular media and in scholarly journals.
- The ability to communicate effectively and professionally both orally and in writing, including the use of the Style Manual of the American Psychological Association.
- An understanding of and ability to apply the ethical standards set forth by the American Psychological Association.

Below are summary responses to relevant questions on our Spring 2016 survey:

7. Now that you completed a course using the OpenStax free online textbook, how likely are you to enroll in another course that uses a free online textbook?		
Answer	Response	%
Very likely	98	63%
Somewhat likely	22	14%
Likely	25	16%
Not very likely	8	5%
Not likely at all	2	1%
Total	155	100%

8. Now that you completed a course using the OpenStax free online textbook, how likely are you to recommend a friend enroll in PSYC 1101, if the course uses the same free online textbook?		
Answer	Response	%
Very likely	96	62%
Somewhat likely	24	15%
Likely	23	15%
Not very likely	8	5%
Not likely at all	4	3%
Total	155	100%

9. Which format of the textbook did you use?		
Answer	Response	%
Read textbook online	54	35%
Reviewed the PDF that I saved to my computer or tablet	55	35%
Printed PDF of the textbook	9	6%
Purchased a hard copy of the textbook	37	24%
Total	155	100%

10. If you printed the PDF of the textbook, what did you print?		
Answer	Response	%
Printed entire PDF of the textbook	7	5%
Printed certain chapters	10	7%
Printed certain portions of chapters	4	3%
I did not print PDF of the textbook	131	86%
Total	152	100%

11. If you printed the PDF of the textbook, where did you print it?		
Answer	Response	%
Printed it on my own printer	18	12%
Printed it on campus using SmartPrint	2	1%
Printed it at an off-campus copy center	2	1%
Did not print PDF of the textbook	130	86%
Total	152	100%

12. Which of the following is MOST TRUE for you?		
Answer	Response	%
I read chapters as assigned to prepare for class	92	60%
I read ahead of schedule (ahead of the assigned readings for the upcoming week)	21	14%
I only read the textbook right before the exam	31	20%
I did not read the textbook	10	6%
Total	154	100%

13. Did you use/review any of the links (videos, etc.) in the hyperlinks sections in the textbook?		
Answer	Response	%
Yes	33	21%
Sometimes	67	44%
No	54	35%
Total	154	100%



14. How helpful were the study questions at the end of each chapter?		
#	Answer	Response
Very helpful	55	35%
Somewhat helpful	37	24%
Helpful	31	20%
Not helpful	2	1%
I did not use them	30	19%
Total	155	100%

17. How would you rate the quality of this free book as compared to books you have purchased for other university classes?		
Answer	Response	%
This free book is the same quality as other books I have used/purchased	131	85%
This free book is of poorer quality than other books I have used/purchased	5	3%
I have not used the free book for this course	14	9%
I have not used/purchased other university text books so I cannot compare	4	3%
Total	154	100%

Generally speaking, the transition had a positive effect on our student performance as indicated by the D/F/W/WF rates, as well as by our informal evaluation of student performance on course outcomes. Additionally, we received a majority of positive feedback on our student survey, and have noted how, how often, and in which format(s) students are using the OpenStax book. Interestingly enough, there were still some students who purchased the low-cost print text, although they were vastly outnumbered by those using only the online/PDF version.

Because of the wide variety of our course delivery methods and student types, it is difficult to identify any one or small number of co-factors. However, as noted in the previous section student comfort and facility with online resources may have negatively impacted those students when we made the transition. And while the hardcopy of the text was available for an incredibly low (compared to other texts) price, we noted that many students who may have had difficulty with the online text did not pursue the hardcopy option.

We did have a fairly significant number of MOWR students in several of our impacted sections, and given the selection criteria for those students it was not surprising they often appeared to be more conscientious and academically stronger than other non-MOWR students.

Also, one section per term also incorporated community engagement pedagogy and a fairly significant group project, in addition to the newly adopted text. The multiple competing demands created by the introduction of a non-traditional project that required approximately

10 hours of out-of-class group work may have played a role in the overall impact of the text. This project had never been implemented before and had several challenges that required trouble shooting and flexibility. Students responded well and ultimately embraced the project, but there was definitely frustration in the beginning of the semester. However, students performed well on the final project.

### **Sustainability Plan**

As a department, we have adopted the OpenStax book for the next academic year, and as mentioned before have begun the collection and compilation of our internal supplemental resources, including suggestions for media incorporation, critical thinking exercises, lecture videos, and other materials. Having these materials will support other faculty who were not part of our initial revision team as we continue using the text. We do intend to continue to update these materials, as well as those sections of the text as needed.

### **Future Plans**

As a general rule, our experience with this course transformation has made us more aware of the potential for OER in our courses, and encouraged us to explore additional avenues for our other courses. As college costs continue to rise and with the substantial proportion of our students requiring financial assistance, we see this as another means to support our student learning.

An immediate impact begins even before our next semester. This summer, Clayton State will offer its first Summer Bridge Program for a maximum of 40 incoming freshmen who were originally ineligible for admission to the university, and PSYC 1101 is one of the required courses in that program. A member of our grant team will be teaching one of the two psychology sections and will use the OpenStax textbook. In addition, he will orient the other instructor to the materials and will assist her in planning and implementing the course with the OpenStax materials

In the coming academic year, the project lead will be fully converting her undergraduate upper division and graduate course in the coming Fall to OER rather than print text. Other team members have indicated their plans to, if not fully transition to OER, more fully integrate OER into their other courses.

Moving forward, the comparative lack of instructor resource materials for the free online texts can be addressed by the creation of secure forums where university professionals across the nation can submit materials for use by instructors for the online texts. However until that is widely available,, our team is in the process of collecting a repository of materials including test bank questions, applied experiences, outside media suggestions, etc.

Members of our team also intend to more closely examine the results of our survey, in order to analyze them to both present and publish the results of our experience with this OER.

## **Description of Photograph**

Team Photograph (left to right):

Eckart Werther, Nichelle Gause, Antoinette Miller (Project Lead), Mark Daddona, Christina Grange, Sam Maddox

### Survey Questions (Final Version, Spring 2016)

Now that you completed a course using the OpenStax free online textbook, how likely are you to recommend a friend enroll in PSYC 1101, if the course uses the same free online textbook?

- Very likely (1)
- Somewhat likely (2)
- Likely (3)
- Not very likely (4)
- Not likely at all (5)

Which format of the textbook did you use?

- Read textbook online (1)
- Reviewed the PDF that I saved to my computer or tablet (2)
- Printed PDF of the textbook (3)
- Purchased a hard copy of the textbook (4)

If you printed the PDF of the textbook, what did you print?

- Printed entire PDF of the textbook (1)
- Printed certain chapters (2)
- Printed certain portions of chapters (3)
- I did not print PDF of the textbook (4)

If you printed the PDF of the textbook, where did you print it?

- Printed it on my own printer (1)
- Printed it on campus using SmartPrint (2)
- Printed it at an off-campus copy center (3)
- Did not print PDF of the textbook (4)

Which of the following is MOST TRUE for you?

- I read chapters as assigned to prepare for class (1)
- I read ahead of schedule (ahead of the assigned readings for the upcoming week) (2)
- I only read the textbook right before the exam (3)
- I did not read the textbook (4)

Did you use/review any of the links (videos, etc.) in the hyperlinks sections in the textbook?

- Yes (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- No (3)

How helpful were the study questions at the end of each chapter?

- Very helpful (1)
- Somewhat helpful (2)
- Helpful (3)
- Not helpful (4)
- I did not use them (5)

Please select the category that best describes your student type?

- Dual enrolled/Move-on when ready student (1)
- New Freshman (2)
- New Transfer Student (1st semester at Clayton State) (3)
- Re-enrolled/Previous Clayton State Student (10)
- Native student (started as freshman and continuously enrolled) (7)
- Transfer student (not 1st semester at Clayton State) (8)
- Transient student from another college/university (9)

Please select the category that best describes your current semester enrollment.

- Part-time student (taking 9 or less credit hours) (1)
- Full-time student (taking 12 or more credit hours) (2)

How would you rate the quality of this free book as compared to books you have purchased for other university classes?

- This free book is the same quality as other books I have used/purchased (1)
- This free book is of poorer quality than other books I have used/purchased (2)
- I have not used the free book for this course (3)
- I have not used/purchased other university text books so I cannot compare (4)

If you have specific feedback regarding the textbook please enter it here: