Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Final Report

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Grant Number: 134

Institution Name(s): Columbus State University

Team Members:

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Project Lead: Dr. Jennifer P. Pitts

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:

Name of Course	Course Number/ Delivery Mode	Number of Students
Principles of Information Technology Management	**MISM 3115 Traditional**	**72**
Principles of Information Technology Management	**MISM 3115 (V) 100% Online**	**45**
Total Students		**117**

Semester Project Began: Summer 2015

Semester(s) of Implementation: Fall 2015

Average Number of Students Per Course Section: Traditional Section (70); Online Section (45)

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation: Two per semester

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation: Fall semester 2015: 117 students

1. Narrative

A. Describe the key outcomes, whether positive, negative, or interesting, of your project.

Summary of your transformation experience, including challenges and accomplishments

Overview

MISM 3115 Principles of IT Management is a required course for all business and computer science students in the Turner College of Business, and is the course used for the Association to Advance Collegiate

Schools of Business (AACSB) program assessment for the "Proficiency in Technology" learning goal. Because the course is often the only required technology-related course that non-MIS or Computer Science majors will take, course material must be both current and relevant which makes it a challenge when it comes to textbooks and up-to-date information and cases. Using older versions of textbooks in a technology-based course with case studies is simply not a good option.

Over the past several years, the MISM 3115 course has used a standard introductory Management Information Systems (MIS) textbook supplemented with online resources provided by the textbook publisher through a student companion website. The most recent edition of the textbook used in the course prior to the current semester required students to purchase a separate code to access the online Resources (PowerPoints, self-guided quizzes, videos, etc.). These supplementary resources were previously provided free to students who purchased a new textbook or offered at a nominal charge for students with used textbooks. The total cost of a new textbook with the access code was currently at over $280/ student making it almost cost-prohibitive for some students. As a result, many students were opting out of purchasing the textbook altogether or purchasing the less-expensive International or earlier editions that have different cases or outdated material. The results were unengaged students, lower test averages, and students who were ill-prepared for quizzes, in-class and online discussions.

Transformation Experience

The transformation experience for the course in both the online and traditional sections was overall a very positive experience for students, and a very challenging one for the instructor. For the course, a no-cost, open access textbook was used that was an earlier edition of a well-respected textbook by John Gallaugher, *A Manager's Guide to Information Systems*. The textbook was initially an open-access textbook offered through FlatWorldKnowledge.com and structured so students could read it free online but paid a nominal fee for a print version and access to online resources. In December 2012, Flat World Knowledge announced that it would no longer provide free access to their textbook or the instructor resources and content. At that time, the current version of the textbook was archived as part of a project by Andy Schmitz (see Textbook Archive Project) to create a repository of Creative Commons-licensed copies of most textbooks available through Flat World Knowledge. The MIS textbook available through the archive is the one used as the primary source for the course (see MISM 3115 Textbook). In addition to the textbook, learning material from a variety of web-based resources was used to reinforce the chapter topics and promote active learning. This is an area that proved the most challenging. The process of reviewing and selecting content for each module was the most time-consuming part and often difficult to determine what content to include so that students were provided with sufficient supplementary learning resources without being overwhelmed.

The textbook was offered online and also, in a low-cost print copy though the University's Print Services. The print copy, unfortunately, did not include an index which was cited as the primary complaint about the textbook. Results of the Learning Materials Satisfaction Survey, as well as student comments on a discussion forum dedicated to course feedback, however, indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the textbook among students in both sections. I think having a print copy option and the option to print the chapters directly as PDF files was a very important part of the free textbook being so successful.

Overall the transformation experience was much more positive than anticipated. It was interesting to see how appreciative (and surprised) students were that a free textbook was being used. Because the quality of the textbook was not substandard and the rigor of the course remained high, there were no complaints about the lack of instructional content or resources. I think students in both sections knew the course was in a "beta" mode and understood from the beginning that it would not be a "canned" publisher course and therefore were very adaptable and positive about the experience.

Accomplishments

Each of the four goals related to the Textbook Transformation Grant were accomplished. The first three are related to the development of the course learning material and the development of a learner-centric course. This was accomplished in the course re-design and integration of the free online MIS textbook. The fourth goal related to serving as a resource to other business faculty is in process as colleagues learn more the resources available in their disciplines and see the positive results of student surveys.

Textbook Transformation Grant Goals for MISM 3115

(1) Redesign the introductory management information systems course, MISM 3115, into a learner-centric environment that utilizes an open-access textbook.
(2) identify and integrate relevant and accessible complementary course material in a variety of formats to increase student engagement and performance,
(3) improve the value proposition for business students by offering a high-quality, no-cost solution for a required business course, and
(4) serve as a resource to other business faculty for the adoption of low or no-cost learning material for their courses.

Transformative impacts on your instruction

The transformative impact on instruction in the course was primarily in developing course modules that would engage students more and help them organize and retain the textbook content. This was clearly a paradigm shift from an instructor's perspective in the sense of not having a pre-packaged publisher's course module with slides, quizzes, and other resources already created and ready to be inserted in the course. The process of creating and testing each course module was a challenging but very rewarding process and, at the end, it was very clear which modules worked best and which ones needed to be refined or changed completely.

Transformative impacts on your students and their performance

Summarized student performance data from Fall 2015 are presented in Attachment 1. The primary transformative impact on students was the quantitative cost savings associated with using the free textbook. The most compelling data about the use of OER, however, was from students' comments about how it impacted them directly. A discussion forum was available throughout the semester for student comments and suggestions about the textbook and the course in general which generated many postings, and open-ended questions on the Learning Materials Survey administered at the end of the course provided further supporting data. Interestingly, the student grades in the course did not change significantly from previous semester courses and the DFW rate was slightly higher in Fall 2015 than in previous semesters.

B. Describe lessons learned, including any things you would do differently next time.

Some of the key lessons learned from the project are to (1) be mindful not to underestimate the amount of time required to carefully review and select course material for each module. Also, the importance of testing the amount of time to complete each activity is critical to ensure it meets accreditation standards but the required amount of work is not excessive; (2) be very adaptable and willing to change course if necessary when something is not working. Responding to student comments and complaints timely and with course adjustments is important when working with OER material for the first time; and (3) recognize that students enjoy being part of the experiment and are willing and eager to provide feedback

knowing their opinion is meaningful and may help encourage other faculty to consider using free textbook options.

2. Quotes

- "The course was very easy to manage without the use of the expensive textbook and PowerPoints as long as you came to class to pay attention. I love the idea of helping college students save money. College is expensive enough already. I would like to see more classes in the future offer this type of book."
- "I really liked the free textbook option, but I did not like it being online so I bought the hard copy. The hard copy was only $27 and that is a great option compared to the $200 books I have to buy for other classes."
- "I loved the textbook option and was one of the students who opted to have it printed for a very small fee. I paid almost $200 this past summer for a book I could never get my money back on. Prices for rentals are unbelievable too. Having taken this class with the option to have the physical book printed for a very low fee was GREAT for me! I would think students would really embrace this and I hope professors will too :)"
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3. 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?

Total number of students affected in this project: __117_____

- Positive: ___86____ % of ___53_____ number of respondents
- Neutral: ____2___ % of _____53___ number of respondents
- Negative: ___16____ % of _____ number of respondents

Student Learning Outcomes and Grades

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?

Choose One:
- ___ Positive: Higher performance outcomes measured over previous semester(s)
- _X__ Neutral: Same performance outcomes over previous semester(s)
- ___ Negative: Lower performance outcomes over previous semester(s)

Student Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) Rates

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:

_11.7_% of students, out of a total ___117____ 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)
- __X_ Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

3b. Narrative

Drop, fail, withdraw (DFW) rate for the two sections in the course were higher than the previous semester's rate but still relatively low for the large class size. The MISM 3115 course is a required business course and students must have a grade of "C" of better as a prerequisite to other business courses. The key factor for the higher rate was a result of the rigor of the course and required weekly engagement. In comparison to the most recent semester (spring 2015), the DWF rate increased slightly but not significant to draw any conclusions related to the textbook.

Enrollment Statistics	Number of Students	Number DWF
Online	45	5 – WF; 1 - F
Traditional	72	1 – WF; 3 - F
Total	117	6 – W/F; 4 - F

Student Learning Satisfaction Survey Results

Measure	Online (% Satisfied or Very Satisfied)	Traditional (% Satisfied or Very Satisfied)
Satisfaction with Textbook (Online)	94%	78%
Satisfaction with Textbook (Print)	55%	74%
Satisfaction with Learning Materials (PowerPoint Slides)	88%	80%
Satisfaction with Learning Materials (Supplementary Material)	83%	83%
Total Responses	17	36

Summary of Results

The results of the quantitative survey indicated an overall high level of satisfaction with the online version of the free textbook across both sections of the course, with the highest levels (94%) among the online students. Conversely, the print copy of the textbook, available as an option for all students, was not highly regarded by the few students who elected to buy a print copy. The quality of the print copy was not very appealing to students and missing an index and all graphics for the chapters. Student satisfaction with the supplementary learning materials was relatively consistent across both sections.

4. Sustainability Plan

MISM 3115 is offered every semester in both traditional and online delivery modes. Beginning in spring 2016, the course will be offered with the low-cost textbook option vs. a free textbook option for the same textbook. The primary reason for changing to the low-cost option is to gain access to the current chapters that are critical and necessary for course. The learning modules including the educational content, videos,

and other material will be re-used in the upcoming semester. The textbook will be the newest version of the author's textbook offered through Flat World Knowledge. The decision to change from no-cost to low-cost is primarily to ensure that students have access to the most current cases, examples, and chapter material which is becoming dated in the 2012 edition.

5. Future Plans

The positive response from students was one of the most rewarding parts of this initiative. Future plans include continuing to develop and updated this course as well as other courses in the Management Information Systems discipline. I also plan to serve as a mentor to other faculty exploring OER resources for their courses. A presentation proposal is currently planned for the SOBIE conference in April 2016.

6. Description of Photograph

(left – right) Dr. Jennifer P. Pitts, (Lead), Associate Professor of MIS; Jacqueline Radebaugh, Associate Professor of Library Science