

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants
Final Report

Date: 12/17/2015

Grant Number: 102

Institution Name(s): Georgia Southwestern State University

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

Charles M. Huffman, Ph.D., Chair, Dept. of Psychology and Sociology

Charles.huffman@gsw.edu

Joseph Comeau, Ph.D., Asst. Professor of Sociology

Joseph.comeau@gsw.edu

Gary Fisk, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology

Gary.fisk@gsw.edu

Judy Orton Grissett, Asst. Professor of Psychology

Judy.grissett@gsw.edu

Jamie MacLennan, Ph.D., Assoc. Professor of Sociology

Jamie.maclennan@gsw.edu

Courtney McDonald, Ph.D., Assoc. Professor of Sociology

Courtney.mcdonald@gsw.edu

LaVerne Worthy, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology

Laverne.worthy@gsw.edu

Project Lead: Charles M. Huffman, Ph.D.

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:

Introduction to Psychology, PSYC 1101

Introduction to Sociology, SOCI 1101

Semester Project Began: Summer 2015

Semester(s) of Implementation: Fall 2015

Average Number of Students Per Course Section: 37.1

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation: 10

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation: 371

1. Narrative

A. The key outcomes differ between the Introduction to Psychology and the Introduction to Sociology courses. In psychology, a comparison of spring 2015 grades to fall 2015 (implementation of OER text) reveal a substantial increase in fall grades (Spring= 75%; Fall=81%). This is a significant and rather dramatic increase in final grades, a positive outcome. In sociology, the differences in final grades for spring vs. fall were not significant (Spring=77.23%;Fall=77.04%). However, we interpret that as a positive because final grades did not decrease. In addition, in both disciplines the DWF rates were lower in each category in the fall semester than they were in the spring.

The use of an online, digital text required some changes in classroom management. For example, students need a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to access their text during class time. Instructors had to learn to use the online text too. It was easily adapted by being able to show specific pages of the text using a digital projector. Describe the key outcomes, whether positive, negative, or interesting, of your project.

The impact on students differed according to discipline. The psychology students had higher grades while the sociology students stayed the same. Overall, the student comments about the use of an online, digital text were positive.

B. We underestimated the number of students who wanted a physical copy of the textbook. We used the recommendation of OpenStax and targeted about 8% but in psychology the number of students who wanted a paper copy was about 12%. For most students, it was their first time using a digital textbook. We would offer a workshop providing students with some hands-on demonstrations of how to best use a digital textbook.

2. Quotes

- 1. "It was awesome that we didn't have to buy a textbook."
- 2. "Thank you to the department for using a free textbook. I like being able to read the text on my iPad. Good job!"
- 3. "At first I didn't like the book being online. Once I figured out how to use it, I think it's pretty cool."

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: 371

- Positive: 93 % of 371 number of respondents
- Neutral: 5 % of 371 number of respondents
- Negative: 2 % of 371 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)
- 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:

17.2% of students, out of a total 371 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)
- Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

3b. Narrative

- We have submitted midterm and final grades for 196 students from the spring 2015 semester (using publisher's text) and 371 students from the fall 2015 semester (using OpenStax texts). Our primary interest was comparing differences in DFW rates and final grades. In addition, we administered a short student satisfaction survey to ascertain student attitudes about using an OER textbook.
 - DFW rates, Spring 2015:
 - Psychology
 - D=11.7%
 - W=9.6%
 - F=17%
 - Sociology

- D=9.8%
- W=5.8%
- F=8.8%
- DFW rates, Fall 2015:
 - Psychology
 - D=10.3%
 - W=3.1%
 - F=3.1%
 - Sociology
 - D=8.5%
 - W=3.4%
 - F=6.2%

As you can see from the DFW rates, the percentages decreased in every category from spring 2015 to fall 2015. A very positive outcome.

- Course retention and completion rates increased. A positive outcome.
- Final grades in Introduction to Psychology increased by 6% from spring 2015 to fall 2015. A positive outcome. Final grades in Introduction to Sociology did not differ. We interpret no difference in sociology as a positive outcome.
- Students overwhelmingly liked the use of the open-source text (93% agreed or strongly agreed).
- It is difficult to make a direct comparison between final grades from the spring 2015 semester to final grades from the fall 2015 semester. We do not have data to illustrate that the characteristics of the two groups are similar.

4. Sustainability Plan

- We intend to continue to offer the OpenStax texts for both psychology and sociology.

5. Future Plans

- We will continue to offer the OpenStax texts in our Introductory courses. As a result of our experience with this project, the department is adopting No-Cost-To-Students texts in five other courses.
- Charles M. Huffman will be presenting some of the results of this project at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association in March 2016.

6. Description of Photograph

- L-R: LaVerne Worthy, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor; Joseph Comeau, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor; Judy Orton Grissett, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor; Linda Singleton, Administrative Assistant; Charles M. Huffman, Team Leader, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor; Courtney McDonald, Subject Matter Expert and

Instructor; Ellen Cotter (non-team member); Jamie MacLennan, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor; Gary Fisk, Subject Matter Expert and Instructor.