

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

General Information

Date: 05/25/18

Grant Round: 10

Grant Number: 341

Institution Name(s): Georgia State

Project Lead: Sarah Hepler

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

Jung Ha Kim, Jung Ha Kim, Principal Senior Lecturer & Director of Undergraduate Studies, Sociology,
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Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: Sociology 1101: Intro to Sociology

Semester Project Began: Fall 2018

Final Semester of Implementation: Spring 2018

Total Number of Students Affected During Project: 130

1. Narrative

For the narrative, [please see a blog I posted about it](#) several weeks ago on the project.

2. Quotes

“The writing assignments help me better my understanding of the textbook, and the assignments help me better my writing skills”

“Honestly, the best part of this course is being able to communicate with everyone else in it. Everyone’s peer review offers different perspective and help me understand the course even better”

“More readings from outside the book”

Three students also mentioned the grading process as “slow” and “in need of improvement” especially during the modules 1 and 2.

“Be unbiased in my reviews of papers and take my criticism well. Hopefully be able to give my professor good information that can help future students, too”

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

3a. Uniform Measurements Questions

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: 128

- Positive: 90 % of 63 number of respondents
- Neutral: 5 % of 63 number of respondents
- Negative: 5% of 63 number of respondents

These numbers are based on the Final Discussion discussed below.

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:

Depending on what you and your institution can measure, this may also be known as a drop/failure rate or a withdraw/failure rate.

___33.6___% of students, out of a total 130 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. Measures Narrative

Both qualitative and quantitative measures were used to measure the effectiveness and effects of the course redesign. The two grantees and a T.A. will collaborate on data collection and analysis.

Quantitative Measures

Outcomes Attainment

Our main quantitative measures were pre- and post-module quizzes aligned to standards set at a success threshold of 75%. Using the American Sociological Association (ASA) standards-aligned course template, students will be required to take pretest and posttest surveys of the five designated lesson plans on Brightspace. The results of these pretest and posttest surveys were documented and analyzed by the Progress Tool in Brightspace to measure student learning outcomes. Another purpose for these pretest and posttest surveys were for students to assess their own progress of mastering course materials. While students weren't be graded on these surveys, they were required to take them, in order to access the actual lesson plans. For instance, Module 1 components were locked - but visible - until the Module 1 pre-test was taken and Module 2 was completely locked until the Module 1 post-test was taken.



INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY Section 003
Spring Semester 2018
Spring 2018

85.69 %

Summary

Grades

Objectives

Content

Discussions

Assignments

Quizzes

Checklist

Surveys

Login History

Objectives Progress

Learning Objectives Passed
100 % (8/8)

Completed: 8/8

Not Started (0) | In Progress (0) | Passed (8) | Needs Remediation (0)

Describe the role of theory in building sociological knowledge and evaluate the limitations of different theoretical frameworks

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Mar 28, 2018 12:35 PM

Writing Assignment 4
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

96 %

Critically evaluate claims about the social world by identifying and appraising assumptions underlying theory construction and social policy, deductively deriving theories from assumptions, inductively reasoning from evidence to theoretical conclusions, and

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Mar 28, 2018 12:35 PM

Writing Assignment 4
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

96 %

Describe the role of social research methods in building sociological knowledge

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Feb 24, 2018 1:22 PM

Writing Assignment 2
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

96 %

Identify major methodological approaches and the design of doing research including sampling, measurement, and data collection

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Feb 24, 2018 1:22 PM

Writing Assignment 2
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

96 %

Conduct and critique empirical research through the articulation of the effective use of evidence, the generation of research questions or hypotheses from sociological theories and concepts, and the recognition of the limits of the scientific method in und

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Feb 24, 2018 1:22 PM

Writing Assignment 2
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

96 %

Express sociological ideas in a clear and coherent manner, in both written and oral communication, to the general public

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Mar 9, 2018 12:28 PM

Writing Assignment 3
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

82 %

Demonstrate informational, technological and quantitative literacy

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Mar 9, 2018 12:28 PM

Writing Assignment 3
Based On: Grade Threshold: 80 %

82 %

Demonstrate an understanding of the kinds of work sociologists do, including an awareness of how sociology is used in clinical and applied settings, and the value of sociological knowledge and skills in the workplace

100 % (1 / 1) Complete 1 / 1 Achieved

1 Activities, 0 Objectives

Last Updated: Mar 9, 2018 12:28 PM

Students were highly successful in meeting this 75% threshold on the 8 identified learning objectives:

- 111 completed and mastered all 8 learning objectives
- 17 Didn't engage with all 8
- 10 completed but needed more remediation on at least one

Grades

Here are the Spring '18 vs Spring '17 Grades and DFW. There was a 78% improvement in student final grade under the new course design and a 14% reduction in DFWs.

Semester	CRN	Course	Professor	A (90-100)	B (80-89)	A-B	C (70-79)	D (60-69)	F <60	W	DFW	DFW%	Other	Total	CRS AVG (Rounded grade point average)
Spring 18	20759	SOCI 1101	Kim, Jung	54	23	77	8	4	11	28	43	33.60%	0	128	3.1
Spring 17	10785	SOCI 1101	Kim, Jung	11	21	32	36	11	28	11	50	42.00%	1	119	1.74
			Difference	43	2	45	-28	-7	-17	17	-7	-0.084		9	1.36
			Percentage Change	391%	10%	141%	-78%	-64%	-61%	155%	-14%	-20%		8%	78%
Adjusted for Enrollment Number															
Spring 18	20759	SOCI 1101	Adjusted by 3.52%	52.10	22.19	74.29	7.72	3.86	10.61	27.02	41.49	33.59%	0	123.5	2.99
Spring 17	10785	SOCI 1101	Adjusted by -3.64%	11.40	21.77	33.17	37.31	11.40	29.02	11.40	51.82	41.96%	1.04	123.5	1.80
			Adjusted Difference	40.70	0.43	41.13	-29.59	-7.54	-18.41	15.61	-10.33	-0.084			1.19
			Adjusted Percentage Change	357.00%	1.96%	124.00%	-79.31%	-66.15%	-63.43%	136.96%	-19.94%	-19.94%			66%

Qualitative Measures

We used two qualitative measures of the course: beginning and end of course discussion posts and a mid semester responsive evaluation.

Here is a description of each post:

Welcome Module Discussion Post

In the Welcome module of the course, students were required to respond to a discussion prompt focusing on expectations. The discussion prompt read: It was great reading your responses to the Welcome discussion - I'm so glad to have you in the class and really enjoyed learning about each of you. One of the most important skills to learn as a budding sociologist is self reflection. Throughout the course we'll be working on our skills of reflection so let's get started now. In this post, you'll be reflecting on your expectations for the course. At the end of the course, we'll do the same exercise and you'll reflect on how your ideas have changed: What are your general expectations for yourself and your classmates this semester? In other words, how do you think your experience will be this semester? How do you predict that your experience this semester might affect your life after this semester is over? Although you have a textbook for this course, it is free. How do you think that not having to buy a textbook will affect your experience?

Final Module Discussion Post

In the Final module of the course, students were required to respond to a discussion prompt reflecting on how their expectations and thinking evolved during the semester. This discussion prompt read: Thank you all for participating in this course. Remember when we thought about your expectations early in the semester? Now it's time to reflect on those expectations as well as looking towards the future. The goal of this activity is to help you reflect on your own thinking and how it has changed during the semester. To do this activity, you need to look back at what you wrote during the Welcome module. How did your experiences this semester match your expectations? How did they differ? How could you see yourself using your experiences this semester in the future? How did not having to buy a textbook affect your experience?

Qualitative data were analyzed using an iterative, thematic approach. First, a random sample of student pre/post-test discussions will be selected. We will then read through each pre-test discussion post, coding relevant sections. The same process will be carried out for the post-test discussion post. Codes will then be collapsed into themes.

Midterm Evaluation

A midterm GIFT (Group Instructional Feedback Technique) evaluation was carried out by the two PI's on this project. We received 59 responses. The results were collated and themed and then shared with the students. Jung Ha made several small tweaks to the course based on this process:

SOCI 1101 Midsemester Evaluation

Hi! Please take a few minutes to complete this midsemester course evaluation. Your answers will help improve the course

What aspects of this course ENHANCE your learning?

Long-answer text

What aspects of this course can be IMPROVED?

Long-answer text

What could YOU (as a student) do to make the course better for your classmates

Long-answer text

The Mid-semester Evaluations	Mar 20, 2018 1:19 PM	Apr 9, 2018 12:13 PM	Expired
<p>I hope you enjoyed a restful spring break.</p> <p>I'd like to give thanks to everyone who participated in the mid-semester course evaluation. THANK YOU! Fifty-nine people shared their thoughts and opinions. There are a few emerging topics that were mentioned in BOTH the "learning enhancement" and the "further improvement" sections of the evaluation and some constructive critiques that I'd like to share with you in your own words:</p> <p>a) <u>The peer review:</u></p> <p>"This discussion questions insure that I am reading and REALLY understanding the topics. I also enjoy that I can compare my understanding with other classmates." "Honestly, the best part of this course is being able to communicate with everyone else in it. Everyone's peer review offers different perspective and help me understand the course even better" Items of the course."</p> <p>"I think it would be useful if there was something we could do after the reviews for our essays in order to return it in for a higher grade with the corrections added."</p> <p>b) <u>The writing assignment:</u></p> <p>"The writing assignments help me better my understanding of the textbook, and the assignments help me better my writing skills." "The writing assignments, and getting to express my own opinions on certain subjects." (x4) "The peer review and writing assignments, I feel like we should do something different sometimes instead of the same routine every module." "There is a lot of writing, some of it does not seem to be related to what we are actually learning. The amount of work is overwhelming and discourage students from actually learning."</p> <p>c) <u>The "tests"</u></p> <p>The Pre-test & the post-test were mentioned as positive learning enhancements.</p> <p>The test - the length and the format - was mentioned as mostly things to improve, either more time or fewer questions.</p> <p>d) <u>The course syllabus:</u></p> <p>"Knowing the format and schedule of the class without having to worry about changes to due dates and other things" (as +). "The lay out of the syllabus" (as -).</p> <p>e) <u>Other suggestions</u></p> <p>"I like the set-up and format that the course and instructor is presently. I would change minor things, such as the hour of times that text-alert messages goes out to students cellphones. Like students, the instructors can work various hours and days as they seem necessary. Getting a text alert at 6AM or 12AM is not good for a full-time working student/adult."</p> <p>"Possibly more quizzes, I have some anxiousness that although I am doing my work, I am not able to focus of what information is the most important to take in."</p> <p>"More readings from outside the book"</p> <p>"The aspects that can be improved in this course would probably be more communication between the professor and the students. This is an online class so professors and students don't have facial interactions, possibly making it harder to learn the material.</p> <p>The workload: "Honestly, for it to be an introduction to Sociology, this feels more like an advanced class. Especially with the strict deadlines and three pages every week."</p> <p>Three students also mentioned the grading process as "slow" and "in need of improvement" especially during the modules 1 and 2.</p> <p>Some self-reflection: "Need to ask more questions and improve my writing by thinking deeper."</p> <p>"Be more detailed in my discussion post replies. If the student actually reads the comments on their paper, they will see what they are doing wrong. hopefully, they would change what needs to be changed on their next assignment, so that they can make a higher grade"</p> <p>"I could log on and do the assignments sooner and try not to procrastinate. That way my peers can have more time to read and review my work."</p> <p>"Be unbiased in my reviews of papers and take my criticism well. Hopefully be able to give my professor good information that can help future students, too."</p> <p>As you can tell, there is A LOT that you shared in the mid-semester evaluation. And I thank you for sharing!</p> <p>A few "improvements" of sorts that I can implement immediately:</p> <p>A study-guide for TEST II (will be posted during the first week of April);</p> <p>An onsite review session for the exam: March 30 (Fri) from 12 to 1 p.m. in the Sociology Dept. Conference room (Langdale Hall, 10th floor).</p> <p>An online review session on April 5 (Thursday) via the Frequently Asked Questions from 12 to 1 p.m. Please, send questions related to the exam 2. I will try my best to answer them during this special time period.</p> <p>** Needless to say, these are optional and additional opportunities for you to utilize, based on your needs, schedule, and priorities. There is no need to worry if you can't or don't participate in any of them.</p> <p>(And lastly, if I were to offer an online course for a regular class-size, then, I'd probably integrate BOTH group-discussions and class-discussions. Regardless of the size of the class, I'd also change the procedure of the writing assignments and the peer-reviews. That is, I'd ask students to conduct the peer reviews first and submit the (revised) writing assignments after the peer reviews. Thanks, again, for all your constructive critiques.)</p> <p>As you can tell from the Modules and the syllabus, the semester's work is about to completed soon in this course. Please, try to put in more conscious effort and energy to successfully complete the coursework for the next three or four weeks.</p>			

4. Sustainability Plan

This course will be made freely available to all instructors teaching Sociology 1101 at all GSU campuses. Importantly, this course will be made available as a template to adjunct instructors teaching at the GPC campuses. Thus, this template will be open to critique and collaboration from other sociologists at all campuses. This includes those faculty that are full-time, adjunct, visiting, and GRA's. We see this as a small, non-mandatory transformative step towards fostering a culture of sharing and collaboration between the different campus units of GSU. The course will be updated and supported each semester with help of GSU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Human resources at the CETL include instructional designers, multimedia designers, learning technologists, and a data science/analytics team.

5. Future Plans

- The success of this project has already begun to affect the content selection choices of other Sociology professors. In addition, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is currently seeking other OER grant opportunities to infuse free, reusable content in as many of our courses as possible.
- We presented our project at the Teaching and Learning Conference in Spring 2018. We also [published a blog on the finished product and process](#). We will continue to write and think about OER in future designs and as the online programs expand at GSU.

6. Description of Photograph

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