

**Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants
Round 2
Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016
Proposal Form and Narrative**

Institution Name(s)	Albany State University				
Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each)	Dr. Hema Oshoone Mason, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Counseling and Psychology, hema.mason@asurams.edu Dr. Mark Thomas, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Counseling and Psychology, mark.thomas@asurams.edu				
Sponsor, Title, Department, Institution	Dr. Carolyn Rollins, Chair – Department of Counseling and Psychology, Albany State University				
Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered (Summer 2015, Fall 2015, or Spring 2016)	Introduction to Psychology, PSYC 1101, Summer 2015				
Average Number of Students Per Course Section	66	Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation in Academic Year 2016	1	Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation in Academic Year 2016	66
Award Category (pick one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials <input type="checkbox"/> OpenStax Textbooks <input type="checkbox"/> Course Pack Pilots <input type="checkbox"/> Transformations-at-Scale				
List the original course materials for students (including title, whether optional or required, & cost for each item)	Required Textbook: Psychology: Concepts and Applications, 4 th Edition J. Nevid (ISBN-1111835497)		Textbook Cost: \$243.25 for each book in the ASU Bookstore Total Cost: \$243.25		
Plan for Hosting Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> OpenStax CNX <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2L <input type="checkbox"/> LibGuides <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____				
Projected Per Student Cost	\$243.25	Projected Per Student Savings (%)	100%		

1. PROJECT GOALS

- Reduce students' financial burdens with regard to textbook purchases by offering no-cost-to-student learning materials.
- Increase and improve student productivity, engagement and participation.
- Provide stimulating learning materials that encourages students to be participatory learners early in the semester.
- Make sure no-cost materials are available to all students beginning on the first day of class.
- Promote student retention and success.

1.1 STATEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

Statement of Problem. Students are rarely engaged in class and class discussions because they have not purchased the required textbook materials. Many reasons have been given for not purchasing the books including (1) cost of textbooks, (2) lack of funds or (3) financial aid issues which prevent students from getting materials in a timely manner. In addition, there are supplemental materials available to enhance the learning experience and students receive these materials when they purchase the textbook material. However, because they are not purchasing the books, they are also not benefitting from the supplemental materials. For those who do decide to purchase books, they will generally wait until one quarter of the semester has passed. As a result, students fall behind and struggle to get caught up.

Another problem is that it is difficult to get students to invest in textbooks that are not part of their major area. It is difficult to convince students to invest \$200-\$300 for textbook materials outside of their major area, especially when the refunds on those books are about \$20. For these reasons, students will opt out of purchasing the needed materials, even at the expense of their grade. Even though these classes are outside of the student's major, it affects the students' overall GPA.

The Transformation. This course will no longer require traditional textbook materials, as requiring these materials have not resulted in desirable outcomes for these students. Students will now benefit from free textbook learning materials that will enhance their learning experience. In addition, students will have no-cost supplemental materials including practice exams, content relevant articles, scholarly journal articles, videos, video demonstrations and video lectures. All of these materials will comply with APA standards. All materials will be housed on the Desire2Learn (D2L) learning management system. Specifically, these materials will be accessible to all enrolled students via the D2L group locker and the content areas of D2L. The stakeholders affected by this transformation include the university, students and the faculty. Each of these groups will be impacted by the transformation in several meaningful ways. For instance, one of ASU's and Georgia's highest priorities is to recruit, retain and ensure the success of students. As a stakeholder with a vested interest in this transformation, the university will see substantial improvements as it relates to the retention and success of its students. Students will benefit from this transformation by saving money and reducing the financial burden they face on a regular basis. They will have immediate access to textbook and supplemental materials. They will be better prepared by having read the required materials prior to class. Likewise, faculty members will be able to teach more effectively, because of the better prepared student. Often times, faculty members find it necessary to slow down the teaching pace because students have not adequately prepared for the class lecture and discussion. This obstacle would be greatly diminished with this transformation. With this transformation, students will be more prepared and take greater responsibility in this course. This will also encourage the students to be active, engaged and participatory learners.

1.2 TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

The selection of materials for PSYC 1101 will take place via an in depth review of the available and recommended open textbook materials. Specifically, Dr. Thomas and I (Dr. Mason) will each review materials from MERLOT, College Open Textbooks, OpenStax College and other sources as appropriate. While reviewing these potential sources, we will also look for free supplemental materials such as videos, demonstrations and practice quizzes. After we have reviewed the available materials, we will then make the proper selections – using APA guidelines as our curriculum standard. The selected materials will be adopted for the summer semester 2015 PSYC 1101 course. These materials will also be adapted for use throughout the semester term. A course and syllabus redesign will be necessary to reflect the new no-cost materials that will be used. Therefore, the course and syllabus redesign will reflect the new materials that are selected for the course. Assignments, papers, quizzes and exams will be created from these materials as well.

The plan for providing open access to the new materials includes giving students a hard copy of the newly designed syllabus, which will have a statement regarding the new design, along with access to the web addresses where materials may be obtained. We will inform the students of the new no-cost materials available to them. Because students must have the ability to freely access the no-cost psychology materials without restrictions, we will ensure that students have all of the URLs that correspond to the required and supplemental reading materials. We will place this information in the ‘required and supplemental reading’ section of the syllabus. We will also provide a separate document with the URL information, so that it does not appear that the information is buried with other information in the syllabus. In addition, we will provide detailed information on Desire2Learn and provide training on how to access the textbook and supplemental materials. Students will also be able to access a soft copy of the syllabus and separate URL document on Desire2Learn. Next, as we are going over the syllabus during the first week of class, we will physically demonstrate how to access all of the URLs in class. Lastly, we will create a Wiki site for students to access the no-cost learning materials, as Google Wikis are a free and easy way to access and share information. Indeed, our plan provides multiple ways of providing open access to the required and supplemental materials for this course and should be a very valuable resource for our students.

1.3 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASURES

We will examine the effectiveness of no-cost-to-students learning materials on student success, using both a quantitative and qualitative approach. Using the statistics feature in Desire2Learn, exam scores in classes in which textbooks were required will be compared to the newly designed course which uses the no-cost textbook option. It is predicted that students participating in this new class format will have higher exam scores than students who had textbooks. From a qualitative perspective, two discussion forum assignments from a class requiring a textbook will be compared to two discussion forums in which no-cost materials were used. We will evaluate these discussions based on quality of responses and completeness of information. In the traditional format, the quality and completeness of discussion assignments have been problematic, as students often gave generic answers. These generic answers were a result of not having a textbook to guide them. It is therefore predicted that the quality of discussion forums will improve as a result of having immediate access to no-cost learning materials.

1.4 TIMELINE

2/2/15	Attend required ALG training
3/1/15	Search for no-cost materials
4/1/15	Prepare syllabus redesign
5/1/15	Upload materials in D2L
6/3/15	Quantitative data collection - Exam one comparison: Textbook vs. no-cost material
6/17/15	Quantitative data collection - Exam two comparison: Textbook vs. no-cost material
6/7/15	Qualitative data collection - Discussion forum comparison
6/17/15	Midterm grades due
6/20/15	Submit mid-semester report
7/1/15	Quantitative data collection - Exam three comparison: Textbook vs. no-cost material
7/15/15	Quantitative data collection - Exam four comparison: Textbook vs. no-cost material
6/28/15	Qualitative data collection - Discussion forum comparison
7/15/15	Final grades due
7/20/15	Submit final report

1.5 BUDGET

Dr. Mason - \$5,000.00 for the selection and preparation of no-cost materials, as well as course and syllabus redesign, and collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data at 8 time points.

Dr. Thomas - \$5,000.00 for the selection and preparation of no-cost materials, as well as course and syllabus redesign, and creation of pre and post attitudinal surveys.

\$800.00 for travel expenses to required ALG training.

1.6 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

There are normally 5-6 sections of Introduction to Psychology (a top 50 USG course) taught at Albany State University. The proposed plan will initially introduce no-cost materials to one section. It is expected that this program will have far reaching success and will result in (1) significant monetary savings (2) engaged and better prepared students and (3) increased academic performance. As such, we will propose that all sections of Introduction to Psychology use the no-cost textbook method. This will result in an individual savings of \$243.00 and a total savings of over \$80,000.00 for all 5 sections. With the success of the Introduction to Psychology course, we anticipate incorporating no-cost textbook materials into additional lower level psychology courses.

The course materials will be housed and maintained in Desire2Learn. Every semester there will be a plan for ensuring that all materials are relevant and up-to-date. Additionally, as new and stimulating material is identified, this material will be added to the resource library.

1.7 REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Please see attached letter of support from Dr. Carolyn Rollins, Chair of the Department of Counseling and Psychology, Albany State University.



DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGY

November 28, 2014

Affordable Learning Georgia
Textbook Transformation Grant Program
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA 30332

Dear Reviewer:

I am pleased to support the proposal of Dr. Hema Mason for the Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant. Dr. Mason is a dedicated educator whose instructional approach targets a broad range of learning styles. She balances lecture with the application of learning in a way that encourages students to be participatory learners, think critically, and apply their skills across settings. Dr. Mason does this regardless of the instructional platform. She is grounded in her discipline and adept at the use of Desire2Learn, our instructional platform.

Increasing access and the affordability of college for Georgia students in general and specifically for Albany State University students align the missions of the University System and State of Georgia, Albany State University, and the Department of Counseling and Psychology. We have experienced the consequences of rising higher education costs for promising students who are unable to complete or whose achievement suffers because they must work long hours to afford textbooks and tuition. Albany State University encourages faculty to use our resources creatively to make education more affordable. In our department, this means increasing access options to meet learners' needs and increasing the use of cost-free or low cost resources, such as digital libraries, instructional and learning resources. Dr. Mason will develop the materials in a manner that facilitates updating, so that they can remain current without having to be completely redeveloped.

If awarded the grant, the department will work with Dr. Mason to coordinate the distribution of her award to assure that she has the time to develop the course as well as access to other resources to support her success. I am confident in her ability to complete the project effectively and on schedule.

Please let me know if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carolyn W. Rollins".

Carolyn W. Rollins, Rh.D., CRC, NCC
Interim Chair

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