

Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Final Report

To submit your Final Report, go to the [Final Report submission page](http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/site/final_report_submission) on the ALG website:

http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/site/final_report_submission

The final report submission form allows up to five files:

- This completed narrative document (required)
- Syllabus or syllabi (required)
If multiple files, compress into one .zip folder
- Qualitative/Quantitative Measures data files (required)
If multiple files, compress into one .zip folder
- Photo of your team or a class of your students for future ALG promotions (optional)
- Invoice for the second half of the grant's award amount (optional)

Follow the instructions on the webpage for uploading your documents. Based on receipt of this report, ALG will process the final payment for your grant. ALG will follow up in the future with post-project grantee surveys and may also request your participation in a publication, presentation, or other event.

General Information

Date: August 13, 2021

Grant Round: 17

Grant Number: 532

Institution Name(s): Georgia State University

Project Lead: Cyntoria Johnson, Clinical Associate Professor

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

Cyntoria Johnson, cjohnson5@gsu.edu

Clinical Associate Professor

Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology

Georgia State University

LaLoria Konata, llkonata@gsu.edu

Policy Studies Librarian

Georgia State University

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: CRJU 4780, Criminal Law

Semester Project Began: Fall 2020

Final Semester of Implementation: Summer 2021

Total Number of Students Affected During Project: 167

1. Narrative

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

Include:

- **Summary of your transformation experience, including challenges and accomplishments**
- **Transformative impacts on your instruction**
- **Transformative impacts on your students and their performance**

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

Transformation Experience – Challenges and Accomplishments

This proposal set out to transform CRJU 4780 Criminal Law from a face-to-face to an online format, to eliminate textbook costs for students, to enhance student accessibility to digital course content, and to increase enrollment caps to meet high student demand at Georgia State University. Overall, the textbook transformation project was a very positive experience for team members and resulted in meaningful impacts on students and our institution.

We located several open-access textbook options to use for this course from GALILEO Open Learning Materials and USG Libraries. After a thorough content analysis of available OER materials, we designated [Introduction to Criminal Law](#) by Lisa M. Storm as the primary textbook for this undergraduate course. We also surveyed syllabi from other criminal law courses to identify major topic areas typically covered at the undergraduate level of this course. Based on our expertise in the subject matter and our experience teaching this course for numerous years prior to this transformation, we already had a good sense of the major topics to be covered and where to locate suitable supplemental materials. We outlined 12 subject matter topical areas and organized relevant OER materials into content modules within iCollege.

In addition, we integrated digital learning tools that allow students to practice self-paced exercises applying course concepts to legal cases. We secured a departmental subscription to the Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction (CALI) which has compiled over 1,000 interactive, web-based lessons, study aids, and resources covering topics related to criminal law. Previously, CALI was only available to GSU Law students, but we were able to bring this valuable resource to our undergraduate criminal justice students. CALI now provides unlimited access to the learning tools so our students can get more practice with criminal law concepts even beyond this course. This is particularly helpful for students in our Legal Track concentration who are preparing for law school and/or careers in the legal profession.

Team members collaborated on the course design and development of OER materials for this project. Cyntoria Johnson served as the instructor of record and delivered the course during Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021. LaLoria Konata served as the subject matter librarian and co-instructional designer and created a [GSU Library Research Guide](#) where course materials are made publicly available at. We worked together to locate and compile high quality open-source content and digital media. Throughout the academic year, we met virtually to discuss student performance, the organization of the course material into subject matter modules,

evaluating the assessments, and ideas for improving the course. The total number of students impacted by the transformation was 167, which yielded a \$19,873.00 cost savings for this year alone.

Transformative Impacts on Our Institution

This transformation project has had a meaningful impact on our institution. We learned that instructors can still deliver high quality course content and achieve course goals and objectives without requiring a traditional textbook. We attended pedagogical workshops and professional development trainings which enhanced our knowledge of the subject matter and motivated us to learn and integrate innovative technology into the learning environment. We are proud that this transformation has encouraged other faculty members to adopt no-cost pedagogy as well. This project is an integral piece of our broader departmental goals to offer a no-cost degree pathway and expand our online course offerings for criminal justice majors.

Transformative Impacts on Students and Their Performance

We received overwhelmingly positive student feedback about this course, and records indicate that students performed well during the transformation. This project saved students from spending thousands of out-of-pocket dollars on textbooks this year. The increased enrollment caps allowed more students to enroll in a high demand, popular course without having to compete for limited in-person classroom space. Students enjoyed the flexibility and convenience of the 100% online, asynchronous format. Students will have access to the open access materials beyond the completion of this course, which will help to prepare them for law school and careers in the law.

Lessons Learned

While this project was an overall success, we share a few concerns and highlight ways we addressed them. Our primary challenge this year was the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused some unfortunate hardships for students. Many of them faced personal and financial challenges which impacted their studies at GSU. We made the extra effort to reach out and connect with students, held extended virtual office hours, and provided detailed information about on-campus resources and student services.

Second, the increased enrollments in this course created additional workload for the instructor. We continue to look for ways to support instructors through graduate teaching assistantships within the department and university initiatives.

Our third challenge involved the criminal law project, which was due at the end of the semester. Students initially struggled with the independent research and writing components as well as finding time in their busy schedules to connect with their teammates. Between the first and second implementation semesters, we took the time to restructure the criminal law project by: (1) chunking the components into smaller, more frequent scaffolded assignments due periodically throughout the semester, (2) breaking up the due dates rather than a single end-of-semester deadline, and (3) introducing peer review to enhance equitable and inclusive learning. We also scheduled virtual meetings so students could get one-on-one assistance from

their instructor and subject matter librarian. In addition, we provided students more information about support services to improve their writing as well as academic integrity pointers to avoid plagiarism.

2. Quotes

Provide three quotes from students evaluating their experience with the no-cost learning materials.

- “She made sure all her materials were free of charge which greatly helped due to my lack of funds.” (SEI, Fall 2020)
- “I would absolutely keep the no cost system in which the links were provided with the slides because it was easy to get the information for study purposes.” (Keeps & Kicks, Fall 2020)
- “I would definitely keep the supplemental videos and cases as they helped me make real world connections to the material.” (Keeps & Kicks, Fall 2020)

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

A. Uniform Measurements Questions

The following are uniform questions asked to all grant teams. Please answer these to the best of your knowledge.

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: 167

- Positive: 100 % of 51 number of respondents
- Neutral: 0 % of 51 number of respondents
- Negative: 0 % of 51 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?

Student outcomes should be described in detail in Section 3b.

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.

- 10 % of students, out of a total 167 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)

* Note that DFW rates increased across the University during the pandemic.

B. Measures Narrative

In this section, summarize the supporting impact data that you are submitting, including all quantitative and qualitative measures of impact on student success and experience. Include all measures as described in your proposal, along with any measures developed after the proposal submission.

[When submitting your final report, as noted above, you will also need to provide the separate file (or .zip with multiple files) of supporting data on the impact of your Textbook Transformation, such as surveys, analyzed data collected, etc.]

- ***Include measures such as:***
 - ***Drop, fail, withdraw (DFW) delta rates***
 - ***Course retention and completion rates***
 - ***Average GPA***
 - ***Pre-and post-transformation DFW comparison***
 - ***Student success in learning objectives***
 - ***Surveys, interviews, and other qualitative measures***
- ***Indicate any co-factors that might have influenced the outcomes.***

Supporting Impact Data

To determine the effectiveness of this transformation, we analyzed data on student performance, course-level retention, and student satisfaction. Quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate that this transformation project was an overall success.

We collected student performance and course-level retention data from IPORT, a web-based application that provides access to student data in the University Data Warehouse. We report the enrollments, grade distribution, and retention/completion data for both face-to-face and online sections during the pre-transformation period as well as the fall/spring/summer implementation semesters. Student performance was very similar before and during the implementation semesters. Also please note that DFW rates increased across the board during the COVID pandemic.

Student satisfaction was assessed in two ways. Participation was completely voluntary, and feedback was anonymous for both measures. First, we administered a Keeps & Kicks Survey on iCollege at the end of the semester as a part of the “Farewell” module. The overall consensus of the qualitative feedback is that students appreciated not having to purchase an expensive textbook and enjoyed engaging with classmates in the online discussions and the interactive CALI lessons.

Second, we reviewed the results of the student evaluation of instructor (SEI) reports administered by GSU. Each semester, this instrument evaluates student satisfaction with quantitative and qualitative measures on the quality of the course and the instructor. Student feedback was useful to compare results across sections and to determine necessary adjustments to improve the course from semester to semester.

4. Sustainability Plan

Describe how your project team or department will offer the materials in the course(s) in the future, including the maintenance and updating of course materials.

Going forward, we plan to continue teaching this course in the no-cost format using OER materials. We will continue to look for updated OER materials, relevant criminal cases, etc. to incorporate into our subject matter modules. Since the course is taught every semester, we plan to update the course regularly and pay close attention to student feedback in order to improve the learning experience in the future. In addition, LaLoria Konata will update the [GSU Library Guide](#) associated with this course.

5. Future Affordable Materials Plans

Describe any impacts or influences this project has had on your thinking about or selection of learning materials in this and other courses that you will teach in the future.

This project helped us to realize the power and impact of our own pedagogical decisions on students and our institution. We believe that decision-making *power* also requires the *responsibility* for instructors to reconsider our attitudes about textbook selections and critically examine the impact of our own choices on the students we serve. We look forward to adopting the no-cost pedagogy in future courses as time and resources permit.

6. Future Scholarship Plans

Describe any planned or actual papers, presentations, publications, or other professional activities that you expect to produce that reflect your work on this project.

We were planning to present our findings at pedagogical conferences such as The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and/or American Society of Criminology. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many conferences were cancelled. Nonetheless, we still look forward to sharing our experiences and impact of this transformation project once the University reopens and travel resumes.

7. Description of Photograph (optional)

N/A