Affordable Learning Georgia Affordable Materials Grants  
Transformation Grants Final Report

*(or Textbook Transformation Grants, if R17 or earlier)*

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

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:** 12-18-2020

**Grant Round:** 15

**Grant Number:** 481

**Institution Name(s):** East Georgia State College

**Project Lead**: Daniel Mancill, Associate Professor of Political Science. [dmancill@ega.edu](mailto:dmancill@ega.edu)

Brett Larson, Assistant Professor of Political Science (Former Project Lead)

**Team Members:** Daniel Mancill, Associate Professor of Political Science. [dmancill@ega.edu](mailto:dmancill@ega.edu)

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Dr. Brett Larson, Assistant Professor of Political Science (Former member)

**Course Name(s) and Course Numbers**: American Government, POLS 1101

**Semester Project Began:** Spring 2020

**Final Semester of Implementation:** Fall 2020

**Total Number of Students Affected During Project:** 872

# Narrative

* 1. *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*
  1. *Describe lessons learned, including any things you would do differently next time.*

Our project had four goals: 1. Reduce students’ costs of taking POLS 1101 by using no-cost, high quality educational resources instead of cost prohibitive, traditional textbooks.

2. Increase student success rates in POLS 1101 by using no-cost, high quality educational resources.

3. Adopt and/or create no-cost educational resources that supplement existing no-cost textbooks such as *American Government* by Glen Krutz.

In the Spring of 2020 all grant participants (Mancill, Larson, Cheek, Caiazzo, and Mullins) researched free and low costs textbooks. Openstax was chosen as the open access textbook of choice. Other than accessing the textbook online students could also download the app and use that to read from the textbook. In our POLS 1101 courses links were placed in D2L so the students would have ease of access to the textbook. Transitioning to the free textbook from Openstax reduced the costs burden on our students tremendously. Our first goal of reducing the cost to students was successful.

Our second goal was to increase student success rates by using no cost, high quality educational resources. Here I think we have mixed results. Obviously, the Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on our results. In March of 2020 our institution, like many in Georgia, went to an all online format using D2L, our course learning management system. We, along with our students, had to adapt to this new way of learning. Many students struggled with this change, but we all adapted and did the best we could to help the students get through this very difficult time. For the Fall 2020 semester many classes were hybrids with half attending in class on one day, and the rest attending the class via Zoom. Then vice versa the next class meeting.

Our collective success rates before the Spring of 2020 was 65.8 %. Our Spring 2020 success rate alone was 80.07. I contribute this high success rate to our team of instructors adapting our courses for the online transition.

Our average success rate for the time we adopted the free textbook, which was Summer and Fall of 2020 was 73.19. By comparing our success rate before the Spring of 2020 (65.8%) to now (73.19) is amazing. I feel that we did meet our second goal. However, we feel the pandemic did affect the way we delivered and taught our POLS 1101 classes.

“For our third goal, *American Government* by Glen Krutz as the main textbook for POLS 1101 classes. Despite its merits, this text has content gaps. One key shortcoming is its inadequate treatment of topics such as government, democracy, constitutionalism, the influences on the authors of the US Constitution, and the powers of Congress and the President. To fill these holes, Larson and Cheek used instructional materials that students can access for free such as 100 percent free textbooks, primary sources, journal articles, book chapters, book excerpts, newspaper articles, videos, and PowerPoints. Examples include *Liberty, Order, and Justice* by James McClellan (100 percent free online textbook), *A Disquisition on Government* by John C. Calhoun (free excerpts), and *Introduction to American Government* by Charles Turner (free excerpts).” -Larson

# Quotes

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

1. How often do you buy the required textbooks for your classes?

4 - always 3- only when told

2. Does the cost of textbooks affect your decision to buy them?

6 - no 1 - yes

1. How does the quality of the no-cost/open educational resource textbooks in this course compare to the quality of traditional textbooks in other classes?

4 - no difference 2 - like hand-held text better 1 - no answer

1. Which do you prefer: no-cost/open educational resource textbooks or traditional textbooks?

Why? 3 - traditional 2 - no-cost 2 - doesn’t matter

1. Should more professors consider using no-cost/open educational resource textbooks? Why or why not?

4 - yes 2- up to them 1- undecided

“The no cost textbooks are just as good as traditional textbooks, if not better.”

“No-cost is a great option. These textbooks still provide knowledge that is needed for the class. Quality is great.”

“I prefer printed textbooks so that I can keep them for use after class.”

# Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_872\_\_\_\_\_

* Positive: \_\_\_83\_\_\_\_ % of \_\_\_\_130\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Neutral: \_\_\_\_3\_\_\_ % of \_\_\_\_130\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Negative: \_\_\_11\_\_\_\_ % of \_\_\_130\_\_\_\_\_ 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:

* \_X\_\_ 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?**

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

\_39.33\_\_\_% of students, out of a total \_\_\_212\_\_ 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)

## 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.*

Our team used both quantitative and qualitative measures to compare the use of commercially available textbook and resources to free, open access resources. The last semester that the team used commercially available textbook and materials was Spring of 2020. The team used no cost materials beginning in the Summer 2020 semester. To compare we used data from Spring 2020 and compared that to data from the Summer and Fall of 2020.

Pre and posts test were used to collect quantitative data. The pre test is given at the beginning of the course to assess student knowledge, the post test is given at the end of the course to assess how much student knowledge is gained. In the Spring of 2020 the average pre test score was 4.17, while the average post test score was 5.50. The deviation was 1.34. The average pre test score for the Summer 2020 was 5.82, while the average post test score was 7.46. The deviation was 1.64. In the Fall of 2020 the average pre test score was 5.33, while the average post test score was 11.09. The deviation was 5.75.

The second quantitative measure was the 5-week early grade warning alerts. During week 5 of fall and spring semesters, instructors at East Georgia State College issue early grade warning alerts to students who have overall course grades below 70. This alert is issues via Grades First. In our Spring 2020 courses 22.98% of students received an early warning alert. In our Summer 2020 courses 4.95% of the students received and early warning alert. While in our Fall 2020 courses, 12% received early warning alerts. This shows that student success has increased from the Spring of 2020 to the Fall of 2020.

The third quantitative measure was student performance on assignments such as exams, quizzes, homework, and discussions. In the Spring of 2020 the average exam score was 71.13, the quiz average was 72.40, the homework average was 50.67, the discussion average was 68.42. In the Summer of 2020 the exam average was 78.65, the quiz average was 71.57, the homework average was 80.33, the discussion average was 79.77.

In the Fall of 2020 the exam average was 78.56, the quiz average was 68.89, the homework average was 80.0, and the discussion average was 53.3. As we can see from the data grades on exams increased from the Spring of 2020 to the Fall of 2020. The homework average also increased. While quiz grades and discussion grades decreased.

The fourth quantitative measure was the drop, fail, withdraw and student success rates. In our Spring 2020 courses the drop, fail, withdraw percent was 29.50. The student success rate was 70.50. In the Summer of 2020 the drop, fail, withdraw rate was 26.73%, while the success rate was 73.27%. In the Fall of 2020 the drop, fail, withdraw rate was 39.9% while the success rate was 60.6%. From the data we can see that Fall 2020 presented us with a few challenges when it comes to student success. Because of the ongoing pandemic many of our classes were presented in a hybrid, synchronous format. This led to many students not completing the semester. Although our success rate was lower, we feel that the free textbooks made it easier for students to access the text, and of course since the pandemic had a huge financial impact, the free textbook was beneficial from a financial standpoint.

Our qualitative measure was a textbook questionnaire. It asked students the following questions: (1) “How often do you buy the required textbooks for your classes?” (2) “Does the cost of textbooks affect your decision to buy them?” (3) “How does the quality of the no-cost/open educational resource textbooks in this course compare to the quality of traditional textbooks in other classes?” (4) “Which do you prefer: no-cost/open educational resource textbooks or traditional textbooks? Why?” and (5) “Should more professors consider using no-cost/open educational resource textbooks? Why or why not?”

The most common student response to the first question was that they buy textbooks if they are needed or required. The second most common response was students buy textbooks rarely or not often. It is interesting to note that a few students mentioned that they still prefer to have the traditional version of the textbook.

# 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.*

All materials for POLS 1101 are available to students via East Georgia States College’s online learning management system, D2L. In future semesters, the political science department will continue to make all course resources available to students via D2L. The political science department plans to revise existing open educational materials, search for additional open educational materials, and, if necessary, create new open educational materials to keep the course up to date with key developments in American politics. The political science department will continue to use quantitative and qualitative assessments and revise the materials and/or the course based on student performance and feedback.

# 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 ALG project presented us with a great opportunity. I, along with many in our department, were not aware of the many free and/or low costs open access resources that are available to our students. This project has benefited our lower income students tremendously, this is especially true during the ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic. The department will continue to research affordable learning materials in our POLS 1101 courses.

# 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.*

Now that our entire political science department has taken part in the ALG grant, this will present us will great opportunities to present our findings and experiences in future conferences. This will further enhance our commitment to using free learning materials.

# Description of Photograph (optional)

*This is where a team can list the names of the people shown in this separately uploaded photograph, along with their roles, if applicable.*