**Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants**

**Final Report**

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

*Final report submission requires four files:*

* *This completed narrative document*
* *Syllabus or syllabi* 
  + *(if multiple files, compress into one .zip folder)*
* *Qualitative/Quantitative Measures data files* 
  + *(if multiple files, compress into one .zip folder)*
* *Photo of your team or a class of your students w/ at least one team member, minimum resolution 800x600px* 
  + *(nearly all smartphones take photos larger than this size by default)*

*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: 12/21/2018**

**Grant Round: 11**

**Grant Number: 347**

**Institution Name(s): Georgia Highlands College**

**Project Lead: Dr. Jayme A Feagin**

**Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each):** Dr. Jayme A. Feagin, Associate Professor of History/History Assessment Coordinator (jfeagin@highlands.edu), Dr. Bronson Long, Associate Professor of History/Director, Global Initiatives and Study Abroad, ([blong@highlands.edu](mailto:blong@highlands.edu)), Dr. Steve Blankenship, Professor of History, ([sblanken@highlands.edu](mailto:sblanken@highlands.edu)), Katie Bridges, Instructional Designer, Division of e-Learning, Dr. J. Sean Callahan, Associate Professor of Psychology/Executive Liaison for Diversity Initiatives, ([scallaha@highlands.edu)](mailto:scallaha@highlands.edu))

**Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:** HIST 1111: World Civilizations I and HIST 1112: World Civilizations II

**Semester Project Began: Fall 2018**

**Final Semester of Implementation: Fall 2018**

**Total Number of Students Affected During Project: 219**

# 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.

Overall, the instructors for both HIST 1111 and 1112 in the face-to-face and online sections reported that the course revision went well. The revision of the material seemed to positively impact the transformation experience. The major accomplishments in the transformation center around the successful creation and facilitation of a no-cost, video-based textbook supported by OER materials. More specifically, instructors noted that the use of higher quality learning activities in class helped stimulate discussion and led to a more thorough analysis of primary source documents. Similar results were also reported for the online sections in the primary source-based discussion posts.

The video lectures played a paradoxical role in this transformation. At the beginning of the course, the video lecture format received mixed reviews from students. One instructor reported “The video lecture format seems perfect for online classes, though I had a number of students who felt challenged by the video lectures. Other students loved them.” However, this issue was alleviated by posting the transcripts to the video files. As the instructors and the students became comfortable with the video lectures, the new challenge became making time for the activities because the videos were so effective.

Technology also presented some challenges. For one instructor, this was the first time teaching a course online. For him, learning how to use additional features on D2L and how to best communicate with online students presented some issues.

Impact

The use of OER material significantly impacted how instructors taught the HIST 1111/1112 courses. The video lecture format seemed to have the largest influence on instruction. In regard to the online courses, one instructor offered this critique: “I think the videos made a nice addition to the online classes. They took some adjustment (needed to be flexible, particularly in the pilot semester) and some of the quiz questions need to be revised (based on analysis of success data). I think students are also used to using the textbook as a resource manual, looking up quiz questions as they take the quiz--particularly for untimed quizzes. The video lectures seemed to frustrate them, but in the long run has the potential to make them learn the material better. Going forward, I plan to provide a "how to use the video lecture" section, a study guide for each module quiz, and a timed quiz. That will give them additional resources to be successful (long-term) in the course.”

For another instructor, this course served as their first experience teaching online. They report: “The OER materials had a tremendous impact on how I taught this class. Since this was the first time that I taught online, my entire class was built around the OER materials. I think they allowed provide a higher quality online class than classes that do not have OER materials. This is especially the case as my students watched lecture videos from three different GHC History faculty members, which to a degree helps replicate some of what they would get in a face to face class.”

The face-to-face courses were also significantly impacted in this transformation. In the HIST 1111 course, use of the OER materials changed the dynamic in the classroom. They report: “The OER material freed up a significant amount of time in class that allowed me to experiment with activity learning activities and to go into more depth in talking to students about their term paper assignment and a number of subjects, including more historiographical debates, that I only have time to cover briefly or not at all in the past.”

Not only did the OER materials improve the experience of the instructors, it also provided an opportunity for instructors to assess and improve their own pedagogy. One instructor elaborated: “Personally, I need to work more on using these videos to help me get away from lecture in class. I started out using lots of activities and relying on the videos to fill in the gaps, but as prep time became scarce, I went back to heavy lecturing. I think that part of that was the result of it being the pilot semester, but I also think I (we?) need to spend more time considering how to really make effective use of these resources. It will be particularly important for part-time instructors. Giving them some teaching resources (in addition to content resources) will make this grant project more useful for them.”

Impact on Students

The overall impact of OER materials on students' learning and academic performance was positive. In the face-to-face courses, one instructor reported: “The OER materials gave my students a much richer World Civilization II class than I have taught in the past. My grades improved as well, at least in the sense that I had fewer Ds and Fs this semester.” Similar perceptions of student success were reported in the World Civilizations I course. The instructor stated: “I think, overall, students did well in this pilot program. Everyone was able to access the materials, and I had a fairly consistent group completing the online assignment (which included 7 module quizzes scheduled throughout the semester to ensure that students were keeping up with the video lectures in addition to their coursework) from beginning to end.”

The online sections also garnered positive feedback regarding student learning and performance. One instructor extolled: “My students appear to have really appreciated the Video Textbook. In Module discussions, it was clear that many students had learned a great deal from the videos… [and had] read the assigned primary sources.”

Improvements

Improvements to the OER materials were centered around two areas: the video textbook and primary source documents. In terms of the latter, instructors simply asked for more primary source documents. In regard to the videos, instructors pinpointed four areas for improvement and offered recommendations to address the issue. First, instructors mentioned that the students experienced difficulty adjusting to the video format, not knowing exactly what to pay attention to. To address this issue, they suggested that transcripts beincluded with each video to help guide student’s focus while watching the video. Additionally, providing a list of key terms to listen for and questions to consider is another possible strategy to help guide their attention. Secondly, the instructors suggested organizing the video lectures into themes. This strategy would let students know which videos to watch together and hopefully provide more clarity for them in this new instructional process. Third, to help manage student expectations, the expected time commitment for engaging those videos should be included and emphasized. Lastly, instructors might also consider creating a video (perhaps just using screen capture software) showing how to take notes from the video.

Quotes from Students

“I don't have any suggestions to improve this class. It is by far the best class I've had to take online and I'm very pleased with the formatting, the knowledge of the professors, and the way the class was set up. Keep up the excellent work.”

“The video textbooks were interesting and engaging, however, transcripts (a text file with everything that was said) would make things easier as those of us who don’t have time to watch and take notes will still be able to use the materials. The videos were like sitting through lectures and with work, it made it difficult to study all of the videos.”

“I still think a textbook or material in a text format would be useful. It was just a lot to go to class twice a week and listen to a lecture and then have to watch more lecture videos to get the information. I feel like if I could have read it then it would have been more helpful.”

“I loved the visual book lectures it would be helpful if a word bank for the hard-to-pronounce words, places or unusually spelled words, and names was provided in the written intro that would help in note taking through video lectures. but LOVED them. Most names were provided in writing as we went that was helpful but a word bank would clarify a lot of very unusual words so that we don't miss questions on test because we didn't know Hapsburg was actually Habsburg.”

# 2. Quotes

* Provide three quotes from students evaluating their experience with the no-cost learning materials.
* “I don't have any suggestions to improve this class. It is by far the best class I've had to take online and I'm very pleased with the formatting, the knowledge of the professors, and the way the class was set up. Keep up the excellent work.”
* “The video textbooks were interesting and engaging, however, transcripts (a text file with everything that was said) would make things easier as those of us who don’t have time to watch and take notes will still be able to use the materials. The videos were like sitting through lectures and with work, it made it difficult to study all of the videos.”
* “I still think a textbook or material in a text format would be useful. It was just a lot to go to class twice a week and listen to a lecture and then have to watch more lecture videos to get the information. I feel like if I could have read it then it would have been more helpful.”
* “I loved the visual book lectures it would be helpful if a word bank for the hard-to-pronounce words, places or unusually spelled words, and names was provided in the written intro that would help in note taking through video lectures. but LOVED them. Most names were provided in writing as we went that was helpful but a word bank would clarify a lot of very unusual words so that we don't miss questions on test because we didn't know Hapsburg was actually Habsburg.”

# 3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

## 3a. 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: \_\_\_\_\_219\_\_\_\_\_

* Positive: \_\_\_\_75\_ % of \_\_119\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Neutral: \_\_\_\_2\_\_ % of \_\_119\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Negative: \_\_\_42\_\_ % of \_\_119\_\_\_ number of respondents

\*Missing reports

**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?**

**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.*

\_\_20.5\_\_% of students, out of a total \_\_219\_\_ students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Choose One:

* \_x\_ 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

*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.*

**DFWI Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DFWI 17-18 (Pre-transformation)** | **DFWI Fall 18 (Post-transformation)** |
| HIST 1111 | 14% | 20.5% (26/127) |
| HIST 1112 | 26% | 20.7% (19/92) |

Table 1. HIST 1111/1112 DFWI—data based on final grades submitted to SCORE

Although comparisons between DFWI rates from AY 17/18 and Fall 2018 indicate an increase, we are not convinced that we actually did experience a negative impact on DFWI rate. The DFWI rate of 14% for HIST 1111 in AY 17/18 seems to be an anomaly in terms of general trends.

The historical DFWI rate for HIST 1111 is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Academic Year** | **DFWI Rate-HIST 1111** |
| AY 1718 | 14% |
| AY 1617 | 20.4% |
| AY 1516 | not available |
| AY 1415 | 39.1% |

Table 2. Historical DFWI Rate for HIST 1111 (AY 14-18)

For HIST 1112, the data is a little more substantiated, showing a reduction both year-over-year (5.51%) and between OER and non-OER courses (1.5%) in Fall 2018.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Academic Year** | **DFWI Rate-HIST 1112** |
| AY 1718 | 26% |
| AY 1617 | 23.6% |
| AY 1516 | not available |
| AY 1415 | 31.3% |

Table 3. Historical DFWI Rate for HIST 1112 (AY 14-18)

We can compare to non-OER for Fall 18, but the data is skewed. Because there were so few of HIST 1111 sections that did not undergo revision (only 1/5) that it is affecting the data. HIST 1112 is more weighted in the other direction (6/9 were not revised). This was the result of the course offerings and the people interested in participating in course revision.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DFWI Fall 18 (Non-OER)** | **DFWI Fall 18 (OER)** |
| HIST 1111 | 5.9% (n=1) | 20.5% (n=4) |
| HIST 1112 | 22.2% (n=6) | 20.7% (n=3) |

Table 4. DFWI Rate Comparison Between OER and Non-OER Courses for HIST 1111/1112

Student Learning Outcomes

In line with GHC’s mission goal of “effect[ing] quality teaching and learning that are focused on academic achievement and personal and professional growth,” the history (HIST) pathway aims to produce students who can:

1. Understand the complex nature of the historical record.
2. Engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis.
3. Generate significant, open-ended questions about the past and devise research strategies to answer them.

To that end, we have created 9 student learning outcomes (SLOs), which are measured in every course, every semester.

1. Distinguish between primary and secondary materials and decide when to use each
2. Identify key events that define change over time in a particular place or region, and identify how change occurs over time
3. Recognize a range of viewpoints in historical narratives
4. Understand the dynamics of change over time.
5. Explore the complexity of the human experience, across time and space.
6. Distinguish between historical facts and historical interpretations
7. Seek a variety of sources that provide evidence to support an argument about the past.
8. Develop a methodological practice of gathering, sifting, analyzing, ordering, synthesizing, and interpreting evidence
9. Evaluate a variety of historical sources for their credibility, position, significance, and perspective.

Students are assessed via primary source analysis, which seeks to evaluate students’ historical thinking skills, focusing specifically on an ability to read primary sources critically.  Students will be assessed on their ability to evaluate a primary source in terms of audience, context, significance, purpose, and credibility.  The ability to read, understand, and apply primary sources requires that students

* Understand the context surrounding a document (SLO 2, 4, 5)
* Analyze the audience and purpose of the document (SLO 3, 6, 7, 9)
* Explore the significance of the document (SLO 5, 9)
* Evaluate the credibility of a document and its author (SLO 7, 9)
* Understand how to apply documents to research questions (SLO 1, 7, 8)



Table 2. HIST 1111-Percentage of Class Scoring Higher Than 70%



Table 3. HIST 1111-Number of Courses (out of 7) w/ Correct Responses Percentage Below 70%



Table 3. HIST 1112-Percentage of Class Scoring Higher Than 70%



Table 4. HIST 1112-Number of Courses (out of 7) w/ Correct Responses Percentage Below 70%

The Marco Polo Assessment Quiz seemed to be the most challenging for students in HIST 1111. While students in 1111 also struggled with the Decameron and Prince Siddhartha, the struggle with Polo seems to be wider spread with the percentage of the class scoring above 70% on this quiz being very low. Actually, it is the lowest score of the entire OER. Additionally, it seems context, credibility and purpose are difficult concepts for students to define. The information in the course does a good job describing what it means. However, it would be advantageous to students to have a list of example sources and the respective answers to the assessment questions.

We were quite surprised with the results from HIST 1112. Students did not seem to consistently struggle with one of the sources. Scores for the “de las Casas” item between 1111 and 1112 were interesting and warrant further investigation. Researchers speculate if the timing of the assignment impacted scores on this assessment. Secondly, the high instance of struggle with the significance of the “Obama speech” item is also important to note. For the researchers, this lack of student performance has broader implications. One must consider if the topic and context is to current. Perhaps, there have been different results for the Reagan Star Wars Speech or Carter’s Malaise? Student performance with the WWI Graphic was impressive and warrants a more focused exploration of using images as discussion prompts on exams, as other instructors have experienced success using images frequently in exams for students to explain.

Overall, the OER transformation was successful. It must be noted, however, that the DFWI results for the OER/non-OER for 1111 are skewed dramatically because there was only one section of that class not taught using the OER materials.

The most surprising result is Q2 in HIST 1111. This could be related to the need to provide more background information for the primary sources. More specifically, the issue has to do with how students see the primary source fitting into the overall video textbook. We can address this by providing additional background information and providing additional resources to show students how to analyze a primary source (perhaps a guided reading video)?

Thinking specifically about Q2, we believe the issue is that we didn’t do an adequate job linking the primary source readings and analysis question to the video textbook. In other words, there is a possibility that students were confused about where the primary sources “fit” into the overall historical narrative. It is just a hypothesis, but is perhaps supported by the fact that students in face-to-face classes (where students had additional face time with instructors) did considerably better on that assessment than those in online classes (where students were perhaps more reliant on the provided resources and less likely to approach their instructors with questions about what context means).

Going forward, we should include the following in the HIST 1111/1112 OER course materials:

* Add assessment questions to module 1 quiz testing students on the meaning of the categories of analysis for primary sources (audience, context, purpose, significance, credibility). The module 1 quiz lacks an assessment component, so it would be easy enough to add that to the resources.
* Create a guided reading video for a specific source, showing students how to read a document in order to identify the categories of analysis.
* Provide a list of example sources and the respective answers to the assessment questions.
* Update feedback section of the assessment questions with explanations for the correct answers and encouragement to consult your instructor if you are still unclear on why

It could also be an issue of question design. Here is the wording of the question:

Which of the following could not be considered the context of this document?

1. Mongol hegemony (dominance) in Asia
2. Revival of trade along the Silk Road
3. Period of Warring States in China
4. Competition among northern Italian city-states for trade with China

Thus, it might also be as simple as revising the question to either emphasize the “could not” section of the question.

We suspect that it’s a combination of the two. In one HIST 1111 course for example, students were split relatively evenly among the 4 answers:

A: 20%

B: 24%

C: 30% (correct)

D: 36%

But, more students selected “D” (an incorrect answer) than any other answer. Answer D noted the competition between Italian city-states for trade with China, which perhaps wasn’t covered well enough in the background information. It was covered in the video lectures on China and Indian Ocean Trade, but students seemed to have struggled with synthesizing that information.

Class Averages

Graph 1. Class Averages for HIST 1111 and 1112 for AY 2017-2018

Graph 2. Class Averages for HIST 1111 (Post-Transformation)

See comments above for discussion of DFWI. We believe the issue is a problematic baseline.

# 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.*

The master course and modules will be made available to faculty at other USG institutions via the libguide and master course in D2L. In addition to the course and modules, a libguide instructional resources designed to facilitate use of World Civilizations Video Textbook in college classrooms will be included. Course materials will be maintained Ms. Bridges and Drs. Blankenship, Long, and Feagin for use into the foreseeable future.

Although current part-timers are not required to use World Civilizations Video Textbook and all of the accompanying OER resources, we hope that many of them will move to it voluntarily. A “Teaching with the World Civilizations Video Textbook” libguide will be built to help with training and sustainability. Even if some don't, we still believe that our project will benefit many GHC students and will collectively save them enough money to have made the grant worthwhile.

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

Our next steps with this project include some revisions before using the material again in spring 2019. SMEs will be analyzing quiz questions to identify and clarify problematic or low-success questions. Per multiple student requests, we will be updating the master course video lecture pages to include key words, questions to consider, and transcripts for the video textbooks. Additionally, we will be adding resources to help students make connections between the video lecture and the primary sources. After spring 2019, we will revisit our analysis and make any remaining adjustments before opening the master course and training materials to other GHC instructors.

Future plans for submitting proposals to present at conferences are still under discussion among team members.

# 6. Description of Photograph

* *On the Final Report Submission page, you will be submitting a photo. In this document, list the names of the people shown in this separately uploaded photograph, along with their roles.*