Affordable Learning Georgia Affordable Materials Grants  
Transformation Grants Final Report

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

Once you have completed this template, to submit your Final Report, go to the [Final Report submission](https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/xTCCvG) form.

The final report submission form allows you to submit the following:

* This completed narrative document (required)
* Syllabus or syllabi (required)

*If multiple files, compress into one .zip folder*

* Qualitative/Quantitative Measures data files (optional, as needed)

*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:** 12/10/2025

**Grant Round: 26**

**Grant Number: 743**

**Institution Name(s):** College of Coastal Georgia

**Project Lead:** Drew Cagle – Assistant Professor of Political Science

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

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

**Semester Project Began:** Spring 2025

**Final Semester of Implementation:** Fall 2025 (Everyone will use in Spring 2026)

**Total Number of Students Affected During Project:** ~288 (6 sections of POLS 1101)

# Narrative

**Key Outcomes**

In this project, we worked to create engaging open-access assignments in the form of a loose workbook for students in POLS 1101. Our intent was to create a sampling of exercises that instructors could draw upon to assess students in unique and active ways. In doing so, we hoped to increase attendance, engagement, participation, learning, and retention. Further, we hoped to foster an interested and civically minded community within our classes, where students felt comfortable in their level of political knowledge and in how to utilize it.

During this transformative experience, I am happy to report that we achieved our initial goal of crafting what we feel to be a complete initial set of exercises that we hope to add to in the future. We have at least, if not more than, one exercise per chapter of our accompanying open-access textbook for POLS 1101. I am quite proud of the grant team, as we persevered through a stressful fall semester, holding monthly meetings and working collaboratively to craft the most engaging exercises possible.

One of the primary challenges was the scope of the project. Developing original, accessible, and pedagogically effective materials required a substantial time investment, particularly in ensuring clarity for students with varying levels of preparation. Another challenge involved balancing depth and accessibility—providing rigorous political science content while maintaining an approachable format for introductory students. Despite these challenges, the project was completed successfully and resulted in a cohesive, adaptable resource that better reflects the course structure and institutional context.

**Transformative Impacts on Students and Student Performance**

The most immediate impact on students was the elimination of textbook costs, improving equity and access. Anecdotally, students report that they enjoy not having to purchase a textbook, and this allows them to access the course on day 1, rather than having to wait on or save money for a book.

Pedagogically, students demonstrated improved engagement with course content. The inclusion of guided questions, applied activities, and real-world examples helped students better connect abstract political concepts to contemporary issues. Informally, student performance improved in areas related to conceptual understanding and application, particularly on written assignments and exams that required critical thinking rather than regurgitation of memorized information. Students also appeared more confident participating in discussions, likely due to increased familiarity with the material.

**Transformative Impacts on Instruction**

The project significantly transformed instructional practice by shifting the course away from passive textbook consumption toward a more active, scaffolded learning model. Because the materials were instructor-created, lectures, assignments, and assessments are now tightly aligned with the workbook, reducing redundancy and improving coherence across the course. The workbook format also enabled greater flexibility, allowing content to be reordered, expanded, or updated without the constraints of a commercial text.

Additionally, the project encouraged more intentional instructional design. Each chapter was developed with specific learning objectives, applied exercises, and assessment connections in mind, resulting in clearer expectations for students and more focused class discussions. The ability to revise and adapt materials each semester makes the text more responsive to the ever-changing political environment.

# Quotes

**Anonymous Quotes**

**Question: What did you like best about this course?**

1 – “This was a very interactive class!!!”

2 – “Something I liked best about this course was how engaging Dr. Cagle was and how it made the interesting.”

3 – “The use of examples helped elaborate on course content.”

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

* Positive: \_97\_\_\_\_\_\_ % of \_\_\_\_36\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Neutral: \_0\_\_\_\_\_\_ % of \_\_\_\_36\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Negative: \_\_3\_\_\_\_\_ % of \_\_36\_\_\_\_\_\_ 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:

* \_Y\_\_ 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.*

\_\_7\_\_\_\_\_% of students, out of a total \_\_94\_\_\_\_\_ students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Choose One:

* \_Y\_\_ 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)

## Measures Narrative

**DFW**

Materials were implemented in two sections of POLS 1101 taught by Dr. Cagle. Full implementation across all three instructors will take place in Spring 2026. This limited rollout is due to staffing changes beginning in Fall 2025.

In the 2 sections of POLS 1101 that used the materials in Fall 2025, the DFW rate was approximately 9%. Of 91 students surveyed, the average final grade was 93%, with a range of 88. When comparing these statistics to Dr. Cagle’s courses from Fall 2024, we see a marked improvement when using the new materials. In Fall 2024, the DFW rate was approximately 19%, with the average final grade of 83. This is a 10-point swing in favor of the most recent semester, when the ALG materials were implemented.

**Surveys**

Unfortunately, we were unable to field a comprehensive survey to measure student responses to the course materials, again, due to staffing changes. However, we plan to fully implement the materials across 10 sections of the course in Spring 2026, and will conduct a full survey with both quantitative and qualitative assessment measures.

# Sustainability Plan

Our department will offer these course materials on an ongoing basis as part of the regular curriculum. The materials will be integrated directly into the learning management system and classroom instruction, ensuring all students have access to them.

Maintenance and updates will be handled by the project lead in collaboration with departmental colleagues who teach the course. Content will be reviewed at least once per academic year to ensure accuracy, clarity, legal developments, and institutional learning outcomes. Updates will be made as needed to reflect changes in law, policy, or best practices, as well as feedback from students and peer instructors.

To support long-term sustainability, the materials will be stored in a shared departmental repository, allowing future instructors to adapt, revise, and expand the content while preserving core learning objectives. This approach ensures the materials remain current, effective and available for continued use without additional cost to students.

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# Future Affordable Materials Plans

This project has inspired me to apply for a future ALG grant to create an affordable text for my Constitutional Law course.

# Future Scholarship Plans

We are currently in the very early brainstorming stages of scholarly presentations on this project and these materials.

# Description of Photograph (optional)

N/A