

Affordable Learning Georgia Affordable Materials Grants Continuous Improvement Grants Final Report

(or Mini-Grants, for R17 and earlier)

General Information

Date: 5/17/2021

Grant Round: R-16 (Mini-Grant)

Grant Number: M121

Institution Name(s): Savannah State University

Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each): Dr. Lisa Yount; Professor; Fine Arts, Humanities, and Wellness;

yountl@savannahstate.edu / Dr. Isadora Mosch; Instructor/Humanities Program

Coordinator; Fine Arts, Humanities, and Wellness; moschi@savannahstate.edu

Project Lead: Dr. Lisa Yount

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: HUMN 1201: Critical Thinking and Communication

Final Semester of Project: Spring 2021

If applicable to your project:

Average Number of Students Per Course Section: 35

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation of Revised Resources: 27/year

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation of Revised Resources: 945/year

1. Project Narrative

Describe the course of your ancillary creation project, including

- *A summary of your project's purpose, plan, and timeline.*

HUMN 1201: Critical Thinking and Communication is a freshman-level Area B core curriculum course at Savannah State University, making it a graduation requirement for all students. Through the Gateways to Completion (G2C) initiative through the USG, the course has recently undergone a curriculum redesign to reinforce alignment of high impact practices and experiences across all course sections, regardless of instructor. Students in the course are exposed to a common capstone writing assignment/rubric, standardized presentation expectations and evaluation, and shared instructional approaches to support the course student learning outcomes. Additionally, a result of the redesign included locating Open Educational Resources and Creative Commons materials to create a no-cost course for students. Through this ALG grant, our team was able to build on the momentum

we had with the new, fully-scaled curriculum, and allowed us to revise and create new materials for our needs with this course at an access institution with a mission of serving historically black students. The project was carried out in stages, organized by semester, by two project managers: Drs. Lisa Yount and Isadora Mosch from Spring 2020 – Spring 2021 (more details follow below).

- *The original works which were revised or added to, with links.*

Ancillary materials were created to add to the following works:

1. Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking (v. 1.4) by Matthew J. Van Cleave = <http://solr.bccampus.ca:8001/bcc/file/5d41a649-ce0f-4462-bc3d564568b5c857/1/Logic%20text%20v%201.4.pdf>
2. Clear and Present Thinking: A Handbook in Logic and Rationality (Second Edition) by Brendan Myers = <http://www.brendanmyers.net/storage/ClearAndPresentThinking-2ndEdition.pdf>
3. Critical Thinking Web by Joe Lau and Jonathan Chan = <https://philosophy.hku.hk/think/critical/index.php>
4. PHIL 2020 - Principles of Logic and Argumentation at Valdosta State University (created through an previous ALG grant) = <https://libguides.valdosta.edu/PHIL2020ALG>

- *A narrative description of how the project's plan was carried out.*

Each project co-manager collaborated to yield the following actions and items:

Spring 2020: (1) audited/consulted/surveyed other faculty members teaching the newly designed curriculum to receive feedback on needs and improvements for the planned ancillary materials.

Summer 2020: (1) wrote exercises and assignments (online, in-class formats) to provide more practice opportunities for students to master CTC skills; (2) wrote quiz and exam test bank questions that can be rotated and embedded across sections for assessment alignment; (3) explored Critical Thinking software options (for argument mapping, deduction, informal fallacies, etc.) to determine value to the curriculum/student practice – a total of seven were researched, with one (Rationale) being purchased for possible future use.

Fall 2020: (1) conducted faculty development in-services and trainings on the new supplemental/ancillary materials for faculty teaching the course.

Spring 2021: (1) developed handouts and PPT presentations to accompany the ancillary exercises and assignments; (2) enhanced the Critical Thinking and Communication course template shell with new items and “user friendly” navigation for existing and new faculty.

- *Lessons learned, including anything you would do differently next time.*

From consulting with the faculty and considering the model that our curriculum redesign was based upon (favoring common educational experiences for students while maximizing faculty choice and autonomy), we opted to forego the creation of a new OER and instead focused on the ancillary materials generation. Please see #2 below for further elaboration.

2. Materials Description

Describe all the materials you have created or revised as part of this project. These descriptions may be used in the [OpenALG](#) repository description field.

We have designed the Critical Thinking and Communication course curriculum to be roughly standardized from section to section, meaning all faculty must use the same Course Student Learning Outcomes and choose from a robust set of readings, videos, and assignments. Within that set, there are lots of choices between subsets of readings, videos, and assignments that we have left up to individual faculty. This way, every student in Critical Thinking and Communication, no matter which section they are in, can expect the same course learning outcomes and foundation of information, while each faculty member still preserves enough academic freedom to choose to teach which specific content to use and in which order they prefer. Of course, faculty can also supplement the material with anything of their choosing. After consideration and several semesters of practice, we have decided to keep the set of texts as separate modules so that faculty can teach in this guided yet still open method. We realized that if we created our own OER text, it wouldn't allow enough flexibility to support the kind of academic freedom we want to guarantee for faculty, so in the end we decided it wasn't in the best interests of our program to produce our own OER text compiled from the various other OER sources.

Instead, we have created a rich set of ancillary materials to complement the OERs listed in #1 above, outlined below.

As a newly redesigned curriculum, through this grant we have created a Critical Thinking (HUMN1201) Course Redesign Template on our electronic learning platform, D2L. The template is organized by Unit, and within each unit there are several choices between associated readings, videos, quizzes, and assignment ideas that faculty may choose from. This template can be imported easily into any of our faculty's own D2L shells so that they have immediate access to every reading, video, and assignment to choose from. From there, faculty need only pick and choose their own "adventure" within the parameters of the new curriculum, maintaining the integrity of the Course Student Learning Outcomes.

That said, through this grant, we have also created a “Faculty Resources” module within this Template that includes 64 ancillary materials we have created through this grant: a welcome and explanation message to critical thinking faculty that includes the entire Critical Thinking and Communication curriculum guidebook; Assignment Ideas and Inspiration module; Discussion Boards module; Exam and Review Questions module; and Multiple-Choice Quizzes module.

In Assignment Ideas and Inspiration, we have created a plethora of resources for faculty use. We have thirteen documents related to the Common Writing Assignment, including a fillable Enthymeme Worksheet for students to go along with their final essay project; an Enthymeme Worksheet filled out example for reference; a Final Essay instructions handout; a Final Essay rubric; the AAC&U Value ADD Tool for Critical Thinking; plagiarism homework; TILT Principles handouts; and GRASPS assignment handouts. We note in the description of this module that all of these handouts, techniques, and pedagogies can and should be used for any and all assignments in our classes. We also have separate submodules with handouts and resources for projects and critical thinking content such as the App Project, Service-Learning Project, Argument Mapping, Writing Milestones, and helpful links to online articles.

In Discussion Boards, we have created a “Class Q&A” as well as an “Ask your instructor!” board so that students can easily post questions about the class or anything else; an “Introduce yourself!” board to motivate participation and getting to know one another; and an “Enthymeme Analysis” board to help students understand this key concept before their final papers.

In Exam and Review Questions, we have detailed, open-ended questions faculty may use for review sessions and/or exams. We have divided these questions by unit, so that all six units in our new curriculum are covered.

In Multiple Choice D2L Quizzes, we have included not only the quizzes that we originally created for the new curriculum, but also multiple choice (MC) versions of several of those same fill in the blank quizzes (15 total). Through this grant, we have taken several of these quizzes and adapted them to be used as MC in the event a faculty prefers this method. One advantage for the MC method for these quizzes is if the faculty wants the students to be able to immediately see and understand the correct answer once they have turned in their work online. The following quizzes have been edited and/or adapted to MC through this grant: ID Enthymeme, Information Sources and Credibility, Standard Argument Form, Identify the Hidden Assumption, Deduction Completion, and Deduction ID.

This ALG grant has afforded us the time and resources to create these ancillary materials, and each of these submodules is now here for faculty reference. However, we make it clear in our descriptions on D2L that they are not the “end all be all” for the course. In fact, it is created as an evolving collaborative bank wherein faculty can and should continuously take

from the bank and also upload their own ideas, inspiration, and helpful tools and materials. When faculty are supported and intellectually respected, faculty are more likely to “buy-in” to the curriculum and outcomes. We find that when faculty are guided and provided helpful resources, but still have freedom to choose their own teaching “adventure” with their preferences, academic strengths, and pedagogies in mind, students and faculty can both feel connected to the material.

3. Materials Links

Our materials are housed in D2L, so links will not be functional. Ancillary materials are available upon request.

4. Future 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.*

An educational research project measuring faculty participation and fidelity to implementing new curriculum using the principles of Choice Theory and Game Theory will likely be an outgrowth of this project.

- *Describe any plans to revise or add to these materials in the future.*

Since this is a skills-building course, we are always in need of continued development and addition to the practices, exercises, and test/quiz bank items. We will continue to develop the ancillary materials for this OER-based course on a yearly basis to keep things fresh and on a rotation that will undermine issues with student academic dishonesty opportunities.