

**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 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:** May 2023

**Grant Round:** 21

**Grant Number:** 617

**Institution Name(s):** Clayton State University

**Project Lead:** Jason Lee Guthrie

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

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**Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:** COMM 1110: Public Speaking; CMS 2015: Visual Communication; CMS 2410: Digital Photography; CMS 3400: Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity; CMS 4650: Audio Podcasting; and CMS 4999: CMS Capstone

**Semester Project Began:** Fall 2022

**Final Semester of Implementation:** Spring 2023

**Total Number of Students Affected During Project:** 100+ (because of the campus-wide nature of COMM 1110: Public Speaking, contributions to that course affect the majority of the student body at CSU)

## 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*

Our team's experience with the Affordable Learning Georgia (ALG) Transformation Grant has had a positive impact upon the Communication and Media Studies (CMS) program, and a growing impact upon Clayton State University as a whole. With support from ALG, we were able to create OER materials for five (5) CMS courses: CMS 2015: Visual Communication; CMS 2410: Digital Photography; CMS 3400: Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity; CMS 4650: Audio Podcasting; and CMS 4999: CMS Capstone. These courses now require no extra costs for textbooks and have materials that were created specifically with our students in mind to support their success. Additionally, supplemental materials were added to already established OER resources created for COMM 1110: Public Speaking that were supported by previous ALG Grants.

Our team personnel did undergo a significant challenge with the departure of our original team leader, Dr. Susan McFarlane-Alvarez, for another position in May 2022. Dr. Jason Lee Guthrie stepped into the team leader role after Dr. McFarlane-Alvarez's departure. Prof. Shontelle Thrash was added to the team to keep the personnel number and corresponding line items consistent.

- *Transformative impacts on your instruction*

As we worked together on the materials for the ALG Grant, we enjoyed the opportunity to apply best practices we have learned to help transform our classroom instruction. Faculty on

this team have participated in several professional development opportunities regarding teaching and learning together, and this grant gave us an opportunity to put what we have learned into practice. A particular focus of this grant has been on implementing the High-Impact Practice (HIP) of Project-Based Learning (PBL) and it has been rewarding to see this strategy be successful in our classrooms.

- *Transformative impacts on your students and their performance*

Participating in this grant process has helped to bring CMS program instruction in line with our students' needs. Textbook costs are a significant burden for our student population and transitioning to a zero-cost model is a significant benefit for them. The courses supported by this grant are either new or significantly revised from previous versions so there is unfortunately not much opportunity for longitudinal quantitative comparison. However, the included documentation of student evaluations for the supported courses do evidence the transformative impact that ALG supported materials are having on their learning experience.

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

Most of the members of our team have participated in previous rounds of ALG grant funding. Bringing that prior experience into this project meant that we were very focused from the beginning on the work that needed to be done and were able to efficiently complete it. Even with weathering a change in team leadership, we were able to complete not only all the original target goals but also all of the secondary goals we set for ourselves.

*C. Describe any materials you created or revised/remixed that will be shared with the public. Include the [open license your materials will be shared under](#)—for most materials, this will be an Attribution 4.0 License (CC BY) as required in the Grants Request for Proposals.*

All materials will be shared under an Attribution 4.0 License (CC BY)

- COMM 1110: Public Speaking: Recordings of example student speeches that are delivered online in various formats.
- CMS 2015: Visual Communication: Lecture Slides and Videos on Visual Communication topics including historical perspectives, color, typography, design, and more. Assignment materials for various introductory photography and graphic design projects. Supplemental materials including discussion forum prompts.
- CMS 2410: Digital Photography: Lecture Slides and Videos on Visual Communication topics including the history of photography, focus, perspective, composition, and more. Assignment materials for various introductory photography exercises and photography projects.

- CMS 3400: Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity: Lecture Slides, Videos, and other course materials regarding legal case studies for teaching Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity.
- CMS 4650: Audio Podcasting: Lecture Slides and Videos on Podcasting topics including historical perspectives, interviewing, narrative structure, branding and marketing, hosting and publishing, and more. Assignment materials for various podcasting projects culminating in creation of a pilot episode, logo, trailer, and marketing materials. Supplemental materials including discussion forum prompts and guest lectures.
- CMS 4999: CMS Capstone: Lecture Slides and Videos on communication and media topics including communication theory and practical application of communication and media skills for workforce transitions. Assignment materials for various projects including media reviews, resume writing, and creation of a digital portfolio. Supplemental materials including discussion forum prompts, assignment sheets, and rubrics.

## 2. Quotes

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

"I feel like this course prepared me for the direction that I am heading in my career as I've learned a lot of useful tips for job searching and ethics on the job. The highlight of the semester for me was creating the portfolio. This was very beneficial to me as many employers have asked me for one and I never had one. I didn't even know how to build a portfolio or where to begin!" [Student] CMS 4999: CMS Capstone

"The Digital Photography class was a great experience for me. I am the type of person who loves to learn, especially new things. Digital photography is new to me in the sense that I was not aware of all of the setting and features of digital cameras. This class has taken me up a bump and instead of just shooting pictures in automatic mode, I am now to actually make use of the DSLR's features comfortably and know what the different functions are... The online lectures were great because they allowed me to view them more than once if needed to or missed something. I learned a lot!" [Student] CMS 2410: Digital Photography

"This class has exceeded my expectations. When registering for the class I knew I would have to create a podcast. However, I didn't know how many podcasts we would listen to as reference points. This semester I have listened to podcasts that I never would have considered before. Having us listen to podcasts that pair with the lecture is like having a textbook come to life. Especially when I consider the podcast, *Serial* and Adnan Syed release from prison, the timing couldn't have been any better for this course. I like that you present your lecture in podcast form. I also appreciate the video tutorials and detailed instructions

on how to complete our assignments and improve our podcasts.” [Student] CMS 4650:  
Audio Podcasting

### 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: 100

- Positive: 85 % of 100 number of respondents
- Neutral: 10 % of 100 number of respondents
- Negative: 5 % of 100 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?**

As you may be aware, Clayton State has experienced by far the worst drop in enrollment of any USG school during the 2022-2023 year. Because of that unrelated problem, it is difficult to determine what kind of impact ALG materials had on DFW rates. Overall, the team feels we can say definitively that creating engaging, no-cost course materials is a major benefit to our students and the effect of such materials is largely positive on student retention.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ % of students, out of a total \_\_\_\_\_ 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)
- \_\_\_\_ Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

#### 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.*

This Final Report includes a wealth of data related to the courses supported by ALG. Syllabi are included for each course. Student evaluations, peer evaluations by senior faculty, and student testimonials are included for most courses. These qualitative measures help to evidence the efficacy of materials supported by this grant.

Also included are materials used in the curriculum planning process that helped guide creation of these courses and their implementation. This process was begun by an extensive analysis of Comparable Programs within the USG. This analysis, after discussion, produced a plan for CMS Recalibration to bring our program into alignment with best practices for teaching and learning as well as emphasizing teaching our students in demand skills. Course specific documents

include the New Course Proposal and Course Plan for CMS 4999: CMS Capstone; The Area F Analysis of comparable programs that resulted in the creation of CMS 2015: Visual Communication; and Course Description Updates for CMS 2410: Digital Photography and CMS 3400: Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity.

As mentioned earlier, because all of the CMS courses supported by this grant were either new or significant revisions of previously dormant courses, the opportunity for longitudinal comparative measures is minimal. However, the abundant documentation of available evaluative measures suggests that the improvements to the CMS curriculum supported by this grant will have a transformative effect upon student learning outcomes for years to come.

#### 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.*

Our team was comprised of half faculty and half staff. Staff came from the Library and from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. This team building strategy proved beneficial, not only in the efficient creation of promised materials, but also in the sustainable maintenance of their use. Electronic Resource Librarian Jim Rickerson personally created all of our LibGuide materials so he is uniquely qualified to ensure they are maintained correctly going forward. Kyle Marcano is our video guru and ensured that all video files were correctly formatted and compressed for submission and presentation. He is also available if files need to be modified for future applications. Corneliu Chiorescu evaluated our materials for compliance with accessibility best practices and will contribute to ensuring long-term sustainability by regular review of the websites where these materials are displayed.

From a content standpoint, sustainability was addressed in the following ways. The videos created for the Public Speaking LibGuide themselves addressed its most glaring sustainability issue. Post-pandemic, so much of our Public Speaking instruction has centered speaking publicly online, yet all our example speech videos modeled only in-person public speaking. That issue has now been rectified with the addition of six (6) new student example videos – two (2) each for informative, persuasive, and special occasion speaking – that were delivered online.

Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity courses are inherently tied to recent events. This reality poses a challenge to Instructors because teaching prep becomes so time intensive. Submitted materials for this course help to address this issue because they are primarily based upon those parts of the required content that are more stable. Making such materials available as OER resources to other Instructors allows them to put the most of their time and energy into the parts of the content that of necessity must be updated regularly. Similarly, the Project-Based Learning material provides future users with a wealth of information and expertise about instructional tools that evolve rapidly. Thus, the submitted

materials help to foster sustainability by doing the heavy lifting of learning new tools for users and distilling that knowledge down to its essence.

## 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.*

Losing our original project lead certainly affected this project, but it ended up doing so in ways that generated new ideas. These ideas benefitted both existing teaching materials and inspired the creation of new ones. The Clayton State Public Speaking LibGuide (<https://clayton.libguides.com/c.php?g=1058774&p=7695235>) is the product of a previous ALG Transformation Grant and a more recent minigrant. (It actually features a textbook created by Dalton State colleagues with support from ALG as well). Though not part of the original focus of this grant, when Prof. Thrash was added to our team and enlisted to add content for this LibGuide she was able to address a significant gap in its material. Strategizing her contribution also inspired our biggest future plan for the current set of materials.

All materials for this grant have been organized, as requested by ALG staff, by course and then by material type (ex: a folder for Lecture Slides, a folder for Lecture Videos, etc.). However, maximum usefulness for the materials from CMS 2015: Visual Communication, CMS 2410: Digital Photography, CMS 4650: Audio Podcasting, and CMS 4999: CMS Capstone is really achieved by organizing according to project (i.e. the project-based learning assignments that course lessons are built around). To wit, members of our team have already begun creation of a new Project-Based Learning (PBL) LibGuide that will feature the materials submitted for the grant and arranged by project. The LibGuide will feature some general information and research that supports the efficacy of PBL as well as resources for audio, photography, graphic design and other assignment ideas. These resources will be freely available online. An English Professor wanting to assign their students a podcast, a History Professor wanting to assign a photo essay about a historical site, or a science teacher wanting to assign an infographic project will all be able to find helpful information about how to create such assignments on the LibGuide. It is also a possibility that grant team member Dr. Guthrie will lead a learning community using these resources for CSU faculty interested in implementing PBL in their classrooms in the fall.

## 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.*

Faculty on this grant are regular presenters at the annual University System of Georgia Teaching & Learning Conference. AT USG T&L 2023, Dr. Guthrie presented a workshop entitled “Podcast Pedagogy: How to Use Podcasting in Your Classroom” based off of materials supported by this grant and included with the project deliverables. This workshop



was favorably received at the time and produced several requests for follow-up consultations and guest lectures. In fact, the response to this workshop helped inspire the idea for the Project-Based Learning LibGuide mentioned previously. Dr. Guthrie plans to submit similar workshops on photography and graphic design to future iterations of the USG T&L. Similarly, Dr. Walcott plans to draft a conference paper based off of issues raised in her Communication Law, Ethics, and Diversity course to submit soon.

7. **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.*