The Affordable Course Content Faculty Fellowship (ACCFF)

PennState University Libraries

Adopting and Adapting OER at Penn State Abington

The ACCFF: Overview

The Affordable Course Content Faculty Fellowship (ACCFF) is a **grant-funded incentivized OER-adoption program** specific to the Abington campus of Penn State University. Begun in Fall 2018 by librarians Christina Riehman-Murphy and Elizabeth Nelson through a 1-year grant to **support innovative student-success initiatives**, the first year of the project was so successful that **funding has been renewed** for at least one additional year.

Within the ACCFF structure, faculty apply for a stipend from the grant and are chosen for the project based on the **anticipated impact** of their courses through number of students enrolled and the impact of their course on the larger curriculum. Participating faculty redesign their classes to use only **open**, **library-licensed**, or **low-cost** (**under $50** per student) materials.

The **first cohort** of ACCFF instructors (**Fall 2018-Fall 2019**) chose to use **only free or library-licensed materials** - we estimate that this zero-cost-to-students approach has **saved students** approximately **$45,779.**

Funding

The ACCFF was originally funded by a **$5000 "Chancellor's Grant"** awarded by the Chancellor of Penn State Abington's Campus for projects seeking to improve student success and retention.

Participating faculty each received **$500** as a stipend to support them in finding, evaluating, and selecting OER for an existing course.

Participants

In our first year, the ACCFF included **7 faculty members**. In total, they taught **11 individual courses** which directly impacted **326 students**.

Participating courses came from a variety of disciplines, including **Psychology**, **Math**, **English**, **Communications**, and **Criminal Justice.**

Project Timeline

Fall 2018

- $5000 grant funding received
- Project advertised to faculty across campus

Spring 2019

- 19 applications reviewed
- 7 participants selected and notified

Late Spring - Summer 2019

- Implementation begins
- Support meetings conducted in-person and via email

Fall 2019

- Supported courses begin
- Assessment surveys conducted at semester's end

Spring 2020

- Assessing survey data
- Preparing for 2020 applications

Instructional Support Meetings

Participating faculty were required to attend or participate asynchronously in **3 support meetings** - 1 in late Spring 2019, 1 in early Summer 2019, and 1 in late Summer 2019. Additional help was always available by email or appointment, but the structured meetings helped us **connect our participants into a geographically-dispersed institutional network of support** around OER selection and adoption.

Meeting #1 introduced faculty to the ACCFF project in greater detail. Each faculty member spent at least 30 minutes with our **team of librarians and instructional design specialists** to identify their needs for course materials and get them started with some OER to evaluate.

Meetings #2 and #3 were designed to **keep participants on track**, give them hands-on help **incorporating materials** into their LMS course pages, and assist them in **finding additional open or low-cost course materials**.

Assessment

At the end of each participating course, both faculty and students were each given a **short optional survey**.

The surveys focused on their **perceptions of the OER** they used - specifically **quality of material** and **ease of access and use** (as compared to non-OER course materials).

Surveys have been collected and are in the **process of being analyzed**.

Insights

Our regular meetings with participating faculty brought up **interesting questions and hesitations** around such topics as:

- How **copyright, Fair Use, and Creative Commons** licenses work with open course materials
- OER and **student-perceptions of expertise and authority** when the class has more than 1 "textbook"
- **Learning-management-systems** and the incorporation of OER and library-licensed materials

Elizabeth Nelson, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Penn State Lehigh Valley - ezn80@psu.edu

Christina Riehman-Murphy, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Penn State Abington - cer20@psu.edu