

Library Strategic Funding Award for Open Module Sprint

Sara Benson

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Summary

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC) estimates that students will spend \$1,200 on textbooks and course materials each year, which represents 3.3% of the total estimated cost of attendance for an Illinois resident.¹ The Open Module Sprint will transformed one high-cost, high-impact courses to a no cost, open educational resources in an abbreviated amount of time. Time is the most expensive aspect of adapting and writing open content. Therefore, the sprint concept is a crucial component of this project—it allows for a single block of uninterrupted time to focus on OER creation and adaptation.

This furthers Strategic Direction Two—low income students, in particular, have difficulty learning in courses with high textbook costs as they often forgo purchasing expensive textbooks. Access to a textbook is crucial for students to succeed at UIUC.

Using data provided by the UIUC Bookstore, Sara identified CHLH 243, Drugs and Drug Abuse as the course to convert to open content. The 8 week course is offered multiple times throughout the year with up to 400 students per 8 week term. The textbook cost is \$120 per student.

After identifying the right course to convert, Sara worked to create a team of instructors to help convert course content. The team consisted of: Janet Swatscheno, librarian partner from UIC, JJ Pionke, applied health sciences librarian and his graduate assistant who created a resource guide to use during the sprint, Cheelan Bo-Linn from the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning who provided a quick introduction to how to best organize the textbook and materials, Christy Bazan, adjunct instructor at UIUC and lead instructor for the course, Emily Verone, adjunct instructor at UIUC, Brandi Barnes, adjunct instructor at UIUC, and Ryan Santens, adjunct instructor at UIUC. Each of the faculty authors were paid \$3,000 to write at least one module for the 8 module textbook. The remaining modules were completed by Christy Bazan.

The sprint took place online instead of in-person due to the COVID 19 pandemic and took place a bit later than anticipated—the week of July 26, 2021.

After the sprint, the book still required some editing. Leftover funds were used to hire Heejoung Shin to provide editing and citation support to polish the book before it was used in the second 8 weeks of the fall, 2021 semester.

¹ UIUC Cost of Attendance (COA). <https://admissions.illinois.edu/invest/tuition>.

Current Status

The textbook is currently being used by 384 students enrolled in CHLH 243, saving the students \$120 each or a total of \$46,080. Sara provided the students with a survey assessment tool and received 137 responses. Of the responses, 70% responded that the open textbook is easier to access compared to textbooks in their other courses and 31% responded that it is about the same to access as their other textbooks. Only 1 student responded that it was more difficult to access the open textbook. 51% responded that the textbook quality of the open textbook was better than the quality of the textbooks in their other courses and 72% answered that it was about the same as their other textbooks. Only 1 person responded that the textbook was worse than their other textbooks. 62% responded that they would be very likely to enroll in a course because of free resources in the future.

Overall, qualitative comments received from students indicate that they think the textbook is of high quality and that they are happy to have saved money by not having to purchase a textbook for the course.

The textbook, currently available at <https://iopn.library.illinois.edu/pressbooks/druguseandabuse> will be used in the course going forward and will continue to save students money.

Goals Achieved

The Strategic Funding award facilitated the conversion of an expensive high-use textbook to a free, open access textbook for students enrolled in CHLH 243, but also for students anywhere wishing to learn more about drug use and drug abuse.

Next Steps

The open textbook created during the open module sprint will become a formal IOPN textbook under the Windsor and Downs imprint this spring. In January final editing will take place as well as additional rights metadata added to the book along with cover art. During Open Education Week (March 7-11, 2022), Sara will work with the Scholarly Communication & Publishing Unit and the Scholarly Commons/Media Commons to produce a blog post and video highlighting this important work as well as future efforts to increase open resource use on campus through the Library Seed Funded OER Incentive Program. (Note that any funding leftover from this project is being carried into the OER Incentive Project as well). Learn more about the OER Incentive project here: <https://go.illinois.edu/OERIncentive>.