

Name of Principle Investigator: Cyril Oberlander
Project Title: Open SUNY Textbooks Renewal

1. Please consider the original timeline and deliverable targets. How is your project progressing compared with the original estimates?

Timeline was overly ambitious; textbook publishing takes about 1-2 years to publish, and as a result of challenges to pay SUNY faculty incentives, we delayed the call for authors until the process was established SUNY wide; thanks to the support of SUNY System Admin HR.

That said, the publication dates for the 15 textbooks we select will range between 1/2015-9/2015.

Accomplishments to date; Call for authors brought in 46 manuscript proposals, from a variety of campuses; community colleges, comprehensive, and research institutions, as well as, subject areas. The unique selection review process included a market analysis that evaluated the likelihood of adoption by other SUNY faculty and courses. This review process was both highly successful, we gathered a great deal of comments, suggestions, and scores for the 46 proposals; however, this process was also challenged, it did not obtain nearly as many of reviews as desired. Authors have been notified, and the next step is advising the authors about next steps, providing templates, etc.

2. How is spending progressing when compared with the original budget estimates?

It is advisable to spend the grant incentives after the manuscript is published, or close to finalized, because the author may not be able to complete the work. However, if we need to spend the IITG funding before June 30th, we can provide the incentive as an advance. Many publishers use this technique for manuscripts.

3. Please provide feedback regarding your experience with the project execution. In particular, any issues or roadblocks you've encountered that may have been unexpected.

Biggest issue is one of time to administer the project, and the second was the uncertainty about how to pay SUNY faculty incentives. Although that was very recently clarified, the process remains arduous and inconsistent, given that non-state-operated campuses have differing payment processes, and many campuses are unaware of campus Extra Service forms and processes.

4. What are your positive observations or pleasant surprises about your team's interaction or project process that might would be helpful to other PI's?

Marketing is key, as we get better at marketing our successes, we have seen a great deal of interest in partnerships from corporations interested in the idea of hybrid open textbook publishing.. Furthermore, this marketing would help others understand the project, scope, and expectations.

5. Please describe any challenges you've encountered working with your project team that you've found solutions for that might be helpful to other PI's.

Record and share the observations, statistics, etc. to your team, this helps everyone understand that this initiative has a tremendous impact. For example, the opensuny.org website with Open SUNY Textbooks has had over 9,000 unique visitors in the last month, most from New York, and about 20% from around the world (almost every country).

Similarly, the broad extent of authorship was great to see, how to celebrate the faculty engagement across 64 campuses is a challenge. Proposals breakdown: Adirondack (1), Binghamton (6), Brockport (4), Broome (1), Cobleskill (1), Corning (2), ESF (4), FIT (3), FLCC (1), GCC (2), Geneseo (5), Hudson Valley (1), New Paltz (1), Oneonta (1), Oswego (8), Stony Brook (1), UB (1)

Nice to see such a variety of campuses represented in the program.