

## IITG Mid Year Project Report : Entry # 187

### Name of Principle Investigator:

Whitley-Grassi

### IITG Project Title (truncated)

2014-ESC-Whitley-Grassi-Ecology and Earth Science Virtual Field Experiences OERs: Expanding Access to Field-Based Research Techniques for Students at a Distance

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

We are making steady progress towards project goals. It was found that the development process is more time intensive than originally planned for but now that the process has been well mapped the fluidity of the development is increasing. We still anticipate project completion within the timeframe.

### 2) How is spending progressing when compared with the original budget estimates? (You may also choose to detail issues regarding access to funds in the next three questions).

Spending is progressing at an expected rate. We have currently spent approximately 20% of the budget. The larger expenses on this project include personal service and travel expenses related to data collection and filming for OER. These expenses will be incurred in early spring.

### 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.

Time is always the road block. With busy schedules it is often hard for CO-PIs to carve out time to work even at a distance. In the future scheduling some additional face to face time in the planning process would have been helpful.

### 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?

The team took preliminary designs as part of a presentation to three venues. (Online Learning Consortium International Conference, Collage Conference on Teaching and Learning, and an Empire State Specific Event) In all three presentations we received positive feedback about the plan and our original designs. It has helped us shape our process based on these unexpected peer reviews. Taking your project on the road early has been instrumental in helping us identify real needs in the field that we can work for our OERs to fill.

### 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.

Time management remains the biggest hurdle. One change that we made which helped a lot was to hire an instructional designer/project manager instead of an administrative support person with our personal service budget. This specialized expertise is more helpful than accounting or administrative assistance.