January 19, 2017

John Carey
Chancellor
Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 S. Front St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chancellor Carey:

North Central State College and 14 additional members of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges present the following Innovation Grant proposal titled Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges.

The project seeks to raise academic achievement while conserving resources through adoption of Common and Open Educational Resource materials for courses offered in partner members of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges. This project has the potential to save college students, high school students and Ohio school districts millions of dollars in textbook purchases. It will also continue the practice of collegiality among Ohio's community colleges as we work together to benefit our students.

The primary contact for the grant proposal is Dr. Dorey Diab, President of North Central State College, 2441 Kenwood Circle, Mansfield, Ohio 44906. His contact information is 419-755-4811 and ddiab@ncstatecollege.edu.

As a committed lead partner in this project, we will participate as spelled out in the proposal, including the involvement of faculty, staff and administrators, working together to achieve project success. We will also commit the necessary resources to this project as enumerated in the proposal and assist with evaluation as required.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Dorey Diab, Ph.D.
President

2017 Innovation Grant Proposal: Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges

Executive Summary

The Innovation Grant program seeks to fund projects that reach across institutional boundaries and programs, and that develop new strategies to better meet students' financial and academic needs. In order to lessen the economic burden on students, 15 participating colleges of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) from all regions of the state propose a project to encourage the adoption of Common and Open Educational Resource (OER) textbooks and other materials for Transfer Module courses. Faculty teams from the partner colleges will work to review OER materials for 20 courses that are among the highest enrolled courses at the colleges, thus collaboration is a key component of this project.

Members of the consortium led by North Central State College include Clark State Community College, Central Ohio Technical College, Edison Community College, Hocking College, Lakeland Community College, Lorain County Community College, Marion Technical College, Northwest State College, Rhodes State College, Sinclair Community College, Southern State Community College, Stark State College, Terra Community College and Washington State Community College. OACC is a partner in the project.

The academic improvements will include the availability of OER textbooks and course materials for 20 of the highest enrolled courses on Ohio community college campuses. Many of these courses are also offered in high schools as College Credit Plus courses.

The cost efficiencies realized through this innovation will provide savings for Ohio college students in that they will have little or no textbook costs for these courses. Based on 2015-16 enrollment, if faculty in half of the course sections of these courses adopted OER materials, Ohio Community College students and Ohio school districts would save more than **$14 million** annually in textbook costs.

2017 Innovation Grant Proposal: Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges

Project Design:

The Innovation Grant program seeks to fund projects that reach across institutional boundaries and programs, and that develop new strategies to better meet students' financial and academic needs. In order to lessen the economic burden on students, 15 participating colleges of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) from all regions of the state (See attached map) propose a project to encourage the adoption of Common and Open Educational Resource (OER) textbooks and other materials for Transfer Module courses.

Members of the consortium led by North Central State College include Clark State Community College, Central Ohio Technical College, Edison Community College, Hocking College, Lakeland Community College, Lorain County Community College, Marion Technical College, Northwest State College, Rhodes State College, Sinclair Community College, Southern State Community College, Stark State College, Terra Community College and Washington State Community College. OACC is a partner in the project.

The proposed collaborative innovation will address *educational excellence **and** economic efficiency challenges* in order to stabilize or reduce student costs of college attendance and create opportunities benefitting students. Once established, the new and improved practices will be sustainable over time.

The proposal is in line with Recommendations 6B and 6C of the Ohio Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency's report titled Action Steps to Reduce College Costs (2015). Recommendation 6B call for institutions to encourage departments to choose common materials, including digital elements, for Gateway courses that serve large numbers of students. Recommendation 6C calls for institutions to be part of a consortium to develop digital tools and materials, including open educational resources, that provide students with high-quality, low-cost materials. The task force report encourages Ohio public colleges to collaborate in adopting OER materials.

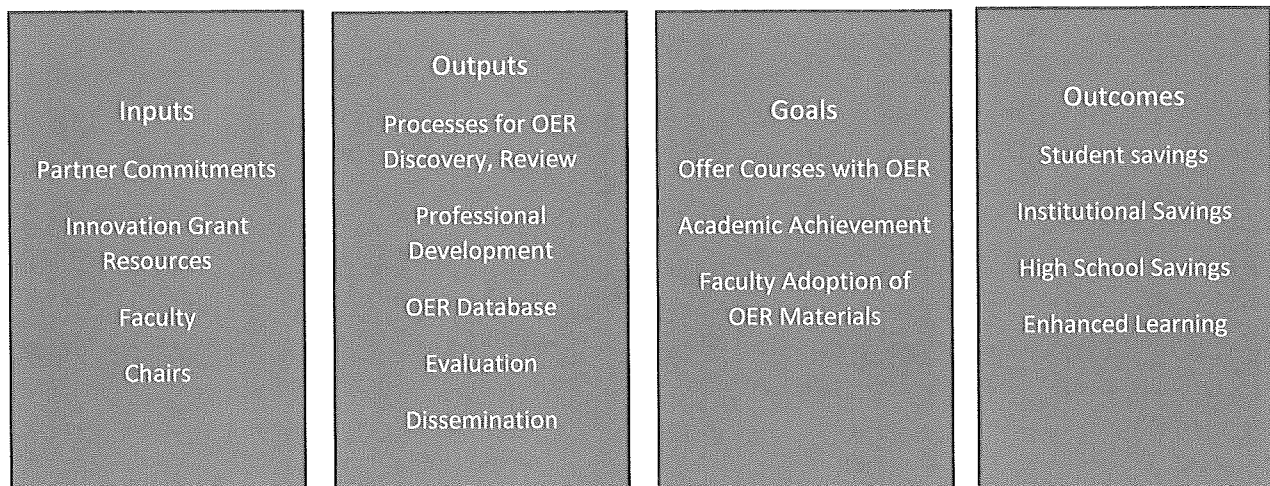## Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges Project Participants
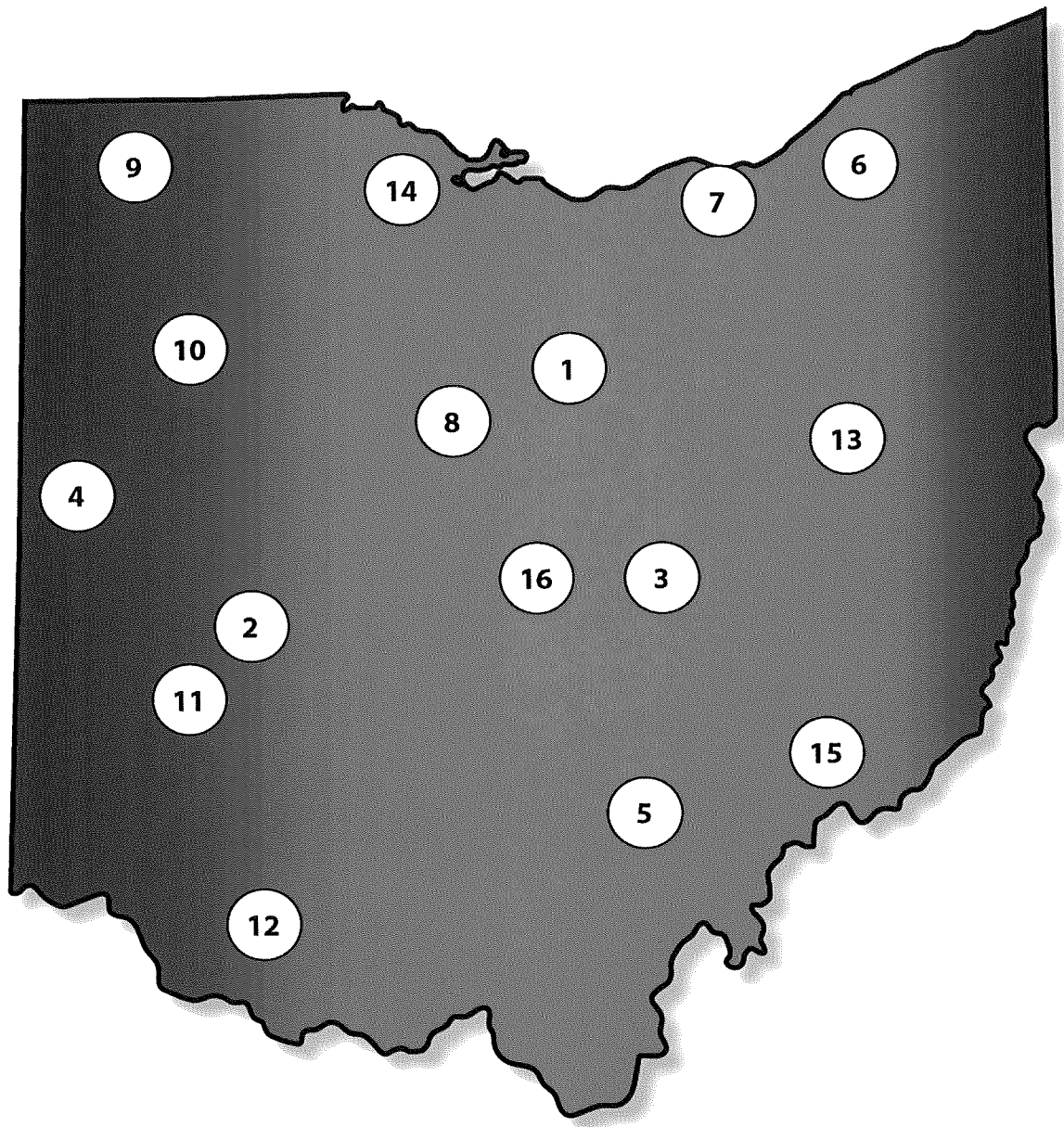
1 North Central State College
2 Clark State Community College
3 Central Ohio Technical College
4 Edison Community College
5 Hocking College
6 Lakeland Community College
7 Lorain County Community College
8 Marion Technical College

9 Northwest State College
10 Rhodes State College
11 Sinclair Community College
12 Southern State Community College
13 Stark State College
14 Terra Community College
15 Washington State Community College
16 OACC

President and Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) from the 15 participating colleges have agreed to work with faculty during the next two academic years to incorporate Common and Open Source Textbooks for Transfer Module and Transfer Assurance Guide courses. Teams of faculty members from participating OACC partner institutions will be given either release time or stipends to collaboratively research materials that will meet the Ohio Department of Higher Education's approved learning objectives for their respective courses.

a. Logic model.

The logic model below represents the project. Inputs include but are not limited to commitments by the partner colleges, Innovation Grant funds, faculty involved in the project and department chairs. Outputs include the processes derived for discovery and review of OER materials by faculty teams; professional development provided to faculty for incorporation of OER materials into their classes, an OER database, an OACC Community of Practice, evaluation of the project, and dissemination of the project to other OACC colleges. Goals for the project include offering courses with OER materials instead of textbooks that students must purchase, academic achievement by students using OER materials, and faculty adoption of and acceptance of OER materials. Outcomes include savings for students where they will use OER materials rather than purchasing textbooks, institutional savings, savings for high schools that purchase texts for College Credit Plus students and enhanced learning capabilities for students.

Inputs	Outputs	Goals	Outcomes
Partner Commitments	Processes for OER Discovery, Review	Offer Courses with OER	Student savings
Innovation Grant Resources	Professional Development	Academic Achievement	Institutional Savings
Faculty	OER Database	Faculty Adoption of OER Materials	High School Savings
Chairs	Evaluation		Enhanced Learning
	Dissemination		

b. Describe how the project will reposition the institutions to respond to changing educational and economic conditions. Identify educational and economic factors the project will address

Open textbooks directly contribute to students' academic success by ensuring that all students, no matter their means, have access to their course materials.

According to a study[1] by the Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRG), the cost of college textbooks has risen 73 percent over the last decade – more than four times the inflation rate. Since 1977, the cost of textbooks has increased 1,041 percent. Today, an individual textbook often costs as much as $200 and can be as high as $400 or more. The same study found that high textbook prices have a disproportionate impact on community college students. When broken down by type of college, data show that a greater percentage of community college students use financial aid to purchase textbooks:

- 28% at 4-year public colleges
- 22% at 4-year private institutions
- 50% at 2-year & community colleges

Of the students using financial aid for textbooks, the average amount used is more than $300 per semester. That adds up to $2,400 over the course of a four-year program, and $1,200 for two years at a community college. That is nearly the cost of adding an entire extra semester for a community college student. The ultimate cost is even higher for a student who uses loans to cover that cost: $2,400 and $1,200 student loans incur $555.55 and $277.73 worth of interest respectively. Put another way, a student using loans would pay an additional $34.72 for a $150

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[1] Senack, E. & Donoghue, R. (2016). Covering the Cost: Why We Can No Longer Afford to Ignore High Textbook Prices, Student Public Interest Research Groups, http://www.studentpirgs.org/sites/student/files/reports/National%20-%20COVERING%20THE%20COST.pdf.

textbook. While a student with the ability to buy books outright pays sticker price, a student using financial aid may actually end up paying a higher price for course materials.

The project will also lessen the textbook burden of high schools providing College Credit Plus (CCP) courses to their students through agreements with Ohio community colleges. According to the Ohio Department of Higher Education, 52,000 Ohio high school students participated in CCP courses during the 2015-16 academic year. Many of these CCP students are enrolled in the courses described in this proposal for OER adoption. In the 2015-16 academic year, more than 11,500 enrolled in the First Writing Course, more than 6,500 studied Introduction to Psychology and more than 7,600 enrolled in the Second Writing Course.

Funds are budgeted for stipends or release time and travel for college faculty to attend meetings to work on this cost-saving component of the project.

c. **How the innovation addresses student academic achievement and establish measurable academic achievement goals for the project (2-, 3-, 5-year).**

PIRG's 2014 report, *Fixing the Broken Textbooks Market*,[2] investigated the impact of high prices on students' academic decisions. The report found that two-thirds of students skipped buying or renting some of their required textbooks due to cost. Of those students, 94% recognized that skipping the book would impact their grade in a course, but chose to do so anyway.

The report also found that high textbook prices impact a student's ability to enroll in the classes they need. Nearly 50% of students said that textbook prices had impacted which courses and how many courses they were able to take. That finding has been corroborated by

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[2] Senack, E. (2014). Fixing the Broken Textbook Market: How Students Respond to High Textbook Costs and Demand Alternatives, U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund & the Student Public Interest Research Group. Available at
http://www.uspirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/NATIONAL%20Fixing%20Broken%20Textbooks%20Report1.pdf

external research, including a study by the Florida Distance Learning Consortium (2011)[3] finding that 25% of students had not registered for a particular course because of the textbook cost.

By making Common and Open Educational Resource materials available to students attending participating OACC colleges, thousands more students will be able to take more classes without being concerned about the costs of textbooks limiting their budgets or financial aid. These students will be able to progress to degree and certificate completion more quickly as they enroll in additional classes.

Over the course of the two-year project, OACC faculty teams will review and adopt Common and OER materials for 20 of the most common and popular courses offered to community college students. If the top 20 courses were included based on enrollment in Ohio community colleges in the 2015-16 academic year, 227,561 students would save money on texts for required courses. Since the first 20 courses to be completed within two years are courses for first-year students, in three years (without any additional OER courses added), this number would be doubled to 455,122. Over the course of five years, without any additional OER courses, a projected 910,334 students would have access to OER materials.

Since not all faculty members teaching these popular courses at Ohio community colleges will be among the early adopters of the OER materials for their courses, a more reasonable estimate for success would be 50% adoption, which extrapolates to include 50% of the possible students enrolled in course sections. It should be noted that student counts are duplicated, with many students enrolled in more than one class section.

Measurable goals for the project would include half of the course sections for the 20 courses with OER materials developed in the first two years. This would provide for an ultimate student reach of 227,561, or half of the 455,122 possible students enrolled in the top 20

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[3] 2010 Florida Student Textbook Survey. Florida Distance Learning Consortium (2011).
http://www.openaccesstextbooks.org/pdf/2012_Florida_Student_Textbook_survey.pdf

courses. An additional group of students benefitting over three years would bring the total to

341,341 (half of the possible 682,683 enrolled in the top 20 courses, with the projected five-year

goal of 455,167 students (half of the possible 910,334 enrolled students in the top 20 courses

based on the 2015-16 academic year).

Table 1: Top 20 Transfer Module Courses at OACC Members with student headcount			
Course	CCP	Undergraduates	Total
First Writing Course	11,586	25,284	36,870
Intro to Psychology	6,766	22,205	28,971
Second Writing Course	7,666	14,852	22,518
Intro to Sociology	3,998	13,841	17,839
Basic Public Speaking	2,495	8,732	11,227
Computer Applications	1,673	9,181	10,854
College Algebra	3,210	6,787	9,997
American History	2,607	6,579	9,186
Introductory Statistics	1,599	7,025	8,824
Medical Terminology	1,144	7,201	8,345
Microeconomics	943	6,540	7,483
Interpersonal Comm.	540	6,872	7,412
Western Civilization I	1,191	5,486	6,677
Pre-Calculus	3,714	2,900	6,614
Intro to Financial Accounting	363	6,179	6,542
Life Span	418	5,852	6,270
American Politics	3,403	2,717	6,120
General Chemistry	1,131	4,353	5,484
Introduction to Ethics	392	4,990	5,382
Business Environment	153	4,993	5146

Table 1 shows an example of the top 20 courses offered at all OACC member colleges

based on enrollment. Many students may be enrolled in more than one course. The data

derives from the 2015-2016 Ohio Transfer Module and Transfer Assurance Guide course

enrollments reported by colleges to the ODHE. Providing OER materials to courses offered at

OACC colleges would save thousands of students millions of dollars in textbook purchases.

While the project will fund only the first two years, the participating colleges will establish

an OACC Community of Practice for OER, allowing additional faculty members from consortium

colleges and faculty members from OACC colleges not participating in the grant to benefit from

the knowledge and resources developed.

Academic achievement will be a key part of the evaluation process, as research

questions to be studied would include how students' final grades differ when faculty assign OER

instead of commercial textbooks and how course completion rates change when faculty assign

OER materials rather than commercial textbooks.

d. How the innovation will address economic efficiency and establish economic

efficiency measurable goals (2-, 3-, 5-year).

The OER project will provide great savings for the students taking courses at

participating OACC colleges, as well as those benefitting from their work through the OACC

Community of Practice.

Table 2: Sample Survey Results of Book Costs for Popular Courses for OACC Colleges				
College	**Course**	**Enrollment**	**Book Cost**	**Total**
NCSC	Intro to Psych.	1,274	$134	$170,716
COTC	English Comp I	2,265	$191.20	$432,876
Hocking	English Comp I	919	$86	$79,034
Lakeland	Psychology 1500	1,684	$109	$183,556
Marion Tech	General Psych.	606	$166	$100,596
Terra State	English Comp I	506	$206	$104,236
Lorain CCC	Psych 151	2,262	$242.25	$547,970
Sinclair	Business Writing	1,102	$68	$68,856
Stark State	Effective Speaking	1,874	$113.50	$212,699
Southern State	Intro to Chemistry	489	$476	$232,764
Washington State	General Psych.	299	$223	$66,677

Table 2 shows a sample of the survey results of a survey taken of OACC project

participants. The table depicts examples of textbook charges students face when enrolling in

courses that are among the most popular courses at the colleges. The column at the far right

shows the total amount these students and their financial aid providers paid in purchasing books

for these courses in the 2015-16 academic year. Each grant project participant selected two or

more of their most common courses and submitted the enrollment and textbook costs.

Using the average cost of a textbook at $129 per course, based on a survey of participating colleges' textbook prices for most popular courses, after adoption of OER resources for the top 20 courses, if half of the projected 227,561 students enrolled in these courses using OER materials, they would save a projected total of **$14,677,684** (half of the possible **$29,355,369**) annually. The survey of textbooks sampled in Table 2 shows that many individual students pay considerably more than the average textbook price of $129.

After three years, the projected savings would be $29,355,369 (half of the possible $58,710,738), based on 50% adoption by OACC faculty. As community college students take the top 20 courses, over the course of four years, the projected savings would be $44,033,053 (half of the projected $88,066,107). After **five years**, with just 50% of course sections of these courses adopting OER materials, the savings project to **$58,710,738** (based on half of the projected total of $117,421,476). As part of the project, OACC will encourage member colleges that are non-project participants to consider adoption of the OER materials for their courses.

This is if only the materials are used by the projected number of students in the top 20 courses at the OACC colleges. The savings can increase markedly if other OACC colleges adopt the OER materials selected for the top 20 Transfer Module/TAG courses.

e. **Explain how/why collaboration between and among institutions is critical to program success. Describe how institutions will collaborate throughout the project.**

The project will employ teams of faculty members from participating OACC colleges to review OER materials for Transfer Module/TAG courses. Faculty team members will work collaboratively in assessing the materials for particular courses, meeting in person and online during the selection and review process. By having faculty members from different institutions participate, a wider view of the materials can be achieved. Likewise, with 15 institutions participating in the project, faculty teams will be able to discover and assess common and OER

materials for more courses. Participating colleges have been asked to select courses where they believe they have faculty members most familiar with the OER selection and review process or where the colleges see a particular need for OER materials. By prioritizing the courses to be tackled first based on the potential student enrollment, the participating colleges will have a tremendous impact on Ohio community college students.

Project Rationale: Explain why this project is important and likely to succeed.

a. Describe problem to be addressed

Thousands of Ohio community college students are spending millions of dollars on textbooks when there are common and Open Educational Resource materials available at no or little cost that could be used in the courses these students are taking. In order to adopt the common and OER materials, the materials need to be discovered, assessed to determine if the materials achieve the learning objectives required for the courses and reviewed periodically to ensure the materials stay current with required course content.

This project will establish a process for discovering desired common and OER materials, develop a plan for assessment and review of the materials, and build a community of practice and depository for OER materials.

b. Describe changed end state once innovation is fully implemented.

The innovation will result in a minimum of 20 Transfer Module/TAG courses offered at participating OACC colleges that utilize common and Open Educational Resources available at no or little cost in place of costly textbooks students are now required to buy. The project, as detailed above, will save Ohio college students, their parents and financial aid providers millions in dollars that would have gone to buying books. The project will also save Ohio school districts participating in the College Credit Plus (CCP) program millions of dollars that would have been allocated to textbook purchases. The materials to be incorporated into the most popular and/or

desired courses on the participating OACC campuses will be located, assessed and reviewed by faculty members with experts in the respective academic disciplines to ensure that the materials meet the learning objectives required in the courses.

c. Describe the research and/or prior experiences with relevant data *including citations* that support the proposed innovation project.

The project is supported by research and prior experiences that have taken place on the use of common and OER materials.

According to a study for Achieving the Dream titled "Opening the Textbook: Educational Resources in U.S. Higher Education, 2015-16,"[4] most faculty say they don't use OER materials because they aren't aware of materials available for their courses. Of the 3,000 faculty surveyed for the 2016 study, only 19% said they were aware of OER. Barriers most often cited by faculty in the study are that "there are not resources for my subject" (49%), "it is too hard to find what I need" (48%) and "there is no comprehensive catalog of resources" (45%). But 91% of two-year college faculty surveyed cite cost to the student as an important concern in textbook selection.

Colleges across the country are working to adopt OER materials for their courses.

As an example, Jackson College in Michigan is working on a project titled Textbook Zero. Work continues to have all course materials available for students in a digital format by fall 2017. Brian Newberry, Jackson College's Instructional Designer, has taken the lead on this initiative. He has already presented workshops during the fall 2015 semester and during learning days in January 2016 for faculty on Open Source materials. Currently, Jackson faculty are utilizing open source materials through OpenStax textbooks. OpenStax reports that their textbooks have been adopted in 2,500 separate courses, by 392,000 students, and 22% of all

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[4] Allen, I. Elaine & Seaman, Jeff. (2016). Opening the Textbook: Educational Resources in U.S. Higher Education, 2015-16, Babson Survey Research Group, available at http://achievingthedream.org/resource/16085/opening-the-textbook-educational-resources-in-us-higher-education-2015-16.

degree-granting institutions in the U.S. are using at least one of their books. Use of OpenStax textbooks is reported to be saving students $39 million this year alone. The potential for this work in saving students money and increasing their success in courses because of immediate access to materials is very promising and the principal goal of this initiative.

In Virginia, Tidewater Community College has developed a textbook-free degree, known as the "Z-Degree."[5] Students enrolled in the Associate of Science in Business Administration degree program use only OER materials.

A 2015 survey of students from 131 universities in the United Kingdom[6] revealed that 78% were satisfied with the ease of use electronic textbooks, such as the ones in this project. All participants own at least one portable digital device, most commonly a smartphone, followed by a laptop. More significantly, 89 percent take their devices to lectures. Ninety percent of surveyed students said they had used their device for last minute reading or to verify something in class, immediately before a test, or before handing in an assignment. For 82 percent of students this was a regular part of their learning experience.

Online resources are becoming more common in the U.S. Indiana University students saved $8 million over three years by using digital textbooks, paying $35 per book.

OhioLINK, Ohio's academic library consortium, is contributing to statewide efforts on college affordability. OhioLink has joined the University of Minnesota's Open Textbook Network (OTN), a consortium of 84 colleges and universities working to advance open textbook initiatives. In its announcement regarding the affiliation, OhioLINK stated: "Nine early OTN

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[5] Tidewater Community College website (2017). Textbook-free Degree. https://www.tcc.edu/academics/degrees/textbook-free.

[6] ShiftMedia, (2016). Digital Learning and eTextbooks in UK Higher Education: Current practice and impact on student experience. VitalSource, available at https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2186210/Content/Shift%20Media/Shift_Media/UK%20eTextbook%20White%20Paper%20-%20Color-No%20Bleed.pdf.

members reported an estimated $1.5 million in textbook savings to date by adopting open

textbooks."[7]

A study by Bliss, T., et al. (2013)[8] of instructors and teachers at eight community

colleges involved in a large-scale project employing OER reported that teachers and students

alike experienced significant cost savings. In addition, most students and teachers perceived

their OER to be at least equal in quality to traditional textbooks they had used in the past.

In the 2014 study titled Community College Online, author Rachel Fishman writes, "The

sheer quantity of OER available today without an accompanying means of gauging the quality of

the materials remains a challenge. Institutions and faculty who would like to adopt such

materials must first be aware of what currently exists and be able to assess the suitability and

quality of materials."[9]

Fishman continues, "Oftentimes, though, faculty are unaware that resources like College

Open Textbooks exists. For this reason, community colleges should either promote existing

databases or, depending on their needs as an institution, support the building of an internal

database that faculty and department chairs can contribute OER to, tagging it appropriately so

that other faculty looking to integrate OER into a course will be able to find trusted resources

that were aggregated by their colleagues. Designating a librarian familiar with OER to help

curate the resources and make recommendations to faculty would also be helpful for those

looking to incorporate OER into their classes."

The California Open Educational Resources Council designed and implemented a

faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open

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[7] OhioLink website, (Nov. 14, 2016). OhioLINK takes step toward textbook affordability, available at https://www.ohiolink.edu/press/ohiolink_takes_steps_toward_textbook_affordability.

[8] Bliss, T. et al., (2013). An OER COUP: College Teacher and Student Perceptions of Open Educational Resources. Journal of Interactive Media in Education. 2013(1), p.Art. 4. DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/2013-04

[9] Fishman, R. (2014). Education Policy: Community College Online, New America, p.27, http://dev-edcentral.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Community_College_Online_2.13.2015.pdf.

Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed.org). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected free and open etextboks using a rubric. Faculty received a stipend for their efforts and funding was provided by the State of California, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This rubric for review could be employed by faculty teams looking for OER materials and by college department chairs approving the materials.

A number of consortium colleges have independently begun to investigate and adopt OER materials for a select few courses. These include partner colleges Sinclair Community College, Lorain County Community College, Lakeland Community College and North Central State College.

This project seeks to make OACC community college faculty members aware of the materials available and to build a database of resources that can be used by OACC colleges. Part of the project will be to discuss the best ways to create and maintain the database.

d. **Detail expected number of students impacted (2-, 3-, 5-year), describe importance to students and measurable impact for students academically and financially.**

As mentioned above, the project would impact community college and high school students throughout Ohio. If only half of the students enrolled in the top 20 courses were enabled for OER adoption, the savings would be significant, with half of a projected 227,561 students saving a projected total of **$14,766,684** (half of the projected **$29,355,369**) annually, based on the average cost of $129 per textbook from a survey of OACC colleges.

e. **Describe how the program provides a new opportunity or model for the state in educational excellence or economic efficiency.**

The project will develop an OACC Community of Practice for OER that will enable faculty members at OACC colleges to learn procedures for adopting and incorporating the use

of OER materials into their classes. As faculty at consortium colleges work on the project to discover, review and assess common and OER materials for their courses, they will set an example for colleagues to follow, multiplying the savings for community college students.

f. **Describe institutions' commitment to project success – any in-kind or financial contributions to be made in the first 24 months. Synergy with other initiatives and investments?**

Participating colleges are committed to the project's success as evidenced by the endorsement of college leaders on the attached letter of commitment. In-kind commitment will include the work of college faculty chairs to review the materials selected for courses by the textbook committees, the work of faculty and administrators to report data required for this project and to help with required reporting to ODHE.

Adoption of OER materials is in line with goals consistently expressed by partner institutions to reduce students' costs while enhancing their academic options. As mentioned above, a number of OACC consortium colleges have independently begun to investigate and adopt OER materials for a select few courses. This proposal would be in line with these activities. Through this project, OACC members already using OER will provide professional development for faculty members from partner colleges.

g. **Describe how the project will be sustained beyond the grant period. Detail 5-year financial requirements to sustain the project and identify specific sources of funding.**

Significant resources and expertise will be utilized in developing the framework and procedures for discovering, reviewing and assessing common and OER materials for community college courses by college faculty. Once these techniques are developed, they will be maintained through the OACC Open Education Resources Community of Practice. The

majority of ongoing costs will be sustained through institutional resources. These include costs for release time or stipends to develop additional courses, faculty professional development on research and online teaching pedagogy, and supplies and instructional materials. This will further enhance the colleges' viability and their competitive advantage in maintaining affordable costs for students. During the second year of the project, and based on their experiences with this project, consortium members will assess what ongoing costs will be most desirable to maintain and sustain as a consortium or as individual institutions.

Project Plan: **This section should provide a clear description of project staffing and a timeline for activities to be undertaken.**

All consortium members and eventually other OACC colleges will have access to course materials discovered and developed through this project. North Central State College (NCSC) and OACC will lead the consortium, fiscally and administratively. Co-project coordinators will be employed by NCSC and OACC. An evaluator and any contractors will be engaged by NCSC and OACC. Consortium partners will have the opportunity to be engaged in personnel and contractor selection. Partner colleges will participate in the project to discover, review and assess OER materials for courses, with faculty members participating on teams that relate to their academic disciplines.

a. Outline the roles and responsibilities of key staff members.

The co-project director will be Mike Welker, coordinator of eLearning and Innovation at North Central State College. He will be responsible for achieving grant goals, complying with award terms and conditions and coordinating collaboration among the partner colleges. He will work with the NCSC Business Office to oversee the project budget.

The OACC office in Columbus will appoint a person to serve as co-project director, assisting in coordination of administrative activities needed. Working with the evaluator, the OACC will serve as central hub for colleges to submit data relating to the project. The OACC

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may also host meetings of college faculty and administrators working on the project. The OACC will also actively work to disseminate the OER knowledge to its member colleges and will organize an OER Community of Practice.

Individual colleges will engage faculty and staff that meet the requirements of the project. Each of the 15 participating colleges has named a project coordinator for the grant project, who are among the academic leaders at their colleges. In some cases, these are Chief Academic Officers, while in others they are Deans. The persons serving in these positions are experienced with grant-funded projects and academic initiatives. The work of these individuals will serve as in-kind support from the participating colleges. The college project coordinators are responsible for keeping others at their institutions informed of grant progress and ensuring that qualified faculty members are selected and assigned projects within their academic disciplines for OER materials.

b. Provide a brief biography of key staff members

Mike Welker serves as coordinator of eLearning & Innovation (eLi), Instructional Designer, Certified Information Designer, Certified QM Peer Reviewer, Certified Information Designer and Canvas & Zoom Administrator at NCSC. He has taught NCSC classes part-time since 2006 in face-to-face and in all distance formats – video conferencing, on-campus hybrid, online hybrid (Zoom) and fully online. He has helped mentor, design and support NCSC faculty across all disciplines to develop new online and hybrid courses. He has attended train the trainer sessions on implementing instructional design processes. He has presented case studies on his distance work at national and regional conferences.

The OACC staff member who will serve as co-project director has yet to be determined. The association will look to hire an experienced educator with expertise in OER and administrative capabilities.

c. Provide a timeline with proposed activities and estimated completion milestone for each activity. Include a GANTT chart showing milestones and key dependencies of the project.

The project will follow the following timeline as depicted by the table below and the accompanying GANTT chart. After award in April, the project leadership will mobilize under the direction of Mike Welker. Project coordinators for the respective campuses will be asked to name faculty candidates to participate in the first series of faculty OER meetings, to be held in fall 2017. This cohort will be responsible for discovering and assigning OER materials for five courses, with faculty assigned to their academic disciplines. The goal is to complete 20 Transfer Module/TAG courses over the two-year project, with five courses selected for OER materials and completed each semester by qualified faculty.

Project Timeline			
Task	Start Date	Duration (In days)	Completion Date
Project Award	4/3/2017	1	4/4/2017
Mobilization	4/4/2017	8	4/12/2017
Assign faculty	4/18/2017	14	5/5/2017
Faculty Prof. Dev.	8/1/2017	4	8/4/2017
Faculty 1 meet	9/5/2017	112	12/19/2017
Faculty 2 meet	1/8/2018	112	5/5/2018
Faculty Prof. Dev.	8/1/2018	4	8/4/2017
Faculty 3 meet	9/6/2018	112	12/20/2018
Faculty 4 meet	1/9/2019	112	5/6/2019
Assess 1	12/20/2017	30	1/20/2018
Assess 2	5/8/2018	30	6/7/2018
Assess 3	12/21/2018	30	1/21/2019
Assess 4	5/7/2019	30	6/6/2019
Evaluation	9/6/2017	650	6/30/2019

In late summer 2017, faculty from the partner colleges will attend a project kickoff meeting where they will learn about the project from the co-project directors. The faculty will receive an overview of the project goals and objectives, as well as the grant project timeline. Separately, faculty and librarians will participate in professional development on how to evaluate

and incorporate OER materials for community college courses. The professional development would be offered in online format to reduce travel costs. Participating faculty will also learn how to modify open textbooks.
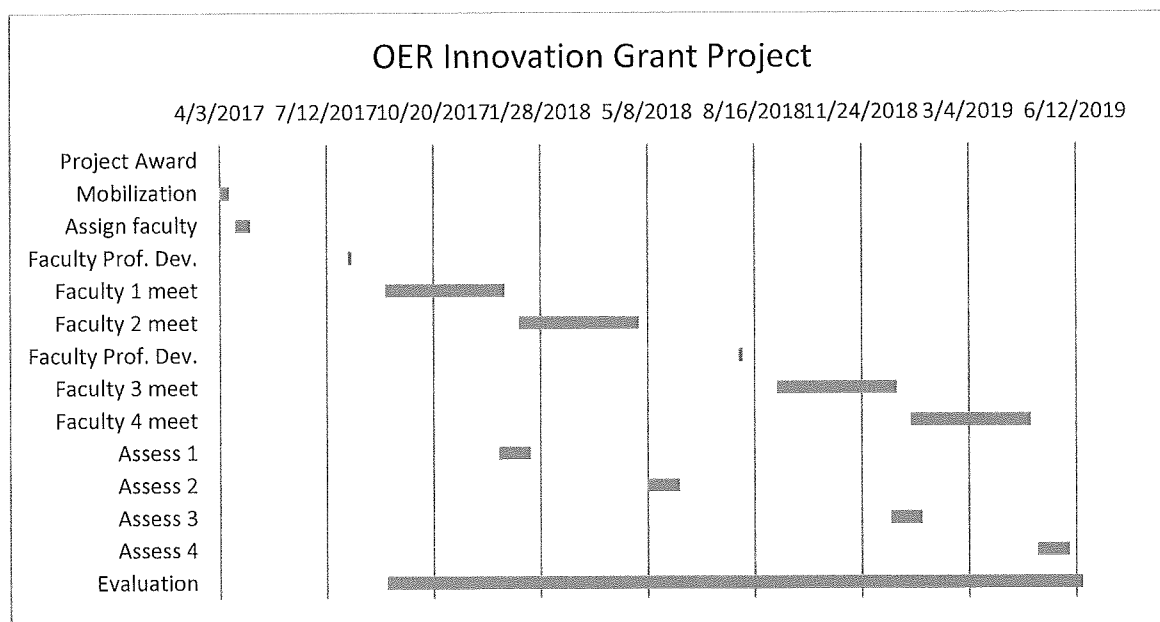
A team of three to five faculty members from different colleges will be assigned to each course to search for OER materials and review them for alignment with course learning objectives. These teams will separately hold organizational meetings at the beginning of the fall semester and then meet online and via conference calls each week throughout the semester as they review OER materials for their assigned courses. By the end of the fall semester, the first cohort will have completed selection and review of OER materials for five courses. A separate team of department chairs will then review the materials to ensure the materials selected meet learning objectives. The assessment team will spend a month reviewing the materials recommended by the faculty team, confirming the materials for use in the respective colleges.

After approval of the respective department chair teams and respective Chief Academic Officers (CAO's), the OER course materials would be adopted for use. Materials selected in fall 2017 would begin use in fall 2018, materials selected in spring 2018 would be also approved for use in fall 2018 after the chairs complete the review in summer 2018. Materials selected in fall 2018 and spring 2019 would be approved for use in fall 2019 after assessment by the department chairs and approval of the CAO's. Should a college or its faculty determine that no appropriate OER materials exist for a course in order to meet the required learning objectives for the course, the faculty may adapt existing OER materials, following the guidelines for adaptation.

Formative evaluation will take place throughout the project beginning in the fall 2017 as the participating faculty members report on how they were able to select appropriate OER materials for the courses. This evaluation will provide subsequent faculty groups with insight into sources for locating appropriate materials for their courses. As courses begin to incorporate OER materials, colleges will track course sections using the materials and track the number of

student participants using the materials. Colleges will also track academic success for those students using the OER materials and compare with students in previous course sections with textbooks they purchased. Summative evaluation will take place at the conclusion of the project.

OER Innovation Grant Project

	4/3/2017	7/12/2017	10/20/2017	1/28/2018	5/8/2018	8/16/2018	11/24/2018	3/4/2019	6/12/2019
Project Award									
Mobilization									
Assign faculty									
Faculty Prof. Dev.									
Faculty 1 meet									
Faculty 2 meet									
Faculty Prof. Dev.									
Faculty 3 meet									
Faculty 4 meet									
Assess 1									
Assess 2									
Assess 3									
Assess 4									
Evaluation									

Identify critical milestones during the grant agreement in the first, second and third quarters; and describe the required actions at that point.

Critical milestones will occur during each quarter of the project. During the first quarter, a critical milestone will be the formation of the initial group of faculty for the first group of courses for review and selection of OER materials. Professional development to be offered to faculty members and librarians in each summer will be a critical element of the project success. Thus, funds are budgeted for the development of effective professional development for faculty on the selection and use of OER materials. In subsequent quarters, the critical milestones will be the completion of selection of materials for courses by participating faculty teams, assessment of the materials by the department chairs, and approval by the CAO's that will allow for the adoption of the materials.

20

Project Evaluation: **Explain how project success will be measured. The evaluation plan should include both formative and summative measurements and may (but is not required to) utilize the support of an external evaluator. Project evaluation must include a system to measure: a) academic achievement and b) economic efficiency, which may include cost savings and productivity gains.**

    a. **Describe the evaluation design. Clearly explain how academic achievement and economic efficiency will be defined and measured.**

Evaluation will be based on achieving the stated goals and activities as indicated in the logic model. A primary goal of the project is for OER materials to be available for students enrolling in 20 of the most popular Transfer Module/TAG courses offered by OACC colleges. The project directors will work with faculty teams and college primary contacts to track which colleges adopt OER materials for which courses. A secondary goal of the project is the involvement of faculty in the process of discovery and assessment of OER materials for classes. In addition to the 20 courses in this project, some faculty after going through the process with team members may take it upon themselves to find OER materials appropriate for other courses. Faculty may also work with colleagues at their respective institutions to find and assess OER materials for additional courses. This compounding of grant benefits will increase both the academic achievement and economic efficiency. The college academic grant contacts will track and report on all courses that adopt OER materials. Institutional Research Offices will be asked to report on students enrolled in these courses.

Economic efficiency will be defined and measured by the savings realized by students and school districts that no longer have to purchase textbooks, but can access OER materials through digital media.

b. **Describe the ongoing evaluation process, including (a) collecting data; (b) analyzing data; (c) responding to data (i.e. developing improvement plans); and (d) reporting data to ODHE.**

A number of data elements will be collected during the project. These include:

- Faculty involved in OER materials review

- Colleges adopting OER materials for courses

- Courses adopting OER materials

- Students enrolled in courses with OER materials

- Students completing courses with OER materials

- Academic success of students in courses with OER materials

- Amount saved by students enrolled in courses with OER materials compared to the amount they would previously have spent on purchasing textbooks

- Amount saved by school districts no longer having to purchase textbooks due to OER materials available for CCP courses.

- Amount saved by colleges due to adoption of OER materials.

Possible Research questions for the evaluation of this project include:

- How do students' final grades differ when faculty assign OER instead of commercial textbooks? (SIS system)

- How do students' enrollment intensity (number of credits taken) and semester-to-semester persistence change when faculty assign OER instead of commercial textbooks or digital content as the required materials for a course? (SIS System)

- How does student use of resources differ between traditional learning resources and OER? (Survey)

- How does student use of resources differ between traditional learning resources and OER? (Learning Management Systems)

- How do students perceive the quality of the OER? (Surveys)

- How do faculty perceive the quality of the OER? (Faculty Survey)

- Does this project result in greater credit accumulation by high school students? (Surveys)

- Does this project result in greater CCP offerings at high school sites? (Surveys)

- Does this initiative lead to greater degree completion? (SIS System)

i. **The implemented evaluation process will guide the development of improvement plans, as necessary, for the project.**

Throughout the two-year project, data will be tracked and evaluated each semester with improvement plans implemented by the co-project directors. Information on sources for OER materials will be shared by the co-project directors with college contacts and faculty teams. Improvement plans may include such things as methodology for reviewing OER course materials, methods for tracking data, and professional development for faculty.

c. **Provide a timeline for the evaluation process, including formative and summative evaluations complementing the project GANTT chart.**

As indicated in the GANTT chart above, the evaluation process will begin in the fall of 2017 as faculty teams begin to review OER materials for courses. Formative evaluation will include the involvement of faculty from partner colleges in the review of course materials. Each semester, data will be tracked and evaluated related to faculty involvement, course adoption of OER materials, enrollment in courses with OER materials, academic success of students using OER materials and amounts saved by

students, school districts and colleges. Should any irregularities become noticeable as data is accumulated, the project directors will work with college contacts to review and change processes as necessary to ensure data integrity and project success.

Project data will be accumulated during the course of the project so that reporting can be accomplished as required by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE). At the conclusion of the two-year project, a summative evaluation report will be shared with partner colleges and the ODHE.

d. **Identify the individuals who will lead the evaluation process and describe their credentials.**

The project will employ an outside consultant to assist with data collection and reporting. The consultant to be employed through competitive bidding will be familiar with academic projects and data integrity, and the requirements of responding to data requests from the ODHE.

Each institution's Institutional Research Office will collect data each semester, using a common form. Data will be submitted to the OACC office for compilation and sharing with the evaluation consultant.

e. **ODHE will collect academic and economic data related to the project for three years after the end of the agreement. This data will include and is not limited to the specific metrics listed and described in the proposal's evaluation plan.**

OACC will collect data from project partners and other OACC colleges on the adoption of OER materials and provide data to the ODHE on an annual basis for five years, the two project years and three years after the end of the agreement.

2017 Innovation Grant Proposal: Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges

Budget Narrative

a. The amounts for each budget line activity requested

The Innovation Grant proposal will support the collaborative work of the consortium in the following categories over the course of the two years. **See the proposal cover sheet for the Excel workbook version of the budget summary.**

Personnel – The project will employ two **co-Project Directors** – Mike Welker, coordinator of eLearning and Innovation at North Central State College, will receive 50% of his salary and benefits based on the estimated time commitment expected for the project. This will be $27,355 in salary and $11,489 in benefits in year 1, with a 2% increase projected in year 2, to $27,902 in salary and $11,719 in benefits, totaling **$78,465** over the project. OACC will appoint a co-project director with salary and benefits totaling **$120,000** over the two-year project.

Faculty review team members will be paid $1,000 per credit hour per course reviewed during the project. Institutions will determine whether this will be paid in release time or stipends, as faculty contracts vary from college to college. With teams of 3-5 faculty members planned for these teams, an average of 4 members was used for budget purposes. This is projected to total **$240,000** based on teams of four faculty reviewing 20 3-hour courses during the two-year project.

Faculty professional development is projected at **$120,000**. This is based on providing 4 hours of professional development to 40 faculty (2 faculty per course) at 15 colleges at $50 per hour in salary and benefits.

Personnel request totals **$558,465**.

Each institution will provide department chairs to review the work of the course review teams as in-kind, ensuring that the materials selected meet college requirements, estimated at $300,000. This is based on a projected $1,000 per course for 15 colleges for 20 courses.

Facilities – $20,000 is budgeted for professional meeting costs.

Supplies -- $10,000 per year has been budgeted for supplies for the project directors and review team members. This will include general office supplies for project communication, budget maintenance, records retention, review team communication, tracking, reporting and dissemination. This will also include supplies needed for the OACC community of practice, evaluation team and participating faculty teams. Totaling **$20,000** over the project.

Purchased Services – $70,000 has been budgeted for paying an outside consultant for assistance with evaluation for the project, with $30,000 budgeted each year for two years. Sinclair Community College and Lorain County Community College offered to provide professional development to project faculty in the form of an online course taking 4 hours. Sinclair and Lorain will receive **$2,000** each for design and delivery of this course. An allocation of **$10,000** is projected per year for storing and maintaining OER materials at a location to be determined. Purchased services will total **$94,000**.

Travel -- $20,000 per year has been budgeted for travel for review team members, the co-project directors and evaluation team members. Mileage will be paid using the federal standard for use of individual vehicles. Totaling **$40,000** over the project.

Indirect Cost at 8 percent of subtotal $732,465 totals **$58,597**.

Total -- **$791,062**.

b. **Describe the timing of expenditures in relation to the GANTT schedule included in the proposal**

Timing of expenditures in line with the GANTT will include payments to faculty team members at the end of each of the semesters in which they engaged in reviewing materials for OER courses. Over the course of the grant, 20 faculty members will receive payment in fall 2017, 20 in spring 2018, 20 in fall 2018 and 20 in spring 2019. The co-project directors will receive salaries beginning in July 2017 and continuing through June 30 2019. Travel
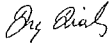
costs and supply purchases will align with needs of the review teams and grant project director. Evaluation costs will begin in fall 2017 and continue through June 2019.

c. Costs should fall within comparative industry standards

Project costs will comply with industry standards for travel, purchases and employment of personnel. All partner institutions have procedures and practices for fiscal stewardship, human resources, procurement, payroll and travel. Annual audits are conducted and are available from each partner institution.

The investment in the discovery and development of Open Educational Resources for courses offered at Ohio community colleges will result in savings for Ohio college students, their financial aid providers and Ohio school districts.

Name of Lead Institution (only one)	North Central State College
Project Start Date	5/1/2017
Primary Contact - Individual must be authorized to sign grant contract and legally responsible as representative.	Dr. Dorey Diab, President, North Central State College, 2441 Kenwood Circle, Mansfield, Ohio 44906; 419-755-4758; ddiab@ncstatecollege.edu
President	Dr. Dorey Diab
Project Director/s	Mike Welker, eLearning & Innovation Coordinator, 2441 Kenwood Circle, Mansfield, Ohio, 44906; 419-755-4706; mwelker@ncstatecollege.edu

1) Certification by Authorized Official:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained in this application is true and correct. The document has been duly authorized to comply with the required assurances.
Signature of Authorized Official
Typed Name and Title: Dr. Dorey Diab, President
Date: Jan. 19, 2017

2) Administering Institution: North Central State College

Contact Person: Sam Renfroe
Title: Director of Grant Development
Address: 2441 Kenwood Circle, Mansfield, Ohio 44906
Email: srenfroe@ncstatecollege.edu

3) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Company Name: Lorain County Community College
Contact Person: Dr. John Crooks
Title: Associate Provost, University Partnership
Address: 1005 N. Abbe Road, Elyria, Ohio 44035
Email: jcrooks@lorainccc.edu

4) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Stark State College
Contact Person: Dr. Andy Stephan
Title: Dean of Arts and Sciences
Address: 6200 Frank Ave. NW, North Canton, Ohio 44720
Email: astephan@starkstate.edu

5) Other Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Ohio Association of Community Colleges
Contact Person: Jack Hershey
Title: President & CEO
Address: 175 S. Third St., Suite 560, Columbus Ohio 43215-7106
Email: jhershey@ohiocc.org

6) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Clark State Community College
Contact Person: Dr. Amit Singh
Title: Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Address: 570 E. Leffel Lane, P.O. Box 570, Springfield, Ohio 45501
Email: singha@clarkstate.edu

7) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Central Ohio Technical College
Contact Person: Dr. Lauri White
Title: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Address: 1179 University Drive, Newark, Ohio 43055
Email: white.2651@cotc.edu

8) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Hocking College
Contact Person: Ryan Rieder
Title: Department Chair, College of Arts and Sciences
Address: 3301 Hocking Parkway, Nelsonville, Ohio 45764-9588
Email: riederr@hocking.edu

9) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Southern State Community College
Contact Person: Dr. Nicole Roades
Title: Vice President of Academic Affairs
Address: 100 Hobart Drive, Hillsboro, Ohio 45133
Email: nroades@sscc.edu

10) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Sinclair College
Contact Person: Greg Deye
Title: Manager of Learning Technology Support
Address: 444 W. Third St., Dayton, Ohio 45402
Email: greg.deye@sinclair.edu

11) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Washington State Community College
Contact Person: Dr. Mark Nutter
Title: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Address: 710 Colegate Drive, Marietta, Ohio 45750
Email: mnutter@wscc.edu

12) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Lakeland Community College
Contact Person: Laura Barnard
Title: Executive Vice President and Provost
Address: 7700 Clocktower Drive, Kirtland, Ohio 44094-5198
Email: lbarnard@lakelandcc.edu

13) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Rhodes State College
Contact Person: Chris Boyett
Title: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Address: 4240 Campus Drive, Lima, Ohio 45804
Email: boyett.c@rhodesstate.edu

14) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Marion Technical Collete
Contact Person: Chad Schneider
Title: Dean of Artsand Sciences
Address: 1467 Mount Vernon Ave., Marion, Ohio 43302-5628
Email: schneiderc@mtc.edu

15) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Northwest State Community College
Contact Person: Lori Robison
Title: Vice President for Academics
Address: 22600 State Route 34, Archbold, Ohio 43502
Email: lrobison@northweststate.edu

16) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Edison State Community College
Contact Person: Paul Heintz
Title: Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
Address: 1973 Edison Drive, Piqua, Ohio 45356
Email: pheintz@edisonohio.edu

17) Educational Partners (please submit separate information for each partner)

Institution Name: Terra State Community College
Contact Person: Clare Keating
Title: Librarian
Address: 2830 Napoleon Road, Fremont, Ohio 43420
Email: ckeating01@terra.edu

Activity	Total	Dept. of Higher Education	Education (OTC, Community College, University) Funds	Name of Education Institution	Other Partner Funds	Name of Other Partners	Activity Description Summary
Equipment (list by item)							
Personnel - Positions							
Individual A- Co-project director/NCSC	78,465	78,465		North Central State College			Salary and benefit for co-project director
Individual B - Co-project director/OACC	120,000	120,000				Ohio Association of Community Colleges	Salary and benefits for co-project director
Faculty review teams	240,000	240,000		Partner colleges			Teams of faculty to review OER course materials
Faculty Professional Development	120,000	120,000		Partner colleges			Faculty and librarians to receive professional development
Chairs Approving Materials -- in-kind	300,000		Partner Colleges				College department chairs reviewing selected OER materials
Facilities	20,000	20,000					Professional meetings costs
Supplies	20,000	20,000					Supplies for co-project directors and review teams
Purchased Services	94,000	94,000					Professional Development course costs, Evaluation consultant, OER archiving
Travel	40,000	40,000		Partner colleges		OACC	Travel for project directors, faculty review teams
Building Improvements							
Other (Describe) Indirect Cost	58,597	58,597					8% Indirect Cost for project management
TOTAL	1,091,062	791,062					

Each Activity must be described in the
budget narrative

Implementation Schedule
Please provide a brief bulleted list of major components of grant activity taking place each term.

Term	Grant Activities
Summer 2017	*Faculty teams selected for courses to identify OER materials *Faculty from the partner colleges will participate in professional development on how to evaluate and incorporate OER materials for community college courses
Fall 2017	*Teams will separately hold organizational meetings at the beginning of the fall semester and then meet online and via conference calls each week throughout the semester as they review OER materials for their assigned courses *Department chairs will then review the materials
Winter 2018	*Department chairs will then review the materials selected by fall teams
Spring 2018	*Teams will separately hold organizational meetings at the beginning of the semester and then meet online and via conference calls each week throughout the semester as they review OER materials for their assigned courses
Summer 2018	*Department chairs will then review the materials selected by spring teams
Fall 2018	*Teams will separately hold organizational meetings at the beginning of the semester and then meet online and via conference calls each week throughout the semester as they review OER materials for their assigned courses
Winter 2019	*Department chairs will then review the materials selected by fall teams
Spring 2019	*Teams will hold organizational meetings at beginning of semester and then meet online and via conference calls each week throughout the semester as they review OER materials for assigned courses

NC

North Central State College

Jan. 19, 2017

John Carey
Chancellor
Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 S. Front St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chancellor Carey:

We the undersigned are writing to express the support and commitment of our colleges for the Innovation Grant proposal titled Adopting OER in Ohio Community Colleges led by North Central State College. We see this as a project that will benefit thousands of students across the state, as well as the many residents of our service areas.

The project seeks to raise academic achievement while conserving resources through adoption of Common and Open Educational Resource materials for courses offered in partner members of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges.

This project has the potential to save college students, high school students and Ohio school districts millions of dollars in textbook purchases. It will also continue the practice of collegiality among Ohio's community colleges as we work together to benefit our students.

As committed partners in this project, we will participate as spelled out in the proposal, including the involvement of faculty, staff and administrators, working together to achieve project success. We will also commit the necessary resources to this project as enumerated in the proposal and assist with evaluation as required.
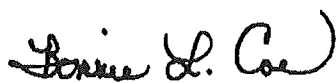
Thank you for this opportunity.
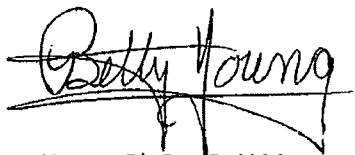
Sincerely,
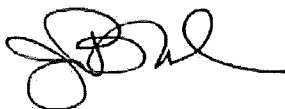
(signatures page two)

Bonnie L. Coe, Ph.D.
President
COTC

Jo Alice Blondin, Ph.D.
President
Clark State Community College

Doreen Larson, Ph.D.
President
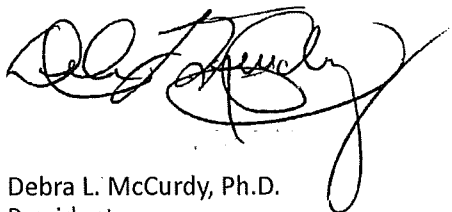Edison State Community College

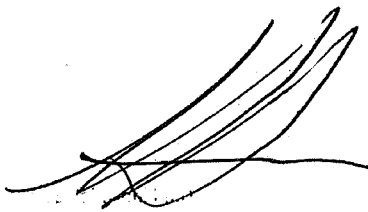Betty Young, Ph.D., JD, LLM
President
Hocking College

Marcia J. Ballinger, Ph.D.
President
Lorain County Community College

Dorey Diab, Ph.D.
President
North Central State College

Debra L. McCurdy, Ph.D.
President
Rhodes State College

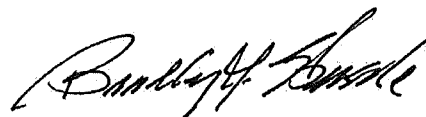Steven L. Johnson, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Sinclair Community College

Kevin S. Boys, Ed.D.
President
Southern State Community College
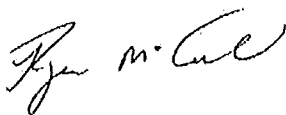
Para M. Jones, Ph.D.
President
Stark State College

Jerome E. Webster, Ph.D.
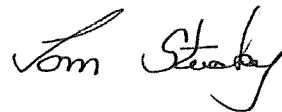President & CEO
Terra State Community College

Bradley J. Ebersole, Ph.D.
President
Washington State Community College

Morris W. Beverage Jr., EDM
President
Lakeland Community College

Ryan McCall, Ph.D.
President
Marion Technical College

Dr. Thomas L. Stuckey
President
Northwest State Community College

OACC

Ohio Association of Community Colleges

January 18, 2017

Chancellor John Carey
Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chancellor Carey,

On behalf of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC), I am pleased to provide our strong support for an innovative and critically important collaboration between the leaders and faculty of 15 Ohio community colleges. The partnership proposes a project to encourage adoption of Common and Open Educational Resource (OER) textbooks and supporting materials for Transfer Module courses.

The OER project aligns with the primary goals of the Ohio Higher Education Innovation Grant program to promote both educational excellence and economic efficiency throughout the state. Development and adoption of Open Educational Resources has the potential to reduce costs for colleges, high schools, and most important, for students and their families. Faculty from partner colleges will focus on the top 20 courses with the highest enrollment rates, and many of these courses also have very high College Credit Plus student enrollment. The rising cost of textbooks has placed a financial burden on many of our stakeholders, and this grant is an opportunity to help address this growing problem.

The proposed OER project goes beyond saving colleges, high schools, and students money on textbooks. It utilizes the promise and capabilities of 21st Century technology to help improve student outcomes. Once developed and reviewed, Open Educational Resources can easily be adapted and tailored to suit the needs of specific institutions, courses, and faculty. Materials can be updated on a regular basis at little to no cost to incorporate the most advanced research and up-to-date information. Our competitive, globalized economy demands innovative educational tools like OER to help our colleges, our students, and our state to remain leaders in both workforce development and educational attainment.

The Governor's Ohio Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency identified several recommendations that the OACC and its partnering institutions seek to advance and fulfill through this grant proposal. In particular, the Task Force made the following recommendations:

- **Standardize materials for gateway courses:** Institutions must encourage departments to choose common materials, including digital elements, for gateway courses that serve large volumes of students.
- **Develop digital capabilities:** Institutions must be part of a consortium to develop digital tools and material, including open educational resources, that provide students with high-quality, low-cost materials.

If funded, this project will help to make these recommendations a reality in 15 of Ohio's community colleges and will build a framework to expand OER to other colleges. This investment holds the promise of putting Ohio at the forefront of the OER movement and further solidifying Ohio's position as a leader in higher education innovation and reform. The OACC is pleased to be included as a partner and looks forward to playing a key role in the statewide project management and faculty engagement activities.

I have full confidence that the OER grant proposal will continue to build on the past and ongoing successes of Ohio's community colleges to meet current challenges and to fulfill the educational excellence and economic efficiency goals of the Innovation Grant program. I appreciate your consideration and strongly urge your support.

Sincerely,

Jack Hershey
President & CEO
Ohio Association of Community Colleges