REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

EXPANDING USAGE OF OPEN-TEXT MATERIALS
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL

Summary and Background
The Office of the Provost, the University Libraries, Procurement Services, the Academic Technology Committee and the Committee on Transformational Education are partnering on a Mini-Grant Program to support faculty interested in Open Textbook alternatives to increasingly expensive commercial texts. UMass Lowell would like to reduce the cost burden of textbooks on our students by encouraging instructors to use low-cost or free alternatives to expensive texts. The Open-Text Materials mini grants are intended to help compensate for the extra time it takes to develop or find new materials, to change course assignments, and to update syllabi.

We currently have a pool of $5,000 devoted to this initiative and will select as many proposals as possible within that pool, based on the quality of the proposal and the potential to impact the most students. Stipends will be presented upon completion of required deliverables. Librarians will work with teams of awardees to provide guidance on issues related to intellectual property and copyright, as well as helping teams discover open educational resources and materials for customized course packets.

What Open Textbook alternatives are eligible?
The library has created a libguide to help you understand some of the options that are available to open-source users (Open Textbook Initiative), and more information may be obtained at the Boston Library Consortium website, https://www.blc.org/special-highlights/open-educational-resources-and-blc.

Options and resources for faculty wishing to adopt open source material can include:

- A Creative Commons* text from another source that you adopt for your course, in particular, texts from OpenStax and the Open Textbook Library.
- Packets of library-licensed and owned materials delivered through Blackboard and our e-Reserve system.
- Individual e-books specially licensed for classroom use and owned by the UMass Lowell library that can serve as the course textbook(s)
- Packets of Open Educational Resources (OERs) available under Creative Commons licenses and aggregated on library guide pages
- Texts written by individual faculty members, or co-authored, and published under Creative Commons licenses.

* A Creative Commons license essentially allows free and open use of material, while protecting the intellectual property of the author.
Available Funding
The Open-Text Materials mini-grant program offers:

A. Up to $1000 – for teams of at least 3 instructors who review Creative Commons texts for possible adoption in multi-section courses:
   - Up to $500 to the team for the review process;
   - Up to $500 to the team if the text is adopted.

B. $350 – for an individual faculty member who creates and adopts a packet of existing open-text materials for a course section in place of commercial materials.

C. $500 for development of original text material to be used in a particular course. An additional $100 is available for instructors who sign onto the proposal & agree to adopt this material.

The Deliverables
The deadline for submission of deliverables for awarded projects is June 1, 2016. The deliverables are as follows:

**Option A:** Teams of Instructors evaluating open-source text material
- Report on results of review
- Report on faculty adoptions, number of students effected, cost savings
- Evaluation of anticipated impact on learning; anticipated student experience (If text is used, report on actual results)

**Option B:** Adoption of packets of open source material in lieu of commercially available material
- Copy of course materials
- Evaluation of anticipated impact on learning; anticipated student experience (If text is used, report on actual results)

**Option C:** Development of original text material available as open source
- Copy of original material
- Explanation of how material will be accessed
- Summary of usage across sections
- Evaluation of anticipated impact on learning; anticipated student experience (If text is used, report on actual results)

Proposal Submission Deadline
Please submit your proposal to Jacqueline_Nicholas@uml.edu, Office of the Provost by:

11:59 p.m. on Thursday, December 10, 2015

Review Process & Award Announcement
Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of faculty, librarians and administrators. Awards will be announced by January 10, 2016.

Awarded Projects – Deadline for Deliverables
The deadline for submission of deliverables for awarded projects is June 1, 2016.

Questions
If you have questions, please contact Jacqueline_Nicholas@uml.edu, 978.934.2219.
Name: ________________________________ Department: ________________________

I. Indicate which mini-grant option you are applying for:
   
   A. Team of instructors evaluating open-source text material. Please list team members and their departments.
   
   B. Adoption of packets of open source material
   
   C. Development of original text material

II. Provide a brief description of your project:

III. For what course(s)/section(s) will the new material be used? What material is currently being used? What is the cost of the current materials? What are the savings that will be passed on to the students?

IV. Approximately how many students will be affected by this change in the course in an academic year?

V. How do you plan to evaluate the effect of this change on student learning and/or the student’s experience of the course?

Please submit proposals to Jacqueline_Nicholas@uml.edu, Office of the Provost by 11:59 p.m., Thursday, December 10, 2015.