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Finding Partners for Libraries to Deepen Connections to Teaching and Learning

April 2024: Innovation Summit

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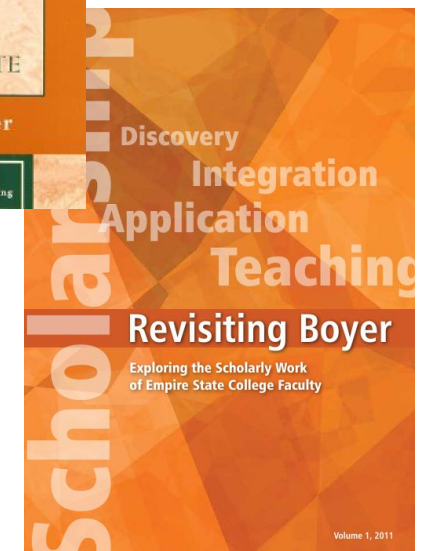
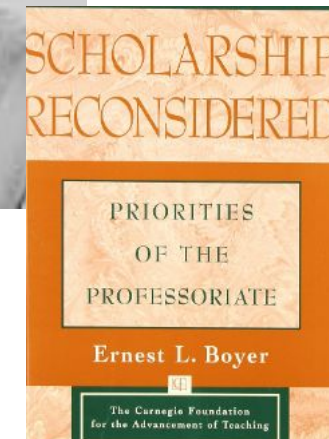


Overview of Empire State University



About Empire State University

- Founded in 1971 by then SUNY Chancellor Ernest Boyer.
 - Early iterations of SoTL built into institution
- Faculty are Mentors with expanded responsibilities for individual student development.
- Blend of Structure and Flexibility.
- For most of Empire's history, teaching and learning has been situated at physical locations across NYS.
- Online learning has expanded in the past 10 years, leading to 98% of Empire's courses now being offered online.
 - Only a few physical locations left with faculty and students now working together virtually.
- Focus on adult students at beginning has expanded to affordable and accessible education to groups that traditional higher education doesn't yet serve well.





Opportunities of Empire's Structure

- Cross-functional teams and program level work is common.
- Strong culture of data-informed practice.
 - Staffing in decision support.
 - Project Management Office.
 - Embedded in Multiple Levels of Strategic Plan.
- Other departments coordinate some areas that are library oriented.
 - Information Literacy (Metaliteracy)
 - Special Collections and Archives

1. STUDENT SUCCESS

Empire State University provides a positive student experience by valuing our students' diverse perspectives, respecting their goals and priorities, and connecting them to the institution and each other. Our high-quality academic programs, mentoring, and support services enable learners to meet their academic, professional, and personal goals.

Supporting Themes

Every member of the university community is invested in student success. We share responsibility with our students for their success, proactively removing barriers and helping students build connections to the institution and to each other. We value students' knowledge and experience, deliver outstanding academic programs, and provide comprehensive mentoring, advising, and other support to increase retention and ensure timely degree completion.

2. ACADEMIC AND INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

As stewards of SUNY's access institution, our students, faculty, staff, professional employees, and administrators must express our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the organization for excellence to be achieved. We deliver on the interconnected priorities of academic and inclusive excellence through high-quality academic programs, student services, and employee support.

Supporting Themes

We are committed to strong academic programs and excellence in teaching, service, research, scholarship, creative activity, and professional development. In support of academic and inclusive excellence, we recruit and develop employees from diverse backgrounds. In turn, by recruiting and educating a diverse student population, we expand educational access, enrich the learning experience, and prepare students to work and live in a global society.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



3. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

All members of the Empire State University community help improve our organization, climate, and programs so we can best serve our students and each other. We engage in ongoing assessment to improve academically, operationally, fiscally, and organizationally.

Supporting Themes

Hallmarks of our organizational effectiveness include fiscal responsibility, continuous improvement, and an inclusive campus climate. All of us contribute to the strength and effectiveness of the university by fostering a culture of inclusion, civility, communication, and support. We work together to ensure that our academic offerings, student services, operational infrastructure, financial resourcing, and campus climate align with our mission, vision, and values.

4. RAISING OUR PUBLIC PROFILE

As a leader in online teaching and learning, individualized instruction, and prior learning assessment, Empire State University strives to be recognized as a distinctive institution that offers high-quality, flexible, affordable education to diverse learners. Employees, students, alumni, community leaders, legislators, and supporters all play a role in elevating awareness of the institution.

Supporting Themes

Through high-impact teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, and public engagement, we support our access-driven mission and differentiate ourselves in an increasingly crowded field. We expand our reach by telling our story, leveraging our expertise, promoting program growth, connecting with students and alumni, and building our philanthropic base.



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Integrating with Instructional Design



Goals of Library and Instructional Design Partnership

- Connect library strengths and goals to other departments to provide students and faculty with the best support services.
- Improve affordability of course resource costs.
- Find paths to assessing library support that can be linked to improvements in student success.



Image from aau.edu





Team Based Course Review Process





Librarians and Course Review

- Role of librarian in course review:
 - Creation of embedded course guide with tutorials, linked readings, and guidance for the course.
 - Review textbook options with faculty to license an ebook or adopt/adapt OER.
 - Consult on research-based assignments to ensure they are scaffolded, and are appropriate for level.
 - Review course content with faculty to ensure diverse perspectives are represented when possible.
 - Contribute to overall accessibility of course.
 - Help facilitate discussions in challenging topics such as approaches to reducing equity gaps.



Academic Support and Library

Recommendations from tutors and librarians based on students' struggles with course assignments and content. Review of OER/affordable options.



SUNY Empire Online

Use data to analyze course design, review course against the rubric, review literature & research



Course Review Participation

- Librarians have been involved in 78 course developments and revisions in Fall 23 and Spring 24.
- 2/3 of courses librarians are involved in moved to affordable course resources and had significant changes to course assignments.
- Contributions for course review typically includes:
 - Mapping textbook alternatives, if possible.
 - Reviewing research assignments from student and faculty perspective.
 - Developing course guide to gather readings and learning materials.
 - Finding media to supplement textual content.
- Participated in brief review of another 125 courses.
 - Examples are purchasing ebook or providing links to instructional content.
- 3 different librarians participated.





First Cohort of Equity Based Course Revision

- Librarians coordinating grant focusing on 6 courses that have high gaps in student success metrics (Whites have at least 10% higher rates of completion than African Americans and Latinx).
- Course Revisions included:
 - Move to OER, preferring courseware
 - Faculty developers, instructional designers, and librarians complete Lumen Circles on adopting best practices using belonging framework.
 - In-depth complete course revision.
- 5 of 6 courses are revised, with all being offered by Fall 2024
- Follow up assessments planned at end of Fall 2024 and ongoing.



How Lumen Circles Support You

- 1 Set Goals**
Identify your ideal teaching style and environment.
- 2 Build Teaching Skills**
Learn how to strengthen your teaching with best practices and our powerful technology.
- 3 Learn By Doing**
Apply what you're learning to your course to see what works and what needs improving.
- 4 Make Connections**
Connect with peers to discuss your ideas and learn from theirs.
- 5 Grow and Inspire**
Track progress towards your goals and inspire deeper learning for your students.

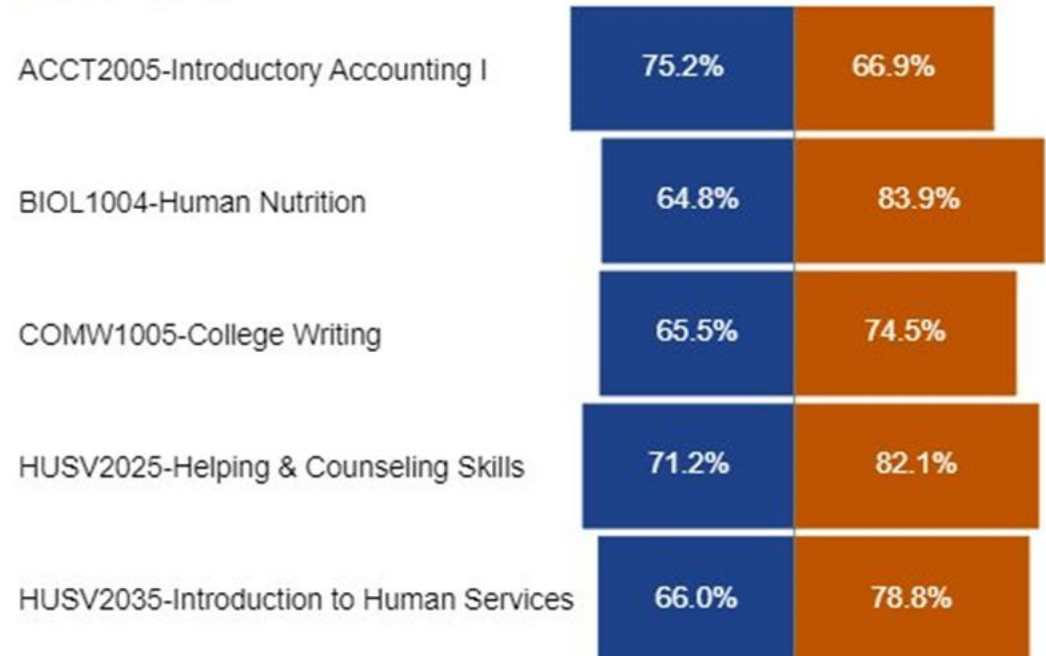


Next Steps for Librarians and Course Review

- Review data on student success and student satisfaction for courses that librarians have participated in review.
- Identify if instructional content leads to improved learning in assignments that librarians have revised with faculty.
- Move from courses to programs and develop better learning materials that can be integrated into courses and provide wider data from broader perspectives.

Course Completion Rates Before and After Course Revision

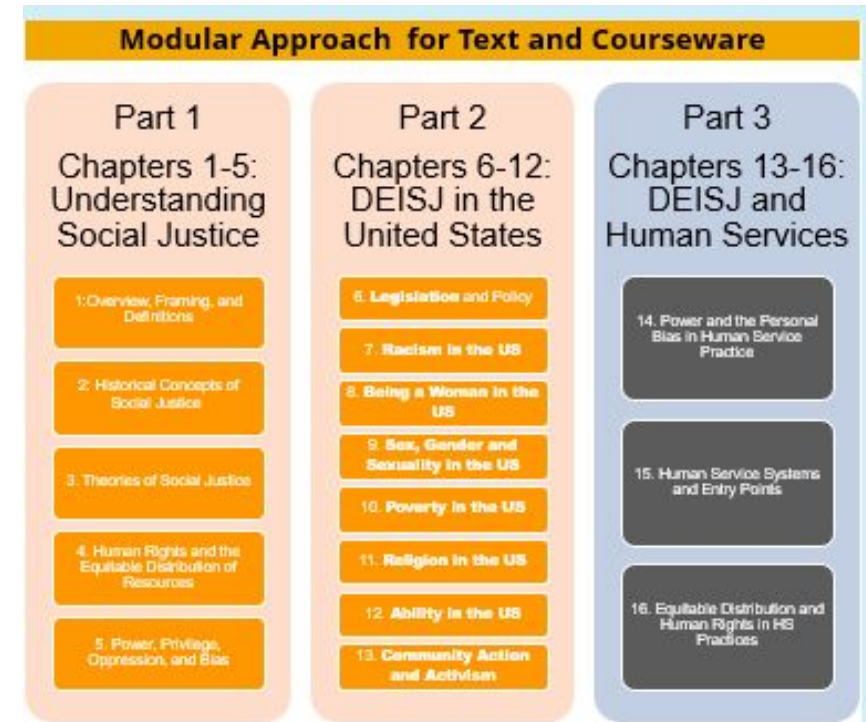
● Before ● After





Library and Instructional Design as Publisher

- Library working collaboratively with instructional design, another library, and faculty to create a textbook and adaptive courseware.
- Project is modular in approach and aligned to DEISJ general education competencies and a full course.
- Librarians serving as:
 - Content developers
 - Project Manager
 - Assessment Coordinator
 - Grant Manager
 - Collaborative Instructional Designer





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Affordability and OER at Empire



OER at Empire from 2018 to 2023

- Total Courses: 45649 (1 or more enrollment)
- OER Courses: 4148
 - 9.1% of Courses
- Total Enrollments: 291740
- OER Enrollments: 21332
 - 7% of Enrollments



\$2.13 Million

(using national average of \$100)

\$1.77 Million

(using average of Empire bookstore data)



Inspiration and Goals: 20% Affordable

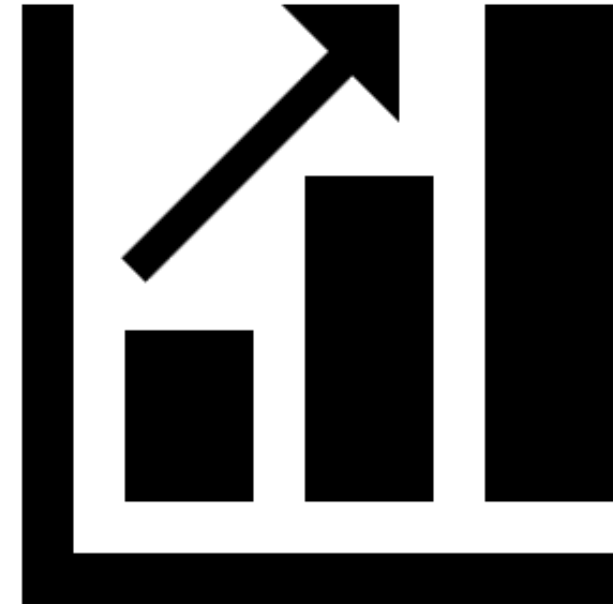
- Administration informally proposed an aspirational goal of 20% of course sections per semester having Zero or Reduced textbook costs.
 - Inspired by other institutions who have expanded to OAER.
 - Talked it up; explicitly aligned it with Empire strategic plan tactics.
 - Results:
 - 25% overall budget increase and later additional \$20k for textbooks
 - New line for an OER and Schol. Com Librarian
 - Staffing dedicated to more accurate OER/Affordability reporting.
- Affordability and Open Pedagogy part our collaboration with other departments.





Developing Affordability Program

- Needed to develop relationships with major stakeholders:
 - Bookstore
 - Instructional Design
 - Faculty and Academic Administrative Structure
- Total Costs over 3 semesters:
 - \$85,000
 - ~20 times initial ROI
- Expectations are that semesterly costs will not escalate, but will continuously decline
 - Many are not traditional “textbooks” so editions don’t change as frequently.
 - After a few years, EO will have revised all the courses (ideally) and we will have purchased the textbooks that can be purchased. After that, just replacing textbooks when they're obsolete or mismatched to content.

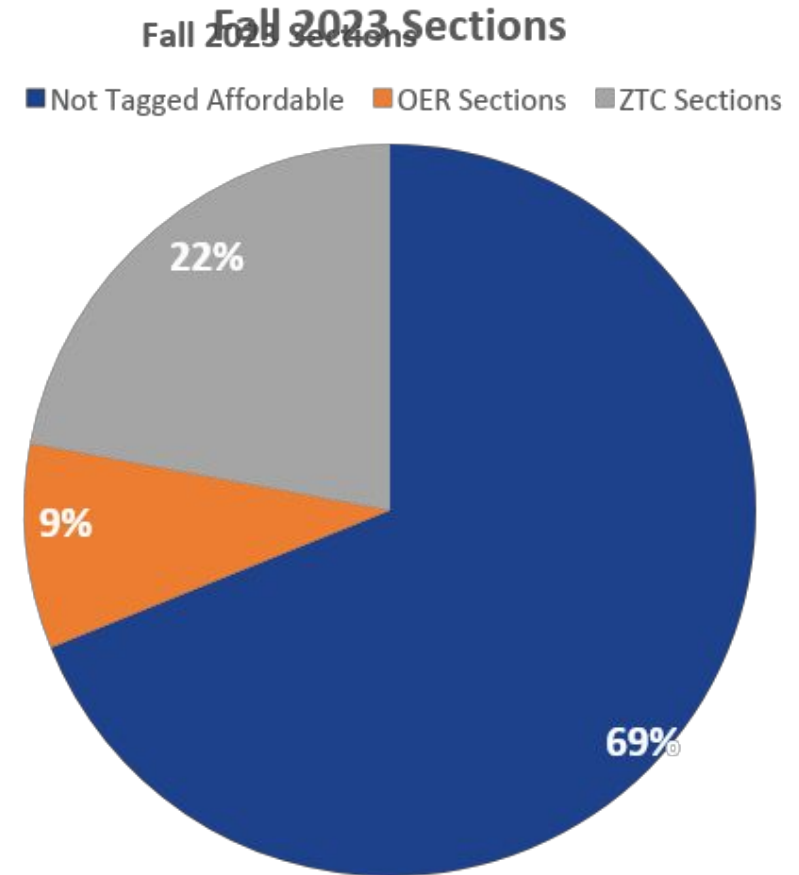




Fall 2023 Affordability Data

31% are affordable (OER or Reduced Cost)

- 1880 of 6500 courses included.
- 170 OER Course Sections
- 415 Courses With Reduced Cost
- \$936,000 in savings
 - 585 sections x 20 enrollments x \$80 average textbook cost (from avg. textbook data)





Overall Spring 2024 Affordability

35% of all sections completely Free of Textbook Costs

45% of all sections affordable (at least 1 textbook available for free)

- 205 course sections OER
- 254 course sections NOTX (lib. purchased all texts)
- 15 course sections with no texts assigned.
- 469 Totally Free Textbook Courses
- 127 course sections with at least one free textbook.
- 596 course sections with reduced costs
- 1335 total sections offered*

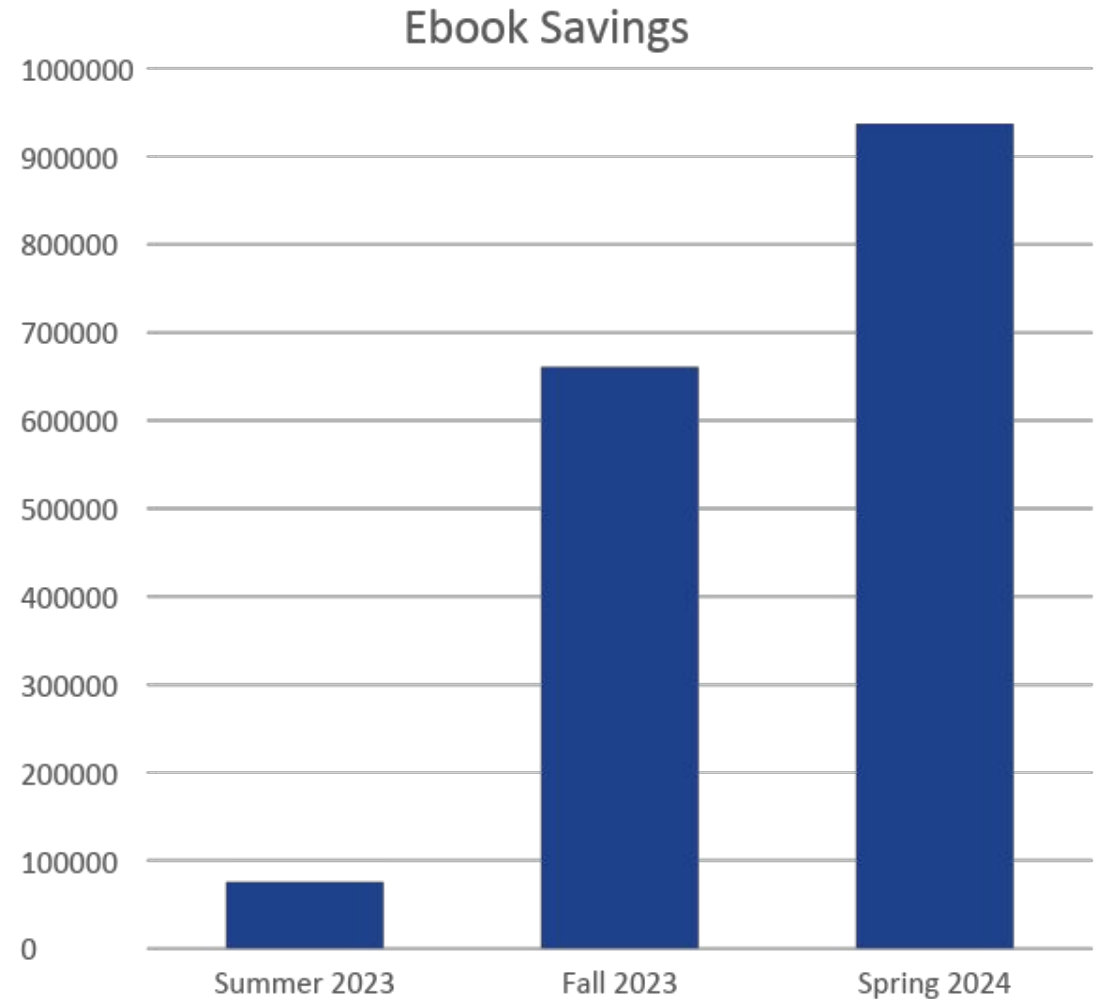
**\$1.19
Million
in Student
Savings**



Savings from Library Collections

- Summer 2023
 - 48 Ebooks licensed
 - \$76,000 in potential savings
- Fall 2023
 - 413 Ebooks licensed
 - \$661,000 in potential savings
- Spring 2024
 - 586 Ebooks provide no-cost options to textbooks.
 - \$937,600 in potential savings

\$1.67 Million in Total Savings





Based on Spring 2024, Is 50% or 60% a Good Goal for Affordability?

- Review of Data from Spring 24
 - 150 course sections where there are Ready to Adopt Courses (with SUNY/NYS subsidized courseware) or reputable OER such as OpenStax.
 - Would be around 11%
 - Some are already “mixed OER”
 - Economics
 - Intro to Psych.
- Based on Course Reviews, more will move to No Textbook Costs





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Wider Applicability



Implications beyond online?

- Empire's status as a primarily online institution makes cross-functional work easier.
 - Campus-based institutions typically don't have the same course and program review structure led by academic support groups.
- Adapting a cross-functional team model to support faculty can improve teaching and learning regardless of mode of teaching.
 - Improved Accessibility
 - Supportive structure to update curriculum
 - Focus is on best practices and improvement and not judging performance.
- Empire's enrollment up 25% in Spring
- Increasing demand for hybrid and mixed modes of instruction.





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Thanks and Time for Questions

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