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Supporting faculty through an open education and affordability gratitude campaign

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Supporting faculty through an open education and affordability gratitude campaign

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3 Using a gratitude campaign to encourage faculty support of open education and affordability
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8 **Abstract**

9 **Purpose**

10 The purpose of this case study is to demonstrate how an academic library can use a library-led,
11
12 public, positive, and broad faculty gratitude campaign to help a campus embrace a culture of
13
14 open education.
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21 **Design/methodology/approach**

22 Using a literature review of faculty outreach efforts in the area of open education, as well as an
23
24 examination of the psychology of persuasion, this library developed a gratitude campaign that
25
26 consisted of a faculty video, letters from the Provost, signed cards from students, door hangers,
27
28 and the delivery of swag bags to faculty offices.
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35 **Findings**

36 While it is challenging to assess how much an initiative may have changed campus culture,
37
38 initial responses to the gratitude campaign have been overwhelmingly positive. In addition, it
39
40 cost little or nothing to develop the campaign and materials can be reused in future events and
41
42 initiatives.
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49 **Practical implications**

50 Changing campus culture, maintaining momentum in a program with limited funding, and
51
52 reaching reluctant faculty are all challenges for open education initiatives. Initiating a gratitude
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3 campaign can begin to address all of these by being public, positive, and inclusive. This case
4
5 study describes how a campus could adopt any or all of the gratitude campaign strategies, and it
6
7 includes openly licensed examples, templates, and models for readers to use.
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9

11 12 **Originality/value**

13
14 Open education and affordability efforts that use presentations, grant programs, and awards are
15
16 common on academic campuses. However, when funding is tight or these efforts fail to reach
17
18 new audiences, a gratitude campaign can make inroads where these traditional efforts are
19
20 limited.
21
22

23 24 25 **Keywords**

26
27 open education, affordability, outreach, faculty, gratitude, video, social proof, persuasion,
28
29 library, collaboration
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34
35 Paper Type - Case study
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37

38 39 40 **Introduction**

41
42 *“Give thanks for a little and you will find a lot.” - Hausa Proverb*
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44
45 Many academic librarians are interested in promoting open education and affordability on
46
47 their campuses. Evidence of the negative impact of textbook costs on student academic outcomes
48
49 is mounting, often resulting in “student survivalism,” which Thompson *et al.* describe as “opting
50
51 out of some classes and majors and often delaying or declining to purchase assigned readings,
52
53 setting [students] back by weeks of study or simply leaving them hopelessly behind their
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3 wealthier peers” (2017). Since 2000, cost barriers alone have prevented 2.4 million low- and
4 middle-income students in the United States from completing college (U.S. Advisory Committee
5 on Student Financial Assistance, 2006). While textbook and other coursework costs only
6
7
8 comprise one part of the financial hurdle for post-secondary students, these costs are often
9
10 surprising to students, may not be covered by financial aid, and have a disproportionate impact
11
12 on student success. Between 1977 and 2015, consumer prices for textbooks have increased over
13
14 1,000% (Popken, 2015). In 2018, the high cost of textbooks caused 64% of students to decide not
15
16 to purchase one or more of their required textbooks, 43% to take fewer courses, 23% to drop a
17
18 course, and 17% to fail a course (Florida Virtual Campus, 2019). Even more troubling, evidence
19
20 shows that the impact of textbook costs is greater for Pell-eligible and part-time students
21
22 (Colvard *et al.*, 2018).
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28 The disproportionate impact of course material costs on student success has led many
29
30 higher education institutions to commit to reducing textbook costs. However, building an
31
32 affordability initiative can be challenging, especially when faculty are hesitant or skeptical about
33
34 switching to an open, free, or low-cost textbook alternative. Even when some faculty are
35
36 enthusiastic and motivated to contribute significant time and energy to moving toward open
37
38 education, a program’s momentum can be slowed by resistance to the initiative by other faculty.
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42 One solution to this problem is to publicly encourage and reward “early adopter” faculty
43
44 for their contributions to affordability. This article will provide a literature review of
45
46 encouragement strategies used at various libraries, and it will also present several methods
47
48 employed by the author’s library, including featuring faculty in videos, distributing “thank you”
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50 door hangers, thanking faculty in social media posts, and giving affordability advocates swag
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52 bags. Many libraries already have developed larger-scale methods of motivating or compensating
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3 faculty, such as through grants and awards, so emphasis in the present article will be on
4
5 opportunities to show gratitude when additional funding is not available. The strategies described
6
7 will also attempt to be as inclusive as possible; for example, including faculty who use library
8
9 resources or who have completely eliminated the use of a textbook and are often overlooked by
10
11 grant programs. Showing gratitude to these faculty is also a chance to celebrate the library
12
13 services that help all of our faculty and students on a regular basis.
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19 **Faculty Outreach and Open Education**

20
21 Jensen and West (2015) define open education as “a philosophy, a pedagogical shift, and
22
23 a movement that works to improve educational experiences through adopting learning materials
24
25 that aren’t locked down by restrictive copyright laws.” The materials that drive open education
26
27 are called open educational resources (OERs), which are openly-licensed materials used for
28
29 teaching that allow for what David Wiley has called the “5R activities” (Wiley n.d). The five
30
31 permissions that Wiley describes are the ability to retain, revise, remix, reuse, and redistribute
32
33 the work (Wiley n.d.). These permissions allow faculty and students to engage in many activities
34
35 that would normally be restricted by copyright, opening the door for faculty to customize their
36
37 courses in ways that improve student learning.
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42 At its core, the open education movement is not just about OERs, but about freeing and
43
44 improving the educational experience (Paskevicius 2017). This shift involves, as Jensen and
45
46 West assert, pedagogical changes beyond just the type of materials that are assigned in a course;
47
48 open education encourages improving student learning by considering the course materials and
49
50 the materials that students create in the process of learning. Nascimbeni and Burgos describe an
51
52 open educator as exhibiting the following actions: transparently sharing teaching ideas and
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3 resources with others, using OERs in instruction, implementing open pedagogy practices that
4 engage students, and adopting open assessment activities (2016). To make the transformation in
5 pedagogy required by open education, a shift in the culture on our campuses and in higher
6 education is necessary.
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12 A culture shift to the use of OERs is difficult in part because faculty face barriers to
13 adoption that are complicated and challenging to overcome. First, while it is becoming more
14 common for faculty to have heard of OERs, a lack of faculty awareness or understanding can
15 prevent a culture shift (Babson Report 2019). When faculty learn about open education, even if
16 they become interested, they may need training in order to find and use OERs, especially when
17 they are interested in remixing projects that require technological skill (Amiel 2013). If they
18 perceive that training and support is not available, they may choose not to complete or attempt an
19 OER project (Amiel 2013). Even if faculty are interested and training is available, one
20 particularly substantial barrier is a lack of time (Lieberman 2018). Faculty must use their time
21 wisely, especially those who are on the tenure track and, unfortunately, the creation of open
22 materials is not often considered in tenure decisions. These and other challenges give faculty
23 legitimate pause when it comes to adopting the practices of an open educator (Nascimbeni and
24 Burgos 2016).
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42 Libraries have frequently been central to open education efforts. Librarians are often
43 OER advocates, OER finders, and OER publishers, leading the way on their campuses.
44 Librarians fill this role successfully because they have the skills to find high-quality course
45 materials; knowledge of copyright and, to some extent, publishing; training skills and resources;
46 and a central campus platform to advocate for the sweeping change necessary to move to open
47 (Cassidy *et al.*, 2015; Jensen and West, 2015). In addition, and perhaps most importantly, open
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3 education resonates with many of the values that librarians have adopted as professionals, such
4
5 as access to information, lifelong learning, and academic freedom.
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8 Librarians reach out to faculty to encourage the adoption and creation of open textbooks
9
10 in a number of ways. One central role that librarians play is in helping faculty find appropriate
11
12 open course materials. For example, at Utah State University, librarians offer a service of
13
14 reviewing faculty syllabi and helping them find OERs and library-licensed resources to meet
15
16 their course objectives (Davis *et al.*, 2016). Librarians also can play a role in making OERs more
17
18 discoverable and curating the materials developed at their own institution (Okamoto, 2013). This
19
20 often means sharing OERs via an institutional repository or other platform and providing robust
21
22 metadata in the process (Mitchell and Chu, 2014). Martin emphasizes that academic librarians
23
24 have a responsibility to manage and understand collections of free and openly licensed content in
25
26 order to successfully meet the needs of patrons (2010).
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31 Librarians can also play an important outreach role by providing professional
32
33 development and training programs for faculty. Events can be centered around Open Access
34
35 Week or Open Education Week, or consist of regular workshops (Salem, 2017). Dean (2018)
36
37 describes her programming efforts at Clemson University, which include an informational pizza
38
39 party for students, workshops for faculty, visits to departmental meetings, and drop-in
40
41 information sessions about her library's grant program. Rigling and Cross' (2018) textbook
42
43 affordability program at North Carolina State University offers Open Access Week pop-up
44
45 interviews with students, whiteboards with questions for students, and a workshop series about
46
47 open access and open education. These outreach offerings both train faculty and advocate for
48
49 open education, often to a captive audience.
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3 Offering faculty incentive programs through textbook adoption or creation grants has
4
5 become a popular strategy for encouraging OER adoption and creation, and these programs have
6
7 often met with success. Effective programs can be found at the University of Massachusetts at
8
9 Amherst (Smith 2018), the State University of New York (SUNY) system (Pitcher, 2014), the
10
11 Emory Open Education Initiative (Emory Scholarly Communication Office, n.d.), the University
12
13 of California at Los Angeles' Affordable Textbook Initiative (Celik and Peck, 2016), the
14
15 University of Minnesota's Partnership for Affordable Content (Jensen, 2018), Oregon State
16
17 University Libraries and Press open textbook program (Sutton and Chadwell, 2014), and Ohio
18
19 University's Alt-Textbook Initiative (Salem, 2017). These programs vary in their scale and
20
21 objectives (i.e., textbook adoption vs. creation), but all have found success in financially
22
23 supporting faculty to make the transition to openly licensed course material.
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28 One of the most valuable outcomes of faculty outreach programs is the development of
29
30 faculty champions who can advocate for open education to their peers (Salem, 2017). Helping
31
32 faculty find materials, training them about open education, and providing grants or awards to aid
33
34 in their adoption of open material all lead faculty to become part of a larger initiative and, also,
35
36 potentially, faculty champions who will spread the word to their colleagues.
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40 These faculty outreach strategies can be especially effective in engaging early adopters.
41
42 However, for institutions that are ready to move beyond engaging early adopters and do not have
43
44 the resources to offer or increase these options, strategically promoting faculty work already
45
46 being done can capitalize on the existing momentum on those campuses. While there are plenty
47
48 of case studies describing faculty outreach efforts that require funding or significant investments
49
50 in time, there are few to date that outline the smaller projects that campuses can undertake for
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3 little or no cost. In addition, few studies draw a connection between their faculty outreach efforts
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5 and psychological concepts that strengthen their approach.
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10 **The Psychology of Public Gratitude**

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12 Many faculty choose not to use an open textbook for reasons that are outside of their (and
13
14 their campus') control. For example, for many there is still no open alternative that meets their
15
16 curricular needs, and for others the commercial textbook they use is uniquely suited to their
17
18 course and not very expensive. In addition, the work required to adopt or create open educational
19
20 resources may not be recognized in the promotion and tenure process, compromising the return
21
22 on investment. Many of these faculty have chosen to take action to aid students in reducing
23
24 textbook costs where they can. However, there are faculty who are hesitant to switch to an open
25
26 textbook for other reasons. For example, they might have doubts about the importance of saving
27
28 money for students, they may perceive open education as a passing fad, or they may not be
29
30 aware of the support available to them for switching textbooks. For open education advocates
31
32 who understand the importance of OERs for improving learning experiences and helping
33
34 students, the focus of their initiatives is on changing these faculty attitudes.
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40 Changing someone's attitude can be very difficult. Even though attempts at doing so are
41
42 sometimes successful, psychological research shows that it is often more effective to change
43
44 someone's actions, rather than attempting to change their attitude (Crimmins, 2016). According
45
46 to self-perception theory, people do not really have a true understanding of themselves, but,
47
48 rather, infer who they are based on how they behave (Bem, 1972). Therefore, counter-intuitively,
49
50 changing someone's behavior often results in that person changing their attitude in order to be
51
52 consistent (Harmon-Jones, 2002). Faculty members' attitudes are difficult to change but helping
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3 them assign their actions to attitudes that are consistent with better learning outcomes may be
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5 more fruitful.
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8 One tactic that takes advantage of self-perception theory is called the “foot-in-the-door
9
10 technique” (Crimmins, 2016). This technique rests on the idea that “persuading people to take a
11
12 small action is more feasible and, once they take the small action, their attitude begins to change,
13
14 making the major persuasion possible” (Crimmins, 2016). For example, although many libraries
15
16 would like to encourage faculty to consider using openly-licensed materials, it may be easier to
17
18 encourage a smaller action, such as using a library-licensed ebook, trying electronic course
19
20 reserves, or piloting a single, small OER in their course. Once an instructor tries changing their
21
22 course content and observes the benefits of doing so—including a sense of inclusion in the
23
24 campus affordability initiative—they may be more open to considering an action that was once
25
26 more daunting, such as switching to an open textbook.
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31 Another strategy for changing faculty behavior is to show gratitude to early adopters in
32
33 settings where their colleagues will see it. This strategy takes advantage of a number of
34
35 psychological effects, one of which is called “social proof” —evidence that an idea has value
36
37 because trusted members of one’s in-group have vouched for it (Cialdini, 1993). This
38
39 psychological phenomenon builds on the idea that people like to identify with social peers who
40
41 feel the way they themselves want to feel (Crimmins, 2016). When faculty see colleagues
42
43 publicly praised and appreciated for their work of switching to more affordable course materials,
44
45 they may want to feel appreciated as well. Humans strive to think of themselves positively (a
46
47 phenomenon called the self-image enhancement effect), and so faculty may be interested in
48
49 joining an initiative that associates them with the positive self-image that they strive to embody
50
51 (Crimmins, 2016). An inclusive gratitude program also can lead to a larger number of faculty
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3 who consider themselves a part of the affordability initiative overall, which in turn means more
4 opportunities for social proof.
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7
8 Finally, public gratitude emphasizes certain and positive feelings, which humans prefer
9 over feelings of uncertainty or unpredictability (Crimmins, 2016). Unfortunately, in some
10 contexts this means that people are hesitant to take actions that have long-term benefits but are
11 unpleasant in the short term. People are less likely to act in the face of a “delayed, uncertain, and
12 rational reward,” but may be persuaded by an “immediate, certain, and emotional reward”
13 (Crimmins, 2016). Faculty who see their peers publicly thanked can see a clear path to positive
14 emotional responses from their institution. And faculty who have been told that they already are
15 contributing to an affordability initiative may begin to feel positively toward it. They may
16 perceive themselves as part of a solution they support ideologically, even if they did not feel that
17 way before. This can propel the momentum of an initiative forward so that it begins to feel like a
18 campus-wide effort, rather than merely the library’s pet project.
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35 **Background**

36
37 Cleveland State University (CSU), located in downtown Cleveland, serves a diverse
38 student population of approximately 17,700 students. Offering one of the most affordable tuition
39 rates for a four-year public university in Ohio, CSU serves many first-generation and Pell-
40 eligible students. Approximately 27 percent of the CSU student population comes from a
41 minority group; of those, two-thirds are African American. More than 1,400 CSU students are
42 international students, and about one-third are graduate students.
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51 CSU’s Michael Schwartz Library has been active in promoting textbook affordability
52 efforts since 2014, when it became one of the seven founding members of the Open Textbook
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3 Network, which as of this writing has over 1,000 campus members around the world. Since
4
5 spring, 2016, the Michael Schwartz Library has been offering small Textbook Affordability
6
7 Grants to help faculty adopt or adapt open educational resources or library-licensed content in
8
9 courses to save students money. By fall of 2019 28 grants were awarded, with an estimated
10
11 impact for 4,387 students. If the open textbooks adopted at CSU replaced books that cost, on
12
13 average, \$100 each, then CSU students saved a cumulative total of \$438,700 from the first-year
14
15 implementations of these grants alone. In addition to the Textbook Affordability Grant program,
16
17 the library also partners with other departments on campus to bring in external speakers, offers
18
19 an annual Textbook Hero Award, and conducts several open textbook workshops per academic
20
21 year.
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26 All of these initiatives — grants, awards, external speakers, and regular workshops — are
27
28 common on other campuses, and have been successful in making open education a spotlight
29
30 issue at CSU. However, with no additional funding and a desire to maintain momentum after
31
32 several successful events, CSU decided to add some new outreach tactics to its efforts.
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37 **Methods**

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40 The Michael Schwartz Library has had success with programming and grant initiatives
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42 and estimates that the grant program alone has saved students more than \$400,000 since its
43
44 initiation in 2016. However, grant applications have slowed, and in 2019 the OER Committee
45
46 recognized that the campus needed a culture shift. This article uses Dean’s definition of cultural
47
48 change: “embedded shifts in routines, behaviors, values, and expectations at both individual and
49
50 institutional levels” (2018). In 2019, CSU turned its efforts toward nurturing a campus culture of
51
52 support, gratitude, and student learning in which open education could naturally flourish. In such
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3 a culture, faculty could feel that the difficult work of modifying and improving their teaching
4 was supported, and the library could have an important role in providing that support. Based on
5 the psychology insights described above, there were three criteria for CSU's new faculty
6 outreach strategy:
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- 11
12 1. **It should be public.** The audience for outreach efforts was faculty peers and assessors
13 who may still perceive open education as a passing fad or "just another initiative."
14
- 15 2. **It should be positive.** It became clear early on that messages that blamed faculty or
16 nagged them to replace their textbooks were not successful and could actually undermine
17 the library's efforts. The focus of this campaign was engendering a sense of gratitude.
18
19
- 20 3. **It should be inclusive.** Although the use and creation of OERs is still heavily promoted,
21 this campaign included any faculty who had made attempts to consider affordability
22 when choosing course materials. This approach cast a wide net and helped those faculty
23 identify as part of the campus affordability campaign.
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33 CSU's initiative, which was called a "gratitude campaign," centered on highlighting and
34 publicly praising the faculty who have been OER champions in the initial stages of the program.
35 The library was the leader in these efforts, but by no means the only campus department
36 involved. The CSU OER Committee, Center for eLearning, Student Government Association,
37 Center for Instructional Technology and Distance Learning, and Center for Faculty Excellence
38 all provided feedback and ideas.
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47 While some strategies targeted grant and award winners exclusively, many of them
48 included a wide variety of faculty, all of whom had demonstrated an interest in reducing
49 textbook costs for students. Faculty on the longer list were called "affordability advocates." This
50 affordability advocate list was generated through conversations with faculty and students, and by
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3 word-of-mouth from other library staff. Any faculty member who had participated in an open
4
5 education event on campus was also added to the list. Faculty from a wide variety of
6
7 departments, using a variety of methods to reduce textbook costs, were considered affordability
8
9 advocates. Listed faculty included those who used library-licensed content, openly-licensed
10
11 content, free material, and, in some cases, no required textbook at all. At CSU, the goal is to
12
13 prioritize the use of open materials, not just saving students money. However, faculty who are
14
15 already thinking about textbook costs might become strong allies in the move toward open
16
17 education. Maintaining an affordability advocates list helps reach a greater number of faculty.
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20
21
22 One element of the gratitude campaign was giving key faculty champions a voice in an
23
24 OER advocacy video that was created in collaboration with the CSU Center for Technology and
25
26 Distance Learning (CITDL). The designers of the video decided early on that, instead of
27
28 highlighting student voices, the video would be an opportunity to feature faculty champions and
29
30 show gratitude for their willingness to embrace CSU's initiative. The video features interviews
31
32 of several faculty who received Textbook Affordability Grants, as well as an administrator who
33
34 supported faculty grant-winners, and a faculty member who did not win a grant but was a vocal
35
36 proponent of textbook affordability. Video creation took hours, even though the resulting video
37
38 was only seven minutes. However, the result was an extremely valuable tool, both for
39
40 highlighting the library's affordability efforts, and for publicly thanking faculty colleagues who
41
42 had taken action to reduce textbook costs. Drawing on the psychology of persuasion, the video
43
44 relied on social proof, and it provided certain and positive messaging from faculty colleagues. (A
45
46 link to the video is here: <https://youtu.be/fiIJsHr-AFk>).
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52 The library also received feedback that grant winners were struggling to find ways of
53
54 gaining credit during the promotion and tenure process for their textbook affordability efforts. To
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3 address this need, the library modified an openly-licensed thank-you letter developed by the
4
5 University of Alaska Southeast, and asked CSU's Provost if he would sign letters for all grant
6
7 winners. He agreed to do so, providing grant winners with important evidence of the value of
8
9 OERs to the university and to student learning. While this letter would not be publicly displayed,
10
11 members of promotion and tenure committees would see the Provost's support for their
12
13 colleagues' efforts when they viewed this letter in the dossiers under review, providing some
14
15 valuable social proof. The letter, openly licensed, may be found in Appendix 1.
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19 The CSU librarians also wanted to create flyers, monitor displays, and other marketing
20
21 material showing the faces of grant winners and encouraging others to apply for the grant.
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23 However, when faculty grant winners were asked to provide a photo for marketing purposes,
24
25 many were not able to provide a high-resolution, professional photo. The OER Committee
26
27 decided to hold several photoshoots, with photos taken by an amateur photographer on the OER
28
29 Committee and instructional designer in the Center for eLearning. All of the winners were
30
31 ultimately given full permission to use the professional photographs in other contexts, which
32
33 allowed the library to extend thanks to them without spending any additional funds. It also
34
35 employed the foot-in-the-door technique by making a small ask (for faculty to have their
36
37 photograph taken), and then moving to a larger one (for faculty to have their photograph featured
38
39 in library marketing).
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44 The CSU OER Committee is fortunate to have one SGA representative each academic
45
46 year, usually selected by the SGA president. In 2019, the OER Committee was able to organize a
47
48 meeting between the SGA representative, the author of the present article, and Nicole
49
50 Finkbeiner, who came to CSU for a day to meet with various groups and committees about open
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52 textbook adoption. Finkbeiner's advice was to make sure that CSU's student open textbook
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3 efforts remained positive; she had learned through experience that negative campaigns (like the
4 #textbookbroke campaign) could alienate some faculty and make them defensive. Based on her
5
6 #textbookbroke campaign) could alienate some faculty and make them defensive. Based on her
7
8 advice, and with considerable help from the library's marketing staff, the SGA representative
9
10 and the author of the present article created large thank-you cards, signed by students, for all
11
12 faculty affordability advocates. Because most students are still unclear about what an open
13
14 textbook is and may even be unaware that their professor is using one, it seemed easiest to have
15
16 SGA members themselves sign the cards on behalf of the student body. SGA had, fortunately,
17
18 heard from an OER Committee representative several times about open textbooks, and they were
19
20 eager to help.
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24 The cards were incorporated into a virtual poster that was displayed in May, 2020 at the
25
26 Provost's Teaching Summit, an annual event that celebrates teaching excellence and features an
27
28 award ceremony. Many faculty who prioritize pedagogical mastery attend this event, making it a
29
30 great opportunity to publicly praise affordability advocates. This approach was positive and
31
32 affirming, providing a clear path to the positive faculty-student relationship that many faculty
33
34 desire. Images of the cards can be found in Appendix 2.
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38 Because the gratitude campaign relied on social proof, the library wanted to thank CSU's
39
40 affordability advocates publicly and, importantly, in a manner that would attract the attention of
41
42 their colleagues. The library's marketing staff member decided to create door hangers for all of
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44 our affordability advocates' office doors. These door hangers serve as a public reminder to other
45
46 faculty of the importance CSU assigns to considerations of textbook cost, and they may refresh a
47
48 faculty member's memory at a critical juncture, such as when they are choosing a new course
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50 textbook. Because the library had not directly worked with many of the faculty on their
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52 affordability efforts, the door hanger project also served to reframe the actions of those faculty as
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3 part of our initiative. Some of the faculty may not have identified themselves as part of the
4
5 affordability initiative on campus, but once their actions were reframed, their attitude toward the
6
7 program was likely to follow. The design of the door hanger can be found in Appendix 3.
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10 For Textbook Affordability grant recipients who had successfully completed their
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12 projects, a visit to their office door was used as an opportunity to celebrate their contribution on
13
14 social media. Library staff planned to bring those faculty a “goody bag” of library swag,
15
16 complete with information about upcoming campus open education events. Faculty were
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18 contacted in advance to ensure they would be in their offices in order to obtain photos of them
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20 receiving their goody bags for posting on social media, but most faculty were not available at the
21
22 same time. Instead, the faculty members were invited to come to the library to pick up the goody
23
24 bag at their own convenience. During each faculty member’s visit, a library staff member took a
25
26 photo of the faculty member with the large student-signed cards to emphasize how grateful
27
28 students are for faculty contributions to affordability efforts. For one of the visits, two student
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30 representatives from SGA were present for the photo and to personally thank the faculty
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32 member.
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37 The use of social media to publicly display the hand-off of the goody bag provided social
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39 proof for faculty seeing their admired colleagues being thanked for their important efforts. The
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41 goody bag initiative was also completely positive, as it did not invoke textbook costs or single
42
43 out faculty who did not choose to use an open textbook for whatever reason. The uplifting photos
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45 merely provided examples of CSU’s support and commitment toward affordability efforts, and a
46
47 clear path to gratitude. Photos posted on social media can be found in Appendix 4.
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51 **Results**

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3 As a result of this campaign, 58 faculty from 26 departments received direct outreach
4 from the library, 33 of whom were not Textbook Affordability Grant winners. Four faculty were
5 featured on the library's social media, and 15 faculty received a library goody bag. Before this
6 campaign, most outreach to faculty about open education came in the form of email invitations to
7 apply for a grant or attend a workshop. Direct, targeted library outreach to faculty about textbook
8 affordability clearly increased as a result of the campaign. The outreach was more public (it was
9 more visible to other faculty), positive (it did not ask faculty to do anything or reiterate the issue
10 of textbook costs), and inclusive (it targeted many more faculty than previous outreach).

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22 Unfortunately, the goal of the gratitude campaign — increased engagement from faculty
23 in our affordability efforts — is very challenging to assess. Some anecdotal feedback from
24 faculty about the campaign included comments like, “Thank you so much! Who would refuse a
25 gift under these lovely circumstances?”, “That’s very nice of you all! ... Thanks so much for the
26 goody bag!”, “I think faculty should also be thanking you and your team for the great support
27 and encouragement throughout the process”, and “That's so nice for you all to do that!” The
28 campaign’s social media posts received engagement from four individuals and were shared two
29 times. Overall, faculty who participated were very positive about the experience.

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40 Beyond just engaging faculty champions, an important objective of the initiative was to
41 increase engagement by faculty who had not been previously involved CSU’s affordability
42 program. It is not possible to fully isolate the effect of our campaign, and the influence of the
43 COVID-19 pandemic may have been significant; however, the number of faculty Affordable
44 Learning Grant applications received in fall of 2019 (before the campaign) was three, and the
45 number received in spring of 2020 (after the campaign) jumped to twelve, the most the program
46 had ever received in one semester. One of the spring applicants was a previous winner who had
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3 lost touch with the library for several years, but who had a very positive reaction to the gratitude
4 campaign. Ten other applicants had never been involved in CSU's affordability initiative before
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6 as a grant or award winner, so the applications represented an influx of new faculty advocates to
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8 serve as models for their colleagues.
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12 While it may be difficult to link the gratitude campaign with increased engagement in the
13 affordability program, positive faculty feedback, an increase in grant applications, and
14 engagement from a fresh group of faculty were the desired objectives when the campaign began.
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16 Based on the first, positive experience, the library will continue to deliver the campaign, as well
17 as track engagement with affordability efforts as gratitude campaign activities are reintroduced in
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19 future semesters.
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26 **Discussion**

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28 Despite the initial success of the gratitude campaign, many of the typical challenges of
29 promoting open education remain, and efforts to change campus culture will, of course, require
30 continued efforts. When the challenges that faculty face include a lack of open options, lack of
31 ancillaries (accompanying material for a textbook, such as test banks), or a deep commitment to
32 their current, commercial textbook, alternative strategies will need to be employed to support
33 open education adoption. As Ivie and Ellis (2018) point out, "OER advocacy requires consistent
34 and comprehensive effort."
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44 In addition, not everything went smoothly in implementing the campaign. There were
45 challenges in agreeing how best to give thanks without overwhelming or alienating the faculty,
46 and there were difficulties in working with stakeholders who were not able to help throughout
47 the entirety of the campaign (e.g., the SGA representative left mid-campaign for a job). In the
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49 future, instead of expecting faculty to be available to receive their goody bags all at the same
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3 time, the library will schedule times for faculty to pick them up when it is most convenient.

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5 Future efforts will also need to consist of mostly or fully online outreach activities, as most of
6
7 our faculty will not be on campus as much as usual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite
8
9 these challenges, all parties involved learned much from the process, and the library hopes to
10
11 offer an even more smoothly implemented and successful program again in the future.
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14
15 Even librarians who are just beginning their affordability programs will encounter faculty
16
17 who have been worried about textbook costs and helping students cope, perhaps for years. These
18
19 early affordability champions are an ideal audience for a gratitude campaign. Below are some
20
21 potential applications of this case study for those considering reaching out to thank faculty:
22
23

- 24
25 1. **Maintain a list of faculty who are making efforts to save students money.** It can be
26
27 very challenging to get a sense of what course materials faculty are actually using in their
28
29 classrooms. If faculty or students share information about specific efforts to reduce
30
31 textbook costs, keep a running list of these individuals. Not only can these affordability
32
33 advocates make great gratitude campaign recipients, but having their names listed allows
34
35 them to be specifically invited to participate in other outreach events and efforts.
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- 38
39 2. **Get help from many stakeholders.** Likely there are many people on campus who care
40
41 about textbook affordability. Try to include them in the planning for a gratitude campaign
42
43 — it can be a positive experience for them as well. This can be an especially good
44
45 opportunity to encourage student advocacy, since gratitude campaigns are so positive in
46
47 nature.
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- 49
50 3. **Consider how to scale up gratitude projects without adding a lot of time and effort.**
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52 Plan ahead for future efforts, especially when funding is tight. Keep messages generic so
53
54 items can be reused and create extra materials that can be used in the future.
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3 4. **Be creative.** A hallmark of CSU's gratitude campaign was that it extended thanks to
4
5 faculty when there was no additional funding to offer them. Consider what skills
6
7 colleagues have and employ them to show gratitude. For example, many of CSU's grant
8
9 winners did not have professional photos, so the campaign was able to provide that added
10
11 value for them. Thinking of these positive outreach strategies may require some
12
13 creativity.

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17 5. **Follow up with actions for faculty who are now part of the effort.** Unfortunately,
18
19 implementing a gratitude campaign is only the beginning. After helping faculty feel a
20
21 sense of belonging in an affordability program, reach out to them and make a specific
22
23 ask, whether that is to pilot an open textbook, participate in a grant program, or attend an
24
25 open textbook workshop. Do not allow your campaign to lose momentum!

26
27
28 Many of the psychology-based strategies of the gratitude campaign could be used to
29
30 improve any library outreach effort. Reframing faculty behavior rather than focusing on
31
32 changing attitudes, making small asks that build up to larger ones, providing opportunities for
33
34 faculty to demonstrate social proof, and keeping messaging certain and positive can help
35
36 improve the results of a library outreach program without requiring additional funding.
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40 At a differently-sized institution, the gratitude campaign strategy could be adapted to
41
42 scale up or down, as appropriate. Regardless of the number of faculty on a particular campus, a
43
44 gratitude campaign that publicly thanks faculty, remains positive, and includes as many
45
46 affordability advocates as possible can contribute to a campus culture change. Any campus
47
48 initiative will need to be catered to the specific campus that is being targeted, but these ideas can
49
50 help a library begin its campaign on the right foot.
51
52

53 **Conclusion**

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3 While textbook affordability grant programs and awards have allowed many campuses to
4 make great progress, changing the culture of an institution requires a variety of strategies and
5 persistent, ongoing work. A gratitude campaign is one strategy that does not require additional
6 financial resources and can take advantage of social proof and other psychological heuristics.
7
8 Showing thanks for the risks and effort that faculty are willing to assume for the benefit of their
9 students is a positive way to widen the net of stakeholders in an open education initiative.
10
11 Combined with other faculty outreach activities, a gratitude campaign can help libraries build a
12 coalition, strengthen partnerships, and cultivate a positive campus culture in which open
13 education can thrive.
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Reference Services Review

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3 Appendix 1. Provost Email
4

5 TO: Textbook Affordability Grant Recipient
6 FROM: OER Committee, Provost's Office
7 RE: Recognizing Contributions to Open Education & Affordable Course Materials, 2019
8
9

10 Dear X,
11

12 Thank you for your efforts to use Open Educational Resources (OERs), free content, or library
13 licensed materials as a substitute for commercial materials in your 2019 course(s). Increasing the
14 use of OERs and other free content aligns closely with Cleveland State University's Strategic
15 Plan, and it benefits our overall goal to improve student achievement and retention. We
16 recognize your use of OER or affordable course materials as a form of academic leadership that
17 advances innovation in teaching and learning with effects beyond your classroom.
18
19

20 Data shows that contributions like yours result in significant positive impacts for student
21 learning.
22

- 23 • The cost of traditional textbooks can be a barrier for students.¹
- 24 • Studies show using OER produces equal or improved student learning outcomes
25 compared to traditional textbooks.²
- 26 • Global adoption of OER has saved students \$1 billion since 2013 (\$900M in US & CA
27 higher education).³
28
29

30 Your 2019 adoption of BOOK/RESOURCE TITLE (OER/library content) as a required text for
31 COURSE # saved your students \$X (based on the replacement of a \$100 commercial
32 textbook).
33
34

35 If you receive student course comments related to your selection of affordable course materials,
36 we encourage you to share them with us. We also hope you will include this letter in your
37 promotion and tenure file as evidence of innovative teaching that supports student success at
38 CSU.
39

40 Sincerely,
41
42
43
44
45

46 "OER Champion Recognition Letter template" by University of Alaska Southeast and modified by Cleveland State
47 University is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).
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- 52 3. <https://sparcopen.org/news/2018/1-billion-in-savings-through-open-educational-resources/>
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Appendix 2. Student Thank You Cards

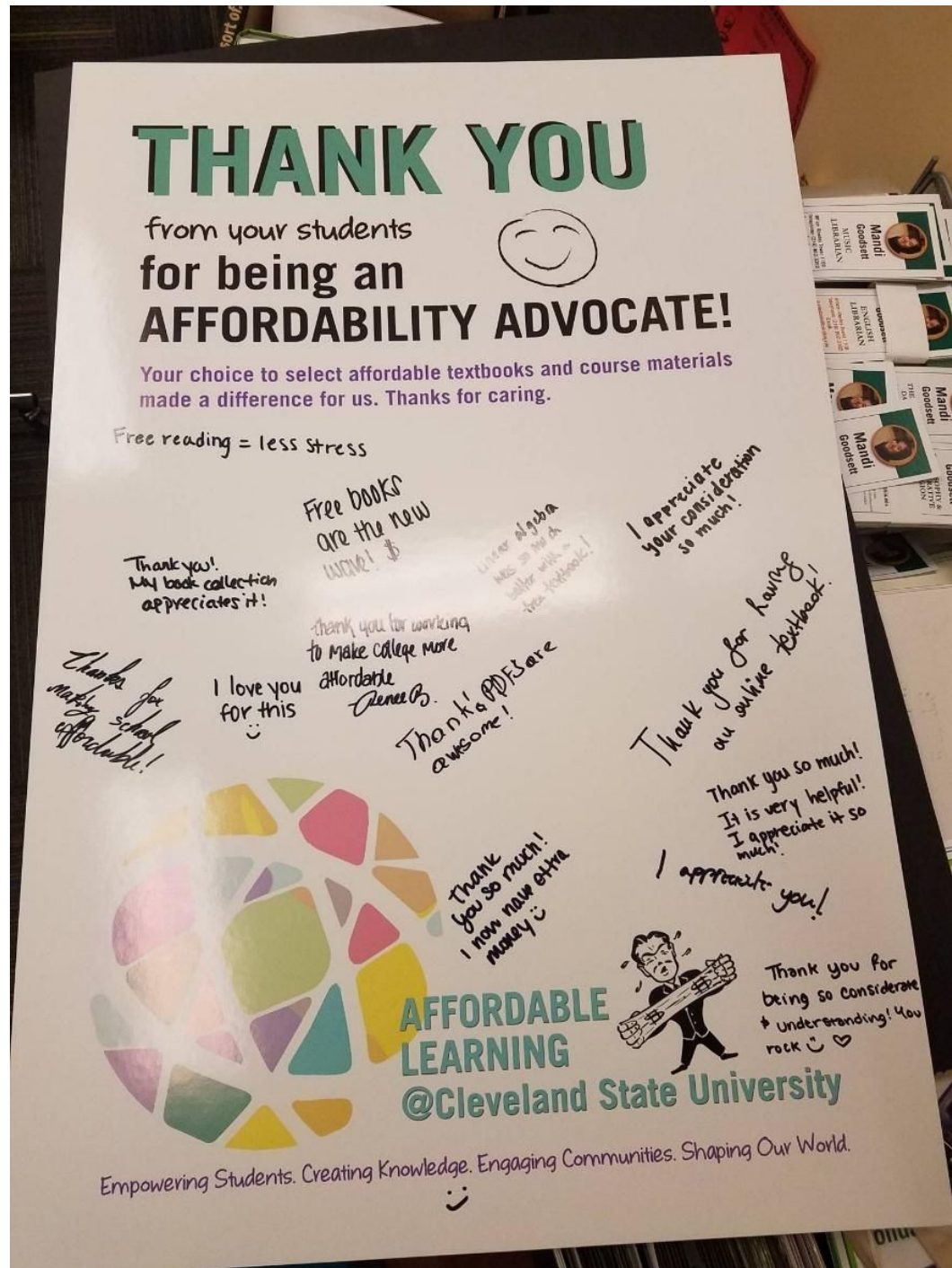


Figure 1: Student Gratitude Thank Poster #1

THANK YOU

from your students
for being an
AFFORDABILITY ADVOCATE!



Your choice to select affordable textbooks and course materials made a difference for us. Thanks for caring.

Wow so full books!

Thanks. This helps a lot!

ONLINE BOOKS SAVED ME A PRETTY PENNY! IT'S MUCH APPRECIATED

thankyou For all the money you're saving students!

Thankyou for helping me save money and being more accomodating

means a lot since money is always tight.

Thank you for using a free book! My pockets appreciate it! ♡

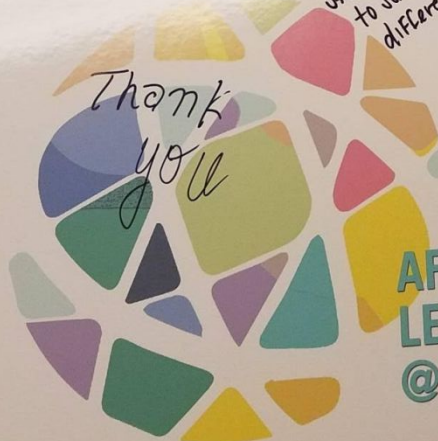
We appreciate you! spread the word to your colleagues! 😊

Thank you for giving myself & thousands of other students the opportunity to save \$ & make a difference! ♡

Thank you SOOO MUCH!!!!!! This has changed my life!

Thank you

MUCH APPRECIATED 😊



AFFORDABLE LEARNING @Cleveland State University



Empowering Students. Creating Knowledge. Engaging Communities. Shaping Our World.

Figure 2: Student Gratitude Thank Poster #2

Review

Appendix 3. Door Hanger Design



Figure 3: Door hanger design in context

Review

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a big
THANK YOU
for being an
AFFORDABILITY ADVOCATE!



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*Your choice to select
affordable textbooks
and course materials
has made a difference
for your students!*

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Thanks for caring.



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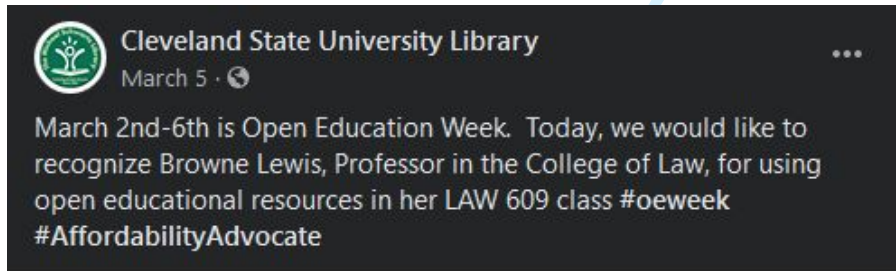


Review

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Figure 4: Thank you door hanger design

Appendix 4. Goody Bag Delivery Social Media Posts




Celebrating Faculty members that have adopted/adapted open educational resources



Mandi Goodsett, Open Educational Resources Librarian (L) with Browne Lewis (R)

Thank you Professor Lewis for saving your students over \$10,000/year

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March 6 · 🌐

March 2nd-6th is Open Education Week. Today, we would like to thank Shawn Ryan, Assistant Professor in the Mathematics department, for using open educational resources in his MTH 288 class @sdr17 @CSUSGA #oeweek #AffordabilityAdvocate



openeducationweek.org
#oeweek

Join
the global event

Celebrating Faculty members that have adopted/adapted open educational resources



SGA Representatives, Jake and Atia (L) with Shawn Ryan (R)

*Thank you
Professor Ryan
for saving your
students over
\$22,000/year*

ices Review