

# **Title III Project Operations and Procedures Manual**



## **U.S. Department of Education Title III, Part A Strengthening Institutions Program**

**Creating Affordable and Accessible Pathways (AAP)  
Integrating OER (Open Educational Resources) and Supplemental Instruction in  
GE Courses**

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## GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

A. PR/Award #	P031A230038
B. Project Title	Creating Affordable and Accessible Pathways (AAP) to Success: Integrating OER and Supplemental Instruction in General Education
C. Recipient Information	Utah Tech University, St George, UT 84770
D. Contact Person	Kelly Peterson-Fairchild Dean of Library & Open Learning Services <a href="mailto:Kelly.peterson-fairchild@utahtech.edu">Kelly.peterson-fairchild@utahtech.edu</a> 435.652.7711
E. Performance Reporting Period	October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2028
F. Grant Award	\$2,015,497.00
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I. OER Librarian	Emma Lanners – <a href="mailto:emma.lanners@utahtech.edu">emma.lanners@utahtech.edu</a> 435.652.7719
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## I. Purpose

Utah Tech University (UT) has been awarded a Title III, Part A Strengthening Institutions Program grant by the U. S. Department of Education. The University now has the responsibility of implementing the project and conducting the grant activity consistent with University policies and procedures and Federal programmatic and fiscal regulations and guidelines applicable to the Title III Strengthening Institutions program.

This manual will provide Title III staff and University administrators and staff with general guidance for implementing and conducting the project. This manual is not a substitute for institutional policies and procedures, or Federal legislation, regulations, and guidance related to the Strengthening Institutions Program. Although this manual is based upon information that is current as of October 1, 2023, and includes information adapted or excerpted from U. S. Department of Education and other federal sources, institutional policies and procedures and Federal legislation, regulations, and guidance are subject to change. Title III staff are therefore cautioned to check current institutional policies and procedures and Federal laws, regulations, and guidance prior to making any decisions or taking actions that would be governed by those policies, procedures, laws, or regulations.

## II. Project Overview

Utah Tech University has created the Affordable and Accessible Pathways (AAP) program. The program is designed to target the two largest reasons for UT students not retaining and graduating: financial difficulties and academic failure. Through this program, we intend to build pathways through the general education curriculum with OER (Open Educational Resources) and SI (Supplemental Instruction), which will help us meet our program objectives. AAP will pursue this goal through three objectives:

- Objective 1: Achieve equitable retention and graduation rates and improve student success
- Objective 2: Combine OER and SI into a comprehensive program (AAP) to increase student success and work with underprepared and under-represented student groups to close equity gaps.
- Objective 3: Decrease the overall cost burden of students by offering OER courses.

## III. Project Design

To achieve the goals and objectives outlined above, UT proposes the implementation of the Affordable and Accessible Pathways (AAP) program. The rationale for the AAP program is based upon implementing pathways through the general education (GE) requirements through which students can complete many of their key GE courses without purchasing a textbook and by participating in SI (supplemental instruction) in key, high-failure rate courses.

## Utah Tech Title III Programs 2023-2028 Staff Responsibilities

**Title III Program Director:** The Dean of the library will serve as Project Director (PD), dedicating 10% of their time to the project. The project director has oversight responsibility for administering the Title III grant at the University and ensures that expenditures comply with the Title III federal guidelines. They will prepare and submit all reports and proposals required by the U.S. Department of Education. The PD has direct access to and will give quarterly grant progress reports to Deans, the Provost, the President, and Trustees. The PD will create an Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) made up of upper administration, University College leadership, Advising, Academics (department chairs, etc.), and students. They will act as an advisory committee during the first year of the grant and will meet monthly.

**Title III Program Manager:** The Associate Dean of the Library and Director of Learning Services will serve as Program Manager (PM) and will dedicate 15% of their time to the project. The PM will oversee the AAP (Affordable and Accessible Pathways) program, create a Title III Grant operating manual which will outline grant objectives, Federal regulations, grant activities, and roles and responsibilities of key personnel. This will also cover budgets, travel assessments and reporting requirements. The PM will meet monthly with the AOC once formed. The PM will directly communicate with and/or train all faculty and staff on changes made by the formative assessment. The training will take place at the beginning of each semester. The PM will meet weekly with the PC, and OER librarian through the life of the grant.

**Title III Program Coordinator:** The Program Coordinator (PC) will coordinate and supervise all aspects of the AAP program. Ensure that the program complies with all terms and conditions of the grant and federal regulations. Will hire SI leaders early in grant year 1 and will meet regularly with the PM, SI leaders, the OER librarian, and obtain feedback from students through the life of the grant. The PC will also communicate frequently with advisors, faculty, department Chairs, and other program heads who have a part in the AAP program. The PC will meet weekly with the PM and OER librarian and will attend the monthly AOC meetings through year one of the grant.

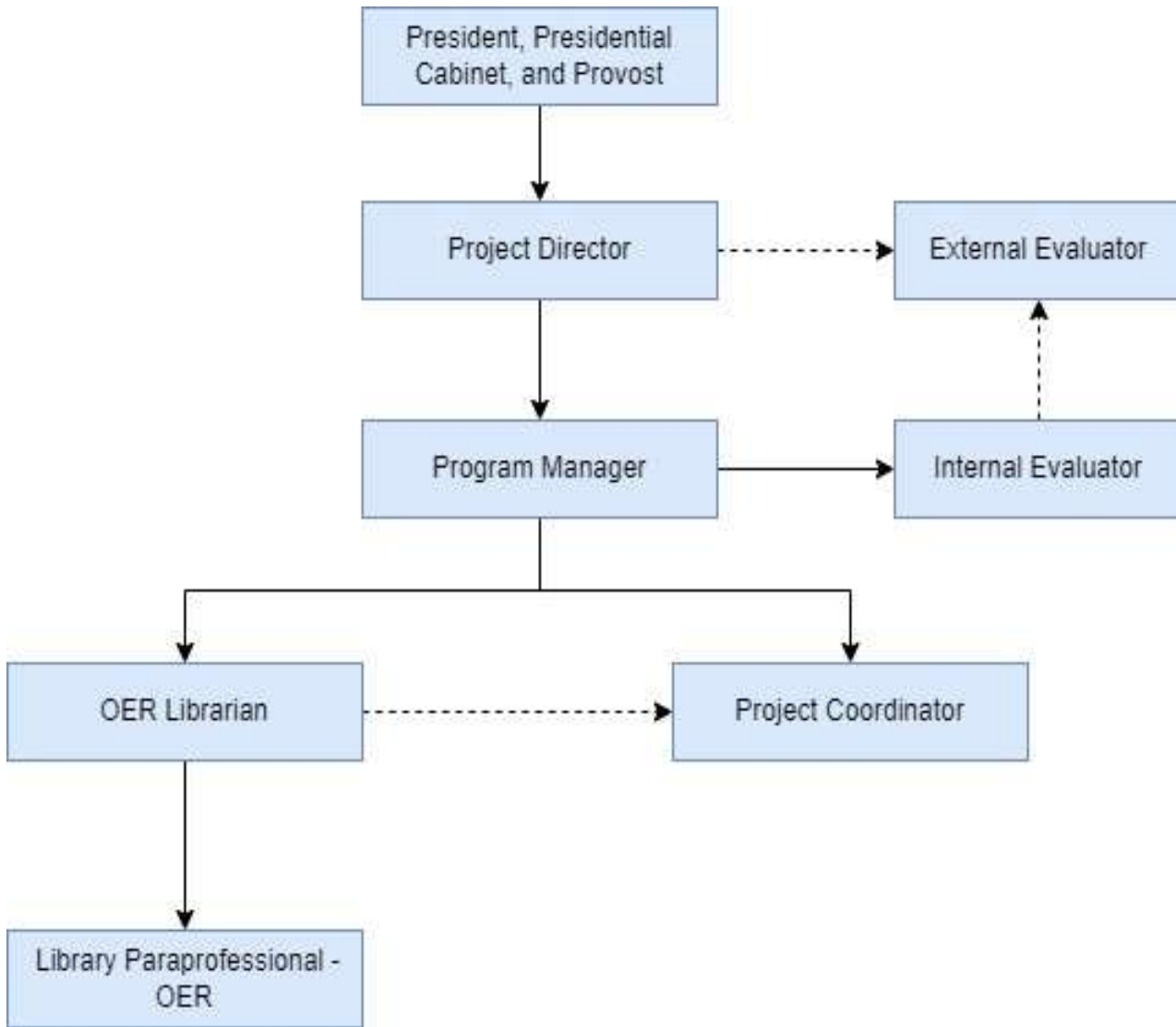
**Assistant Librarian for OER and Graduate Support:** Will serve as the OER specialist and will dedicate 40% of their time to the grant.

**OER Library Paraprofessional:** The OER Library paraprofessional will assist with the implementation and project management of OER course conversions. Will assist faculty in identified departments with locating and adapting OER and other free material into their curriculum and assisting in project management of the course. Will assist in coordinating digital content and services in relation to the OER initiatives. Will help coordinate schedules and timelines for additional course design assistance and report writing for OER-related progress on the grant. They will organize and contribute to the digital storytelling of the impact OER has had on students and faculty.

**Internal Evaluator:** The Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness will serve as Internal Evaluator (IE) with 15% of their time dedicated to the project. The IE will be responsible for providing the assessment data needed for federal reporting and for external evaluation.

**Title III Personnel:** Any employee whose salary (whole or part) is paid with grant funds must submit a monthly Time and Effort Reporting Form. Grant funded personnel are expected to work on grant related activities at the same rate as they are funded by the grant. Title III personnel are expected to attend any meetings convened by the Title III Program Coordination Office.

Figure 1: Organizational Chart



**Administrative Oversight Committee Members**

Title III Staff Members

Dr. Helen Tate – Associate Provost for Academic Success/ Dean of University College

Jamie Kearra – Director of Student Success

Matt Nickodemus – Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness

Cheri Crenshaw – Associate Dean for CHASS/ English Professor

Julie Chew – Professor of Nursing

Geoffrey Smith – Associate Professor of Biology/ Department Chair

McKay Sullivan – Associate Professor of Mathematics/ Department Chair

Katie Armstrong – Director of College Advisement

Matilda Gibb – Student Representative

## **Supplies and Procurement**

All supply and equipment requests must be related to the Title III project's objectives. Procurement processes will follow Utah Tech University policy 221 as outlined by the University Policy Manual. Standard University procedures will be followed for purchasing, ordering, and remitting payment to vendors. The Purchasing Office will maintain original documentation and receipts. Copies of all purchase orders will be maintained on file. All purchases must benefit the project(s) to which they are charged, and must be allowable, allocable, and necessary under the project's sponsor guidelines. All supply purchases must be approved by the Project Manager. Supply expenses are targeted at marketing for the AAP program's promotion.

[Utah Tech University Policy 221: University Procurement](#)

## **Record Keeping**

A grantee should have in place a viable recordkeeping system that includes:

- A copy of the approved proposal;
- A copy of the most recently approved budget for the project;
- Current and prior Grant Award Notices;
- Copies of any grant-related memoranda, letters, or other official correspondence, including but not be limited to:
  - o Fiscal Guidance.
  - o Policies/Procedures.
  - o Training.
  - o Communications.
  - o Supplies.
  - o Travel.
- Copies of all performance reports submitted to the Department of Education;
- Copies of surveys or needs assessments;
- Forms used to monitor project activities;
- Inventory of all equipment purchased or leased;
- Project evaluation plan, including timelines and measurement instruments;
- Annual third-part evaluations;
- Project timelines indicating completed activities and projected completion dates;
- Recent audit reports by the Department of Education or state agencies, if applicable;
- Site visit reports; and
- Time and effort records

## **Reporting Requirements**

The Department of Education requires the university to document and maintain Time and Effort Certifications on all federally supported employees. Internal procedures have been developed to ensure adherence to this requirement.

Each Title III funded employee is required to complete a monthly Time and Effort form. Completed Time and Effort forms must be submitted monthly to the Title III Program Coordinator no later than the 5th business day following the reporting period. Any employee whose salary (whole or part) is paid with grant funds must submit a monthly Time and Effort Reporting Form. Grant funded personnel are expected to work on grant related activities at the same rate as they are funded by the grant. Title III personnel are expected to attend any meetings convened by the Title III Program Coordination Office.

Quarterly Reporting is required by the Department of Education. These reports are used to complete the annual grant performance report demonstrating outcomes and institutional impact. The reporting schedule is as follows:

First Quarter (October – December) December 2023

Second Quarter (January – March) April 2024

Third Quarter (April – June) July 2024

Fourth Quarter (July – September) October 2024

The reporting quarters will remain the same throughout the life of the grant. The due dates will change based on the day of the year.

### **Program progress reports**

Both internal and external evaluations are management tools used to keep the program focused on annual objectives. Uniform Guidance, CFR 200 states that recipients shall monitor the performance of grant supported Projects and report progress according to program requirements. The evaluation should review programmatic progress to assure that positive effort is made toward achieving the grant's goals.

[eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)

### **Internal Evaluation**

Internal audit evaluations are carried out through semi-monitoring reports, site visits, annual progress reports, and Title III workshops. An external evaluation is conducted annually to determine progress in achieving the objectives in its approved application, the effectiveness of the project in meeting the purposes of the program, and the effect of projects on the persons directly impacted by the projects.

### **External Evaluation**

An independent external evaluator, at the discretion of the University President, will evaluate the Title III grant and the individual Title III Project. The evaluator will conduct both a formative and a summative evaluation. Evaluators will look at all aspects of grant projects, including comparing actual accomplishments to the goals established for the period, documentation of project progress in meeting measurable objectives, allowability of project expenditures, and the project's effect in strengthening the overall effect project operation of the university.



## **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Leaders**

SI leaders are selected based on recommendations from faculty members and the students GPA. SI leaders must maintain an average GPA of 3.6 or higher. These individuals have previously excelled in the course and have received training on guiding collaborative group study sessions. SI leaders attend all of the assigned lectures, take thorough notes, and participate as a traditional student within the course. SI leaders plan and use a variety of teaching and learning methods within an additional 50-minute session each week, to help students with study skills and course subject matter.

## **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Leaders remote work procedure**

The Library and Open Learning Services department allows one remote workday per month. Due to the requirement for SI leaders to prepare for their SI sessions, it will occasionally be necessary for them to conduct their prep work at home. The Program Director/Dean of the Library has agreed to allow all employees, including SI leaders, to have 8 hours of remote work per month as per policy. For SI leaders working on the Title III grant, the remote work must be spread over a sufficient period to ensure that the SI leader does not exceed the maximum hours of 12 per week. The remote work hours do not roll-over from month to month. The SI leader must also have approval from the PC to participate in remote work.

UT Policy 310 addresses part-time employee regulations:

[https://utahtech.edu/wp-content/uploads/formidable/193/310\\_Part-Time\\_Employment.pdf](https://utahtech.edu/wp-content/uploads/formidable/193/310_Part-Time_Employment.pdf)

UT Policy 326 addresses Alternative-Work-Arrangements:

<https://utahtech.edu/wp-content/uploads/formidable/193/326.pdf>

## **Supplemental Instruction (SI) class structure information**

SI classes will be chosen from OER (Open Educational Resources) course offerings when available: high-demand, general education courses with high DFW rates. We will also look at adding SI to difficult gateway courses that have been a hurdle for some students to progress into their majors.

As part of the Title III Grant, administrators would like to integrate additional high-impact education practices into the SI sessions, which would include three tiers: collaborative learning, intensive learning, and community-based learning. Instructors that participate in SI courses agree that the assignments, quizzes, and participation in SI sessions comprise 15% of a student's grade in the course.

**Tier 1 – Collaborative learning –** The SI program will use this tier primarily for high-DFW-rate, General Education classes to facilitate deeper learning. The instructor will be more involved in the planning of the SI sessions with the SI Leader. They will not attend the SI session but will tell the SI leader what concepts to work on, discuss with them what learning strategy to use, and review assessment results to ensure that the SI sessions are effective. The instructor will be paid a stipend equal to one credit hour of overload work for their efforts.

**Tier 2 – Intensive Learning –** These courses will be lower division GE (General Education) courses from the OER list and will require additional instructor input into the SI sessions. Although administrators will not be prescriptive about how an instructor adds intensive learning to his or her curriculum, they will characterize this tier as project-based and let instructors choose between a writing-intensive project, an undergraduate research project, and an e-portfolio project that students will create within small groups or in a class. As intensive learning SI courses require much more planning from the instructor and grading of the SI assignments, the instructor will be paid a stipend equal to two credit hours of overload instruction

**Tier 3 – Community Based learning –** This will require an instructor to work with the SI leader to develop curriculum for the SI sessions and to enlist and work with a community partner. Sometimes called service learning, this community-based learning approach will combine practical experience with theory that students are studying in the classroom and will provide them real-world opportunities to solve problems in the community. Because SI and community-based learning require additional curriculum development, project grading, and development of a project with a community partner, the instructor will be paid a stipend equal to three overload credits.

[Utah Tech Policy 638: Part-Time Instructor Track](#)

**Open Education Resources (OER)**

UT students experience negative effects of high textbook costs including 69% not purchasing a textbook because of costs, 39% dropping a class because of textbook costs, and 26% failing a course because they did/could not purchase the required text. Additionally, financial issues are one of the causes students report for withdrawing from the university. The project's objective is to replace traditional textbooks/course materials with Open Educational Resources (OER) in identified high enrollment GE courses.

27 courses have been identified due to their high enrollment numbers in the GE categories for OER conversion, which will eliminate the textbook cost.

Funds from the Title III grant will provide support for faculty in the form of stipends for redesigning courses to replace the traditionally published textbook or course material with OER. Courses with the highest enrollment numbers have been identified within the GE categories: English, Mathematics, American Institutions, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Fine Arts, Literature/Humanities, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. The specific classes funded by the Title III grant are found in the chart below:

Table 11: GE Courses Identified for OER Conversion

<b>English</b>	<b>Life Sciences</b>	<b>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</b>
ENGL 1010	BIOL 1010	FIN 1750
ENGL 1010D	BIOL 1200	COMM 2110
English 2010	BIOL 1610	Soc 1010
	BIOL 2320	
<b>Mathematics</b>	BIOL 2420	<b>Fine Arts</b>
MATH 1010	FSHD 1020	MUSC 1010
MATH 1030		
MATH 1040	<b>Physical Sciences</b>	<b>Literature/Humanities</b>
MATH 1050	PHYS 1010	PHIL 1000
	ENVS 1010	PHIL 1120
<b>American Institutions</b>	GEO 1010	COMM 1020
HIST 1700	CHEM 1110	
POLS 1100	CHEM 1210	

For their efforts, departments will be awarded budget amounts according to their percentage of sections planned for OER conversions to be used for faculty stipends. For example, the English department has approximately 36% of sections planned to be converted to OER and therefore would be awarded an equivalent percentage amount for their department to spend on the work of converting a course.

The primary requirement for a course to be considered OER is that all course learning materials be available to students for free.

Faculty sign an agreement with the university prior to beginning their course conversion, which contains the following terms.

Faculty agree to:

- Select OER or other zero-cost materials to replace the traditional published textbook or other course materials. If needed and appropriately licensed, edit, revise, and augment materials to meet the learning objectives of the course.
- Design or re-design course to integrate the selected material.
- Determine ownership of all third-party content and seek permissions as necessary. Follow licensing terms of any CC-licensed materials used and adapted within the work, including attribution, non-commercial, share-alike, and non-derivative terms.
- Consult with OER Program staff on the use of any intellectual property that is not owned by the Faculty, shared under a Creative Commons license that allows for reuse, or in the public domain.
- In addition to gathering open-source materials, some faculty will author their own content. The project agreement contains the following:
  - Agree to a joint-copyright ownership between the Faculty and the University for course material and design that is created by the Faculty during the course of this project.
  - Agree to archive the completed course shell (all materials, assessments, syllabi, readings, presentations, etc.) with the Library.
  - Upon completion, faculty: Circulate surveys to students in the course. Surveys will be provided by OER Program staff and shall be distributed electronically near the end of the semester of implementation.
  - Assist OER Program staff in submitting a final project report summarizing the challenges and accomplishments of the project and its impact on student performance. The report shall include any data that assist in measuring the impact of the project.
  - Share additional experiences working on the project with the university, colleagues, and allow the dissemination of those observations through a variety of communication channels.
  - Agree to make reasonable efforts to participate in events where the experience of this OER project can be shared for either academic, research or pedagogical purposes.
  - Acknowledge that full or partial support came from the Utah Tech University Library and a Department of Education Title III Grant in any publication or presentation about the project.

OER Staff Agree to:

- Complete planned activities and deliverables according to the timeline agreed upon.
- Process funding as established in this MOU.
- Promptly respond to questions and concerns submitted by the Faculty. Check-in regularly to receive updates on the progress of the project.
- Direct Faculty to additional resources that may assist in resolving challenges encountered during the project period.
- If needed, coordinate the peer review process.
- Perform initial OER discovery and provide a curated list of materials to Faculty.
- Perform copyright compliance check on material.
- Provide copy editing and proofreading of any textual OER to ensure grammatical and spelling accuracy, clarity, and consistency.

- If needed, provide layout and design of OER material.
- Offer consultations regarding reuse of third-party content.
- Assist with drafting letters of permission for reuse of third-party content
- Provide surveys to be distributed to students the semester in which the OER is used.
- Write final project assessment and results with Faculty.
- Any other assessment or documentation as determined by the needs of the Title III grant.

Most OER course conversion projects are completed from conception to implementation to final report within 1 to 1.5 years. Stipends are paid at key intervals throughout each faculty member’s conversion project.

Here is a sample funding disbursement schedule:

The funding request was approved in the amount of \$[amount]. The stipend will be dispersed at the following times:

- \$ dispersed at the initial selection of OER material.
- \$ dispersed at midpoint upon delivery of a course design for archiving.
- \$ dispersed at the start of [fall/spring/summer] semester signaling the integration of materials into the course.
- \$ dispersed at the end of [fall/spring/summer] semester after data from student surveys is received and final report begun.

The weekly time and effort required for OER projects varies greatly depending on the scope of the project, faculty familiarity with relevant technology, number of faculty involved, etc. The chart below outlines **estimated** time commitments by project type, based on information provided by [Open Oregon](#) and [Columbus State Community College](#). Time estimates should be adjusted for each proposed project based on faculty input and project plan/outline.

Project Summary	Project Examples (Open Oregon)	Estimated Time Commitment Per Person (based on 3-credit-course)
<b>Support</b> - Support or assist faculty leading maintenance, enhancing, adapting, or authoring projects.	One faculty member previously received a grant to adopt <a href="#">OpenStax Biology</a> . They are now joining their colleagues’ Category 1 (adopt) proposal as a mentor so that two more faculty in their department can adopt the same book, sharing course shells, slide decks, etc.	1-3 hours per week, for the appropriate number of terms (based on project type).
<b>Adopt</b> - Adopt an existing open textbook or other open course content as-is without making any edits.	Redesign your ASTR 121 course, making use of <a href="#">OpenStax Astronomy</a> as course materials.	1-3 hours per week, for one term. 1-3 hours per week, for the term following implementation for assessment.
<b>Maintain</b> - Make minor updates to an OER already in use or new OER adoption. Minor edits for currency or relevance.	Redesign your COMM 111 course, adopting <a href="#">Stand Up, Speak Out</a> . Incorporate additional video examples of speeches that support learning objectives while adding representation of diverse speakers to the curriculum.	3-6 hours per week, for one term. 1-3 hours per week, for the term following implementation for assessment.
<b>Enhance</b> - Development of ancillary materials to use alongside OER	Redesign your CG 100 course, making use of <a href="#">Blueprint for Success in College and Career, Oregon Edition</a> . Create a fillable workbook	6-9 hours per week, for one term <b>OR</b> 3-5 hours per week for two terms.

<p>already in use or new OER adoption</p> <p><b>Adapt</b> - Make major edits to an OER already in use, adopt and edit an OER, or remix more than one OER into a single course material.</p>	<p>where students practice the skills covered in the textbook.</p> <p>Redesign your CAS 170 course, making use of <a href="#">How to Use Microsoft Excel: The Careers in Practice Series</a>. Significantly revise each chapter to include new software features and write new chapters to cover learning objectives for your course not supported by the original book. (Note: for the finished product from this example, see <a href="#">Beginning Excel</a> by Noreen Brown, Barbara Lave, Julie Romey, Mary Schatz, and Diane Shingledecker.)</p>	<p>1-3 hours per week, for the term following implementation for assessment.</p> <p>6-9 hours per week, for two terms <b>OR</b> 3-5 hours per week, for three terms.</p> <p>1-3 hours per week, for the term following implementation for assessment.</p>
<p><b>Author</b> - Create a new OER (must provide evidence that quality resources are not currently available to adopt or adapt).</p>	<p>Review available open content for your developmental reading/writing course. Determine that none of the existing OER for this population of learners treats reading and writing as integrated skills. Write your own course materials to support your learning objectives, tailored to your own students and pedagogical approach. Redesign your WRD 90/98 course, making use of your OER. (Note: for the finished product from this example, see <a href="#">The Word on College Reading and Writing</a> by Monique Babin, Carol Burnell, Susan Pesznecker, Nicole Rosevear, and Jaime Wood.)</p>	<p>6-9 hours per week, for three terms <b>OR</b> 3-5 hours per week, for four terms (including Summer).</p> <p>1-3 hours per week, for the term following implementation for assessment.</p>

**Travel Guidelines**

Guidelines for travel follow the same general institutional travel policies. The following procedures and regulations must be followed when travel is supported by Title III.

- a. Travel must be associated with one of the Title III project activities in a way that will lead to achieving project objectives.
- b. A brief written travel report must be submitted with the request for payment, summarizing the highlights of the conference and its benefits. How experience/knowledge/skills were used to benefit the unit or University should be submitted when completed.
- c. Travel under the Title III activity will be in accordance with the approved operational plan of the Title III Proposal. Travel Request and approval will be in accordance with the University Travel Policy.

[Utah Tech University Policy 223: Travel, Meals, Entertainment, and Relocation](#)

## **Links to Grant Documents**

### **Grant Award Notification**

<https://library.utahtech.edu/info/title-iii/FY23-SIP-P031A230038-Notification.pdf>

### **U.S. Department of Education Title III, Part A, Strengthening Institutions Program Grant**

<https://library.utahtech.edu/info/title-iii/SubmissionPDF-GRANT13888921.pdf>

### **Time & Effort Reports**

[Faculty Time & Effort Report](#)

[SI Leader Title III Time and Effort Report](#)

### **U.S. Department of Education Title III website**

[Title III Part A Programs - Strengthening Institutions \(ed.gov\)](#)