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Open Educational Resources: Initiatives at the James White Library

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OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: INITIATIVES AT THE JAMES WHITE LIBRARY

By Margaret Adeogun

The James White Library received a one-year allocation of $25,000 on Friday, November 17, 2023, after participating in the pitch competition to raise funds for its Open Education Resources (OER) project. The funds will provide a stipend and professional development to faculty who wish to adopt, adapt, and create Open Educational Resources (OERs) to break down barriers of affordability and accessibility to expensive textbooks and build staff's capacity as they use and create OER resources.

Affordable alternatives to the high cost of textbooks and the need to expand educational opportunities through Open Educational Resources (OER) are significant measures in eliminating barriers to student success and improving enrollment and retention at Andrews University. In advancing global access to quality SDA higher education resources, expand the outreach of Adventist education, deepen students' education experience through customized educational resources, and encourage instructor experimentation and innovation in finding new, better, and lower-cost ways to deliver learning materials to their students through OER. Based on this objective, the James White Library (JWL) proposes an OER Grant Initiative to encourage, support, and incentivize OER adoption, adaptation, and creation. JWL will foster this initiative through small grants to participating instructors to support the creation and adoption of Open Education Resources for teaching and learning from an Adventist faith-based perspective. The grant covers three models:

> **Adopt** an existing open resource (open textbook and other OER course components such as homework assignments, lab manuals, or other supplementary materials). Grant allocation: $1000
>
> **Adapt** existing resources by mixing or revising open textbooks and other OER course components such as homework assignments, lab manuals, or other supplementary materials. Grant allocation: $1500
>
> **Create** a new open resource and other supplementary course materials (particularly for a course with an expensive textbook). Grant allocation: $2500

The financial implication of this initiative led the library to apply and participate in the pitch competition for funds from the AU Academic Partnership Grant, through which the library won a one-year allocation of $25,000 with a promise of additional funds in the following year. This fund will support the work of the recipi-

ents of the JWL OER Grants, workshops, Open Educational Resources membership, OER promotion, training of trainers, and other open access initiatives of the university.

JWL OER Grant Recipients

There are three recipients of the JWL OER grants:

Creation Grant

Dr. Max Keller—Head of the Department of Music

Dr. Keller will create an ear training textbook to support Aural Skills with Melodies, Rhythms, Intervals, Chords, and Harmonic Progressions Course **(MUCT 154 – Ear Training Laboratory I – IV**). Instead of incorporating only folk melodies to teach ear training, Dr. Keller will contain excerpts from the Adventist Hymnal to transform the curriculum into local content. He will receive a grant of $2500

Dr. Cristy Moss—MSMLS Program Director

Dr. Moss will create a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) software to support MLSC 350,451, and 452 courses in the Department of Laboratory Science. Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) software is essential to medical laboratory education. Still, the commercially produced software's high cost and associated costs are prohibitive for many university-based MLS programs to purchase and integrate into their program, thus depriving the students of the enriching learning experience that the software provides. Dr. Moss plans to remove this economic barrier by creating an affordable, customizable, open, and equally effective LIMS that will promote students' full participation in the program, create inclusive access to quality learning tools, enhance stu-

dents' intellectual and practical skills and prepare them for a successful career in laboratory science. This is a $2500 grant award.

Adapt Grant

Dr. Melissa Poua—Department of Medical Laboratory Science

Dr. Poua will adopt an Outbreak Virology Simulation Model that has been newly developed and mix it with a supplementary resource to support the course MLSC 432 (Specialized Clinical Microbiology). Her project will provide cheaper but equally effective ways to give medical laboratory students a better understanding of virology and foundational epidemiology. Creating an ancillary resource that will be openly licensed to support a newly developed simulation tool is a transformative use of a proprietary resource for learning enrichment at a low cost. The open resource will promote students' full participation in the course. This is a $1500 grant award.

This is the JWL's first attempt at using grants to promote learning. Congratulations to all grant recipients.

About the Academic Partnership Grant: The Andrews University Academic Partnership Grant is sponsored by the Office of the Provost. It supports new or emerging interdisciplinary collaborations to integrate and energize curricula. Its purpose is to foster creative thinking and planning to revitalize curricular ideas and strengthen existing programs through initiatives that enrich the academic community and enhance the student experience. The funds will help create space and time to encourage innovative collaboration across disciplines and levels. The Academic Partnership initiative offers two grants of $100,000 each for an interdisciplinary curricular initiative by

Andrews University faculty, departments, schools, and colleges. Funding for the selected projects will be $100,000 to be budgeted over three years, with a $40,000 cap on spending the first year and $25,000 each successive year, with a $10,000 contingency fund. https://www.andrews.edu/provost/academic-partnership-grant/index.html.

At its maturity, we believe this initiative will save student costs, make learning more affordable, and increase enrollment and retention. An affordable learning solution bridges the economic barrier that has prevented many, particularly the Adventist constituency, from benefiting from HE. In the long run, this could expand the frontier of Adventist education.

Open Access Textbook Publishing

In addition to financing OER initiatives, part of the grant will support the publication of Open Access (AO) textbooks. The library recently partnered with the Office of Research and Scholarship to fund a request from the faculty to publish a textbook on OA outlet. This initiative to support opportunities in academic publishing will increase access and reduce student costs.

Congratulations, James White Library!

Margaret Adeogun is the Marketing Librarian at the James White Library on Andrews University's campus.