

**Affordable Learning Implementation Grant Report**  
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**HISTORY 111**  
**Spring 2021**

During Spring 2021, as part of the Affordable Learning Implementation Grant, I assigned Dailey, *Building the American Republic*, (<https://press.uchicago.edu/sites/buildingtheamericanrepublic/index.html>). This textbook was authored by a well-respected historian and is unique in that it is available to students in both a free online version and a low cost (\$30) physical version. This was appealing to me in that, while experimenting with a free online text, students still had the option to purchase a physical copy if they chose to do so. I have been somewhat hesitant to adopt online texts as students have repeatedly told me that they prefer physical texts, however, having both an online version and a hard copy available allowed me to make use of a free online text without fully abandoning a more traditional textbook (at an affordable cost). Happily, in the last few years there have been a number of free online American History survey texts that have appeared giving those of us who teach the American survey a few options to choose from. In applying for this grant, I also considered the free online text *American Yawp*. While *American Yawp* is a good text, the overall quality and the option to purchase a physical copy of *Building the American Republic* made it my choice for the course.

My initial planning for this semester was done with the intention of teaching this course fully face-to-face, however, due to classroom availability there was a relatively last minute switch to synchronous Zoom meetings. Having selected a free/low cost text actually helped to facilitate this transition as I felt free to adapt to the new environment and make the best use of the textbook (which included skipping chapters and adding some online content that I would not have used in a regular classroom). When using expensive textbooks I often feel obligated to use every section, in using Dailey, I did not feel beholden to the text in modifying my course to fit with a synchronous online structure and adapt to student needs.

Overall, student feedback on the text was positive. I plan to continue to use this text both in person and in online courses. As mentioned above, allowing students to choose the between an online and physical version of the text allowed them to select the format that best fit their learning style and allowed me to modify the course to meet the available teaching space. Overall, I am grateful to the Weinberg Memorial Library for their support in this project and will continue to use the *Building the American Republic* text in my survey courses going forward.