

Individual Rising Example for AIM High Impact Award

Thank you for your interest in submitting an AIM High Impact Award application for the [2026 AIM High event](#).

As a reminder, this form is to submit an application for the AIM High Impact Awards and **not for nominating someone else**. If you want to submit a nomination for someone else, please complete the [2026 AIM High Impact Award Nomination survey](#). The individual(s) nominated will be prompted to fill out this application form.

For any questions or concerns, please contact affordable@ucf.edu.

A. Type of Impact Award

Nominations may be submitted for either an individual or a group. Groups can consist of two or more people, whether as a partnership of individuals, a department, or an official campus organization. You can choose between two categories:

Legacy – for those who have been using affordable instructional materials for more than two years (before 1/1/24).

Rising – for those who have been using affordable instructional materials for less than two years (after 1/1/24).

- **Individual (Rising)**

- Individual (Legacy)
- Group (Rising)
- Group (Legacy)

B. Please enter your full name(s)

Shelly Bass

C. Please enter your UCF email(s)

Shelly.Bass@ucf.edu

D. Please list your college(s) and department(s)

College of Sciences - Biology

- E. To be eligible for an AIM High Impact Award, you must have taught at UCF within the past year. Have you taught at UCF in the last year? [Spring 2025, Summer 2025, and/or Fall 2025]

- **Yes - I have taught at UCF within the past year**
- No - I have not taught at UCF within the past year

- F. To be eligible for an AIM High Impact Award, the digital materials used in your course(s) must comply with [UCF's Digital Accessibility Policy](#).

- **Yes - my digital course materials comply with UCF's Digital Accessibility Policy**
- No - my digital course materials do not comply with UCF's Digital Accessibility Policy

- G. To be eligible for an AIM High Impact Award, your course materials must meet the Affordability Counts standard of costing no more than \$20 per credit hour. For example:

3-credit course: under \$60

4-credit course: under \$80

5-credit course: under \$100

- **Yes – my course materials meet the Affordability Counts standard of \$20 per credit hour or less.**
- No – my course materials do not meet the Affordability Counts standard of \$20 per credit hour or less.

Section 1: Impact in Using Affordable Instructional Materials

(Optional) Download and upload the [Impact Calculations excel spreadsheet](#) to fill in the information asked on questions number 1-4. If you would prefer to continue answering questions 1-4 on the Qualtrics form, feel free to do so.

1. Please list the course prefix, course number, and section number(s), associated semesters, and number of students enrolled per section (e.g., SOW3729-0001 Fall 2023 - 40 students, SOW3729-0001 Fall 2024 - 67 students...)

BSC 3312-0001 - Spring 2024 – 55 students

BSC 3312-0002 - Spring 2024 – 70 students

BSC 3312-0001 - Summer 2024 – 75 students

BSC 3312-0W61 - Summer 2024 – 120 students

BSC 3312-0001 - Fall 2024 – 70 students

BSC 3312-0001 - Spring 2025 – 75 students

BSC 3312-0W61 - Spring 2025 – 110 students

BSC 3312-0001 - Summer 2025 – 71 students

BSC 3312-0W61 - Summer 2025 – 105 students

BSC 3312-0001 - Fall 2025 – 65 students

2. What type of instructional material is being used in the course(s)? Select all that apply.
- a. First Day textbooks or courseware
 - b. Library-sourced eBooks or other digital library materials**
 - c. Open Educational Resources (OER)**
 - d. Content design, e.g., self-created module content, lecture content, and other free or low-cost materials
 - e. Other: _____
 - f. I'm not sure
3. Original price of the course material(s) per student for each course section; if there is not an original price, please provide the typical cost for common course materials for this course: (\$100 for ENC1102 and \$145 for ENC1101)
- \$100 for BSC 3312.**
4. New price of the course material(s) per student for each course section: (\$29.99 for ENC1102 and \$0 for ENC1101)

\$0 for BSC 3312.

Section 2: Creativity and Innovation in Using Affordable Instructional Materials

5. How have you brought creativity and innovation to your course materials? Check all that apply.
- a. Created free textbook/course material (e.g., authored content or open educational resource)
 - b. Received grant(s) that led to purchasing course materials and/or doing redesign to meet AIM objectives

- c. Used external online tools for course materials (e.g., social media, blogs, websites, wikis, apps, etc.)
- d. **Used UCF resources (Obojobo, Materia, Pressbooks, Leganto, and other Canvas features)**
- e. **Reflected unique contexts (e.g., your learners' cultures, local cultural surroundings, your specialty or unique experiences, etc.)**
- f. Empowered students to collaborate on creation or curation of materials
- g. Empowered students to incorporate elements of their authentic selves into the creation or curation of materials
- h. **Offered unique or particularly impactful course materials**
- i. Personalized materials to contexts, your subject specialty, and student population
- j. Incorporated opportunities for student interactions with course materials
- k. Other _____

6. Please provide a narrative for how you brought creativity and innovation to your course materials.

When I began teaching BSC 3312 Principles of Marine Biology at UCF two years ago, I quickly realized that the \$100+ traditional textbook was creating financial barriers for many students, and the content felt disconnected from our Florida location. As a new faculty member, I was eager to find solutions that would both reduce costs and enhance student engagement with locally relevant examples.

After consulting with our librarian about affordable alternatives, I discovered that a colleague had already adapted an excellent open educational resource called "Introduction to Marine Biology and Oceanography" with Florida-specific enhancements. Rather than reinventing the wheel, I adopted this existing resource, which immediately eliminated textbook costs while providing students with content that connected global marine biology concepts to familiar Florida environments.

To supplement the OER and address some gaps in current research coverage, I worked with our librarian to curate a collection of recent peer-reviewed articles accessible through our library databases. Using UCF's Leganto tool integrated within Canvas, I created organized reading lists that complement each OER chapter with new research findings. Students can now access both foundational concepts through the OER and current scientific developments through journal articles, all at no additional cost.

My innovation has focused on enhancing student engagement with these existing materials. I've begun incorporating student observations and experiences into our class discussions, encouraging them to connect OER concepts with their own Florida coastal experiences. While I haven't yet developed the systematic student contribution process that more experienced faculty have implemented, I've started collecting student photographs and field observations that I hope to integrate into future iterations of the course materials.

7. (Optional) If possible, please provide links of material(s) created/published/adopted. If necessary, please link to a sharable document.

(Link to adopted OER)

(Link to Leganto List)

Section 3: Student Success in Using Affordable Instructional Materials

8. Provide a narrative of student feedback you have received about your use of affordable instructional materials and how the materials positively affected them. In your narrative, you can also include survey responses, student quotes, SPI data, screenshots, etc. (Note that any student names provided will be redacted).

Since adopting affordable instructional materials for BSC 3312 Principles of Marine Biology two years ago, I've received consistently positive feedback from students, though I'm learning how to track long-term impacts.

The most immediate and frequent feedback relates to financial relief. Multiple students have expressed gratitude for eliminating textbook costs. One student wrote in their course evaluation: "Thank you for not making us buy an expensive textbook. I used that money for gas to actually visit some of the beaches we talked about in class."

The supplemental journal articles accessed through Leganto have also received positive feedback. Students appreciate having access to current research, with one noting: "Reading about red tide research happening right now in Tampa Bay made me feel like I was learning cutting-edge science, not just old textbook information."

8a. If you need to provide a file of this narrative due to length, attach a file here. (Note that any student names provided will be redacted).

9. Beyond meeting UCF's Digital Accessibility Policy requirements and using UDOIT, how have you designed or enhanced your course materials to be accessible to all learners? Consider multiple ways students process information (visual, auditory, text-based, interactive, etc.).

I was specifically happy to adopt the OER from my colleague in the department because it already incorporates multiple formats for students to engage with content, including audio descriptions for complex diagrams and alternative text that goes beyond basic image descriptions. Building on this foundation, I made sure the journal articles I curated through Leganto prioritized sources that offer audio abstracts or podcast summaries when available.

For articles that only exist in text format, I created simple instructions showing students how to use built-in accessibility tools like screen readers or text-to-speech functions in Canvas and their browsers to listen to content rather than just read it. I also provided guidance on accessing the OER's existing audio features that some students might not discover on their own.

Section 4: Sharing and Collaboration in Using Affordable Instructional Materials

10. Have you shared the course material(s) or implementation outcomes in any of these ways? Select all that apply.

a. Involvement in case study

b. Research project(s)

c. Presentation(s)

d. Conference proceeding(s)

e. Publication(s)

f. Shared internally with UCF faculty

g. Shared externally outside of UCF

h. Other _____

i. None of the above

11. Please provide a narrative for how you shared or plan to share your course materials and speak to how this sharing and collaboration have increased or could increase the impact. Please list specific examples based on your selections above.

Informally within our department, I've shared my materials and approach with several colleagues who were curious about the OER adoption process. When faculty have asked about reducing textbook costs, I've offered to share my Leganto reading lists and explained my process for evaluating and selecting supplemental articles. I've also connected interested colleagues with my colleague who originally developed the Florida-enhanced OER, helping facilitate conversations about adapting her approach for other courses.

My most significant upcoming sharing opportunity is co-presenting with my colleague who developed the original OER adaptation at the Florida Association of Science Teachers conference this spring. I'll discuss the newcomer perspective on OER adoption and share practical tips for new faculty, while she presents the development process. This collaboration demonstrates how junior and senior faculty can work

together to promote affordable materials and should reach educators from institutions across Florida who might benefit from our department's collaborative approach to course materials.

12. Please recognize any additional individuals for their efforts in collaborating with you in the creation/adoption/implementation of the course material(s)? Select all that apply.

a. CDL Instructional designer(s)

b. UCF librarian(s)

c. UCF colleague(s)

d. UCF staff member(s)

e. UCF student(s)

e. External colleague(s) (outside of UCF)

f. Other

13. Based on your response to the previous question, please list their name(s) (and provide their role if possible). How did you collaborate with the individual(s)? Please specify, e.g., met on multiple occasions for consultations, co-authored a textbook, served as an advisor, helped curate resources and links, etc.

Lila Dunes, Librarian -Met with me a few times for consultations on textbook affordability options, helped identify the OER my colleague had adapted, and provided training on using Leganto to organize supplemental readings within Canvas.

Sandy Coralton, Biology Faculty member - The colleague who originally developed the Florida-enhanced OER I adopted. She shared her materials, explained her development process through multiple consultations, and is co-presenting with me at an upcoming conference on our collaborative approach to OER implementation.

Thank you for your application to the 2026 AIM High Impact awards. We will be in touch if there are any follow-up questions. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at affordable@ucf.edu.

We hope to see you at the event!