

## **A. Faculty Development Grant Summer 2024 Proposal**

### *Creating Inclusive, Student Centered Textbooks for Communications Courses at HBCUs*

#### **Applicant:**

**Brandi Berry MFA**

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#### **Funding Requested:**

\$7,000 salary supplement

#### **Eligibility:**

\*Evidence of CETL Presentation and Report Submission for Prior Funding Attached

#### **Appendices:**

Textbook Contract with Kendall Hunt

##### Contract

Evidence of Prior Funding Outcomes:

1. Mellon Grant “Lisette”
  - a. <https://vimeo.com/user5319137/lisette>
2. Mount Pisgah Project
  - a. <https://www.mountpisgahproject.com>
  - b. [Final Report](#)

#### **Date of Application:**

February 23, 2024

**B.**

## 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing landscape of communication textbooks is characterized by a lack of contemporary relevance, especially in centering Black experiences, culture, and academic voices. In recognition that faculty at HBCUs often face challenges in finding textbooks that cater to the unique needs of their students, I have entered into a collaborative venture with my colleagues in the Mass Communications department, Dr. Nicole Files-Thompson (Associate Professor) and Trejha Whitfield (Assistant Professor), to author three communication textbooks in the SU 2024.

Underscoring the urgent need to rectify deficiencies within the existing communication education landscape, following the National Communications Association Annual Convention in November 2023, Curtis Ross, the HBCU representative for Kendall Hunt, Dr. Nicole Files-Thompson, and professors Brandi Berry and Trejha Whitfield initiated a collaborative workgroup to address a critical gap in communication education materials. This dynamic partnership laid the groundwork for a collaboration with Kendall Hunt focusing on the development of textbooks that go beyond fulfilling academic requirements. Instead, these textbooks will be meticulously crafted to resonate with the diverse experiences of HBCU students, representing a paradigm shift in the learning experience.

The initiative places deliberate emphasis on integrating culturally and contextually relevant prompts, activities, and exercises. Furthermore, a key objective is to ensure inclusivity in the media featured within the textbooks and ancillary materials, centering representation of Black and Brown voices and faces. This project signifies a collective commitment among Dr. Files-Thompson, professors Berry and Whitfield, to reshape the narrative in communication education. It stands as a pledge to foster engagement, connection, and a more inclusive learning environment for students, extending its impact beyond Lincoln, to wider academic audiences.

## 2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1. TEXTBOOK: INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN COMMUNICATION

**AUTHORSHIP:** Nicole Files-Thompson, Trejha Whitfield, Brandi Berry

**CURRENT COMMUNICATION COURSE:** COM 205 Intro Human Communication

**COURSE STATUS:** Mass Communication Major Requirement, General Elective

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will introduce you to communication principles, common communication practices, and a selection of theories to better understand the communication transactions that you experience in your daily life. The principles and practices in this course are designed to increase communication competency in personal and professional contexts through an overview of communication as a process, along with basic principles and theories.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:** 1) Identify and explain fundamental communication processes, including models of communication, language, nonverbal communication, small groups, and listening. 2) Understand how interpersonal relationships develop and are maintained; analyze and manage interpersonal conflict situations. 3) Monitor one's own verbal and nonverbal communication practices; understand the role of culture, perception, and intent in interactions; communicate ethically and effectively. 4) Explain barriers to intercultural communication and identify strategies to improve.

**TEXTBOOK CHAPTER SKETCH:** Communication in Our Lives; Perception and Communication; Understanding Verbal Communication; Understanding Nonverbal Communication; Listening in Our Lives; Understanding Interpersonal Relationships; Improving Interpersonal Communication; Understanding Groups and Communication; Enhancing Groups Through Leadership and Group Processes; Communicating with Diverse Others

### 2. TEXTBOOK: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SPEAKING

**AUTHORSHIP:** Trejha Whitfield, Nicole Files-Thompson, Brandi Berry

**CURRENT COMMUNICATION COURSE:** COM 203 Public Speaking

**COURSE STATUS:** Social Science Core Elective, Mass Communications Major Elective

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course equips students with essential skills in writing and delivering speeches across various contexts, offering practical experiences in speech delivery. Theoretical foundations of argumentation, effective speech delivery techniques, organizing written speeches, and audience analysis are covered.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:** 1) Apply public speaking skills and concepts to speech presentations. 2) Prepare and deliver different types of well-organized, context-specific speeches. 3) Incorporate credible research into an informative

speech. 4) Critically reflect on the organization, content, and delivery of public speaking performances. 5) Perform audience analyses to create speeches appropriate for and respectful of a diverse audience.

**TEXTBOOK CHAPTER SKETCH:** Public Speaking Essentials f; Ethical Speaking; Being Audience Centered; Listening to and Critiquing Speeches; Special Occasion Speaking; Informative Speaking; Persuasive Speaking; Research & Supporting Material for Informative Speaking; Organizing and Outlining Your Ideas; Language; Confidently Delivering Your Message

### **3. TEXTBOOK: INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA TECHNOLOGY**

**AUTHORSHIP:** Brandi Berry, Nicole Files-Thompson, Trejha Whitfield

**CURRENT COMMUNICATION COURSE:** COM 207 Public Speaking

**COURSE STATUS:** Mass Communications Major Requirement, General Elective

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Students learn how to use photography, videography, and audio to tell compelling stories. The course also explores basic concepts of new media as well as the role digital media (aka “new media”) technologies play in society. Students will engage with digital media technology throughout the course to gain practical experience with new media. Students will learn how to plan, design, and create multimedia content.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:** 1) Produce a VOSOT story for multimedia platform. 2) Write audio/video scripts that effectively communicate news and information to audiences and avoid stereotypes and bias. 2) Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze professional audio and video news stories and photographs. 3) Produce and edit audio and video news stories and edit news photographs. 4) Demonstrate an understanding of ethical journalism and the ability to reflect on the accuracy, objectivity, and cultural diversity in professionally produced work. 5) Develop knowledge of audio, video, and digital photography software. 6) Demonstrate competency in Mac hardware and software for everyday digital literacy. 7) Produce audio and video stories demonstrating understanding of ethical and legal freedoms and restraints on that freedom within our society and demonstrate diversity and cultural awareness. 8) Develop the ability to communicate professionally effectively in audio and visual contexts while conveying news and information to target audiences.

**TEXTBOOK CHAPTER SKETCH:** Website Set Up and Design; History of Contemporary Media; Ownership/Media Law; Impact of Social Media; Privacy and Surveillance; iMovie and Canva; Vision Board and Music Montage (Editing and Layout); Lighting and Camera Setup for an Interview; Camera Composition and Storytelling; Film Editing Style and Technique; Film Shots; Podcasting

### **4. TIMELINE**

**May-June:** Complete initial Manuscript for June 30<sup>th</sup> Deadline; **July-August:** Complete ancillary and Multi-media materials; **FA2024:** Edit Materials based on feedback and instruction.

### **5. ENHANCING TEACHING AND RESEARCH AT LU**

In the FA 24 semester, Dr. Files-Thompson, Professor Berry, and Professor Whitfield will each instruct two sections of COM 205 Human Communication, COM 207 Media Technology, and COM 203 Public Speaking, respectively, using the developed textbooks and ancillary resources. These materials will undergo refinement based on student feedback throughout the academic year. The three initial textbooks cater to 200-level Mass Communications courses, focusing on the holistic development of both hard and soft communication skills. While fulfilling mass communications major requirements, these courses stand out as popular general electives recommended by advisors across disciplines, with public speaking serving as a social science core elective.

### **6. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT:**

Project success will be assessed through a comprehensive approach, utilizing student feedback, evaluations, and the measurement of both indirect and direct learning outcomes. Ongoing student feedback sessions and evaluations will provide insights into the effectiveness of the textbooks and ancillary resources. Indirect outcomes, including increased engagement, will be observed, while direct learning outcomes will be assessed to gauge the impact on student knowledge acquisition.

### **7. PROJECT DISSEMINATION**

The project outcomes will be shared with the Lincoln University community through presentations at department and CETL events. Additionally, findings will be presented to the African American Communication and Culture Division of NCA, contributing to a broader scholarly discourse. Following the refinement of the textbook and ancillary materials via the

aforementioned success measurements, the textbooks will be marketed to other HBCUs, promoting widespread accessibility and impact within the broader academic community.

#### C. BUDGET

<b>Summer Salary</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>
<i>*for explicated work during the months of May, June, July, and August</i>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>