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Nadeau Earns Grant to Create Spanish Medical Textbook

BY CHRIS FRANCIS | AUGUST 20, 2024

NEWS



BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Illinois Wesleyan's Carolyn Nadeau has been awarded an Open Educational Resources (OER) grant of \$71,500 to produce a free online textbook for Spanish learners and aspiring healthcare professionals.

Nadeau, the Byron S. Tucci Professor of Spanish, World Languages, Literatures And Cultures, applied for and won the grant from the Illinois State Library, through the Consortium for Academic Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI). The grant will fund the creation of a free PDF textbook for IWU's Spanish 203 course, Medical Spanish and Cultural Competency for Health Care taught by Nadeau. She plans to publish the textbook through the OER platform LibreText.

Nadeau's overall goal for the textbook is to make the educational value of the course freely available to all academic institutions and "for the finished product to look like a polished, high-end academic online textbook," she said.

The course and textbook are meant for students planning to enter the healthcare industry who want to develop both cultural competency and linguistic skills for working with Spanish-speaking communities, generally addressing "the ability to understand and respect values, attitudes, and beliefs that differ across cultures," as well as relevant Spanish vocabulary, Nadeau explained.



Carolyn Nadeau, the Byron S. Tucci Professor of Spanish, World Languages, Literatures And Cultures, received a grant to create an online textbook for medical Spanish.

"In this class we look at data that compares Latines to other ethnic and racial groups and also look at data that shows differences among different Latine groups," she said. "Other considerations are the importance of family dynamics and who is part of the decision-making process in health care, understanding the gap in access to health care between Latines and non-Hispanic white Americans... and concepts of respect, personal warmth, trust between the patient and the doctor and the role of the interpreter in that dynamic."

The greatest value the book will provide, Nadeau believes, is the ability to translate the course experience into an educational resource.

"What is particularly unique to this class at IWU is the combination of in-class learning and field experience (in a clinical setting)," she said. "Students experience first-hand at the clinic what we are learning in the classroom and also take day trips to the Public Health Department and to Western Avenue Community Center to get a fuller picture of some of the more holistic issues regarding the Latine community here in Blo-No. So many times I've read in student journals how exciting it is for them to experience the classroom-clinic connection. I love bringing that type of dovetailed learning — connecting language, culture and lived experiences — to our students, and through this OER, I hope that others can bring those opportunities to students at other institutions."

After a lengthy process of academic review, Nadeau hopes that the finished book will be available as a free download by the fall semester of 2025.