



U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED
524B)
Executive Summary

OMB No. 1890 - 0004
Expiration: 10-31-2007
PR/Award #:
0215X040276

America's History in the Making, Volume 1 (Formerly Turning Points in American History)

The goals of *America's History in the Making, Volume 1* are to offer teachers a national multi-media professional development workshop series that will help them:

1. understand the lives, roles and impact of individuals in American history;
2. learn more about the events that have shaped American history;
3. develop appreciation for the use of primary source materials in learning more about history content; and
4. secure credits towards achieving "highly qualified" teaching status, a requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The implementation of *America's History in the Making, Volume 1*, was successful; all the above goals were reached. The participating teachers described how *America's History in the Making, Volume 1*, was different from other professional development they had received because they were able to focus on historical content and interact with colleagues. They described the multimedia approach as an effective and engaging way to present historical content and appreciated that the approach addressed various learning styles and provided a model for presenting the information to their own students. The teachers reported that in addition to helping them learn the content, the print materials and videos would be useful resources for their classroom. Most of the teachers (97%) reported planning to use the primary source documents in their classroom and 9% reported having already done so. Because teachers valued the quality and approach of the professional development this project did not experience the challenge of retaining teachers.

RMC Research conducted an independent evaluation of the project tracking each of the project's goals and objectives; the full evaluation report is attached to this annual performance report. With regard to the program measure of increasing teachers content knowledge, 99% of the teachers reported that after participating in the professional development their knowledge had increased greatly (39%) or to some extent (60%). Although the teachers reported themselves that their content knowledge increased, analysis of the content assessment scores did not support this finding. As a group the teachers did not demonstrate an increase in content knowledge from pretest to posttest however, subgroups showed gains on the posttest but these gains did not approach statistical significance. An important subgroup that showed improvement on the posttest was participants who were not "highly qualified" to teach history; on the posttest this group (M = 8.67) approached the scores of the "highly qualified" teachers (M = 9.99) despite having substantially lower pretest scores (e.g. not "highly qualified" M=7.61; "highly qualified" M=10.48). These findings have several implications for future

evaluations of Teacher American History grants that are described in the 524B project status chart.

Objective 1: Provide teachers with twenty-eight contact hours of content and activities to support a two-credit course by creating a content-rich, ten-unit, multi-media professional development series—based on five eras of traditional American history—using video, print and Web-based materials.

Oregon Public Broadcasting developed a high-quality multi-media course entitled *America's History in the Making*. Content areas covered NAEP content categories 1 through 5. Over 30 plus hours of contact hours covering content and methodology support a four-credit course through Southern Oregon University (sou.edu). Comprised in the thirty contact hours, there are eleven units in total, eight of which (Units 1-4, and 6-10), contain American history content through video, text chapters, facilitator guides, Web interactives, and hands-on activities. The remaining two units (Units 5, and 11) are classroom application facilitator guides, and have no video-related materials, but do offer additional American history content. The content is thematically organized within each unit, with all of the media combining to support the themes. All materials are delivered online. The Web site includes all materials created for the course, and has additional resources including a State Standards Chart that shows how the content of this series aligns with individual State Standards, a contextual timeline, primary source documents, lesson objectives, and unique Web interactives. Again, all of the materials can be used as stand-alone units, or support a four credit, graduate-level history course through Southern Oregon University. For this project the four participating education service agencies opted to provide the 30 plus hours to participants through 4 to 5 Saturday sessions.

Objective 2: Develop a facilitator's guide and a "how to use this workshop" videotape to accompany the series.

SOESD developed the facilitator guide "how to" video to guide instructors who might deliver *America's History in the Making, Volume 1* in a more traditional classroom setting. The facilitator's guide video, as well as the facilitator guides for each unit, are available through the learner.org Web site.

Objective 3: Implement the workshops with consortium partners (Southern Oregon ESD, Multnomah ESD, Grant Wood AEA and Riverside COE), for full use as a professional development series for at least twenty teachers in each of the consortium ESAs.

The project's goal was to recruit 100 teachers and the project recruited 88 teachers. A challenge in meeting the recruitment goal was that one of the partnering LEA's, Area Cooperative Education Services in New Haven, Connecticut, was unable to facilitate a workshop in their area, thus leaving the project. Of the 88 teachers 67 were participants as defined by the U.S. Department of Education (i.e., unduplicated teachers that participated in 50% or more of the project activities). Of the 67 teachers 20 were from Southern Oregon Education Service District, 15 were from Multnomah Education

Service District, 17 were from Grant Wood Area Education Agency, and 15 were from Riverside County Office of Education. Of the 67 teachers 2% taught Grade 5, 5% taught Grade 6, 15% taught Grade 7, 51% taught Grade 8, 10% taught Grade 9, 22% taught Grade 10, 24% taught Grade 11, and 10% taught Grade 12 (the total is higher than 100% because teachers taught more than 1 grade). The 21 teachers that were unable to start the project explained that random assignment to the fall or winter cohort meant that they had to withdraw because of family or coaching commitments occurring during the cohort they were assigned.

Objective 4: At the conclusion of the three-year grant period, make the series available nationally—free of charge—through the Web and the Annenberg Channel

America's History in the Making VOL 1 is a national multi-media course available to history teachers free of charge nation-wide via the Annenberg Media Web site (<http://www.learner.org/channel/courses/amerhistory/>). The materials were created to be as flexible as possible, so they could be used in formal professional development settings, or by individuals interested in learning about a particular subject and/or era. Teachers may take the course for history credit or peruse the Web site for specific information. Because the materials are available, free of charge, online, teachers in rural and remote school districts may take the class to achieve “highly qualified” teacher status. Credit arrangements are through Southern Oregon University History department. This online course has the potential to reach thousands of teachers over the course of the next 10 years, which is how long the materials will be made available. Annenberg Media, as well as project staff attend all major American history conferences each year including AHA, NCEE, OAH, etc., to promote broad outreach of the course materials.

The materials are available free through the Annenberg Media Web site (www.learner.org). The videos can be streamed, interactive web resources accessed and text materials printed from the learner.org website. Teachers may access the resources free or complete an online course transcribed through Southern Oregon University. Many school districts or regional service providers may choose to offer a facilitated workshop, which combines face-to-face sessions and online learning. All of the facilitator materials give guidance for leaders of these facilitated courses.

During the full grant period, the total number of teachers served was 67 in 4 education service agencies that serve approximately 77 school districts. The total spent was 1,997,430.78.

The potential for thousands more to benefit by taking the course for credit through Southern Oregon University, or any university that would like to adopt this program over the next ten years is also a consideration for the broader reach that this program offers. Teachers may take this course online through their own professional development departments.