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A Textbook Program is NOT for Us! Re-Imagining Failure Into New Possibilities

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A textbook program is NOT for us:
Re-Imagining failure into new possibilities

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Creating the UNO textbook pilot:

1. Heard about textbook programs at ACRL 2017
2. Did a literature review on textbook programs
3. Saw student needs in our socioeconomically diverse campus as a metropolitan-serving university
4. Would meet recruitment and retention goals for UNO
5. Asked to pilot the project at UNO Libraries
6. Wrote policies for textbook pilot project

Primed for success:

By July 2017, we had:

✓Buy-in from library administration - $$$

✓Buy-in from other subject librarian liaisons

✓Buy-in from the bookstore (partnership)

✓Buy-in from student government

✓Buy-in from advisors who saw student needs

✓Promoted program through targeted emails, campus website, library signs, daily campus newsletters, social media, and word-of-mouth

Summer 2017

Summer 2018

Why we failed

- Low checkouts
- Not sustainable
- Did not meet outside student expectations
- Marketing program could have been better

Lessons learned

- Students verbally said it was great but…
- Assessment can be difficult
- Be mindful with communication
- We needed all the gen ed textbooks or none

Embracing failure in the project

- Developed insight into our library culture

- Found interested partners for other low-cost textbook solutions

- Placed textbooks in reserve collection

Open Educational Resources

- OER changed the conversation

- 25 faculty from all colleges have expressed interest in OER

- Working with textbook pilot champions to generate interest in OER

Building the culture

- Agile decision making

- "Why not?" rather than "We can't"

- Relentless assessment

- Learning from our not-so-successful ideas

- Quickly rolling out adjusted programs, services, policies, or materials

Failure is an opportunity

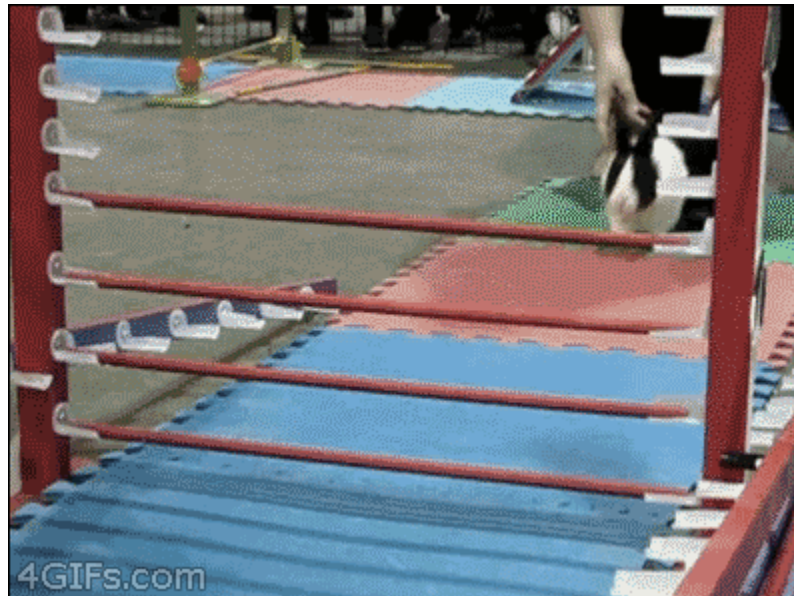Lack of success

+

Resilience and creativity

=

Better than you expected

Questions to ask

1. Did I define a clear problem?

2. Do I know what others have tried in this situation?

3. In solving this problem, what might success look like?

4. Is there more than one path to success?

5. Have I communicated well, with all stakeholders?

6. Do we have enough champions to make it work?

7. Will more money, people, or time help?

8. What does my assessment data say about the problem and my first solution?

9. Should I try again?

Remember…

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