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https://slcc.pressbooks.pub/attenuateddemocracy

Why OER?

The barriers to higher education are many – cost being a major one – and this is my own small assault on those barriers. In addition, standard textbooks tend to be boring and unnecessarily academic, so I've tried to counter that with a writing style that is down-to-earth and accessible for students who may not know anything about politics.

Attenuated Democracy: A Critical Introduction to US Government and Politics

Project Summary

This project was long in development and started with me creating content that I initially shared with only my students via a pdf in the LMS and then via a website. Then, with support from Open SLCC, I worked for a year to write a comprehensive textbook that approaches the subject from an elite theory perspective. The text emphasizes the structural, procedural, and socio-economic barriers to full democracy in the United States. In addition, it covers topics that are often not present in other texts—e.g., the secular nature of the U.S. Constitution, political violence, civil disobedience, corporate power, and economic inequality.

Open SLCC (Andrea Scott) helped me manage the project, connected me with an editor (Linda Bult), helped me put it into Pressbooks (Jen Hughes), and is supporting me to update the text with new examples, political developments, and data.

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Conclusions or Future OER Plans

This has been a rewarding project. For faculty who adopt the text, I have started to develop a support site where we can all share our assignments, exercises, etc.

Tips / Advice for Faculty Using or Creating OER

OERs can distinguish themselves from commercial materials via their ability to engage students with relevant content written in an approachable style.

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