

PROGRESS IN PROMOTING OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES IN THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

5.3

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Presentation: *Linda Michalowski, Vice Chancellor
Student Services and Special Programs*

*Lisa Petrides, Ph.D., President
Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education*

*Barbara Illowsky, Ph.D., Faculty Member
DeAnza College*

Issue

Textbooks have become a prohibitive cost for community college students, affecting access and hampering student success. As part of the System Strategic Plan implementation, the Chancellor's Office convened a series of Textbook Summits to investigate the reasons for high textbook costs and to propose approaches to improving affordability that are available and feasible for community colleges. Based on the proposals developed through the summits, the Board of Governors approved recommendations in May 2008 (see *Attachment*) for colleges to follow to address textbook costs on their campuses. One of the more innovative and far-reaching suggestions contained as a longer-term strategy was to support the awareness, development and adoption of free, open educational resources in community colleges.

Background

Open education resources are learning materials for which copyrights have expired, or that have been released with an intellectual property license that permits their free use or repurposing by others. These resources include items such as complete online courses, course materials, free digital and printed textbooks, streaming video of classroom lectures, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to transmit knowledge that have an impact on teaching and learning. Several prestigious universities including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rice University, Columbia University, California State University and others have developed online repositories of free, high-quality open education resources taking the open source software movement as a model. The Hewlett Foundation and others have been active in promoting the development, organization, use and reuse of these materials worldwide. The

Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources (CCCOER), spearheaded by Martha Kanter, Chancellor of the Foothill-DeAnza Community College District and including one-third of the California Community Colleges and many other colleges throughout the country, is working to promote the further development and use of these free educational materials in community colleges. The Chancellor Kanter was also a moving force behind the enactment of Assembly Bill 2261 (Ruskin) in 2008 that has authorized the Chancellor's Office to establish an Open Education Resources Center Pilot.

The Board will hear a presentation about the work being done by the CCCOER and will receive an update on implementation of Assembly Bill 2261.

ATTACHMENT

Recommendations to Reduce Textbook Costs to Promote Student Access and Success

Approved by the
Board of Governors
California Community Colleges
May 5-6, 2008

Short-term Recommendations

1. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Trustee Leadership.

The leadership of CEOs and Trustees is essential in improving the affordability of textbooks at local colleges. Recommend that CEO's and Trustees take leadership to focus college-wide attention and effort in their colleges and districts on increasing textbook affordability.

2. Textbook Adoption Guidelines.

Establishing textbook adoption guidelines at every college may be the single, most effective short-term strategy available to colleges to reduce the cost of textbooks for their students. Effective and well-implemented textbook adoption guidelines have the potential to reduce costs by raising faculty awareness of their ability to affect cost when making textbook selections and encouraging practices that have been proven to be effective towards that end. These approaches include increasing the number of early textbook adoptions and gaining faculty commitment to use the same book for at least two years, thereby increasing the number of used books available to students as well as their resale value.

Recommend and request that the Statewide Academic Senate, in cooperation with the Community College Committee of the California Association of College Stores (CCCCACS) and the System Office, develop a model set of college-level textbook adoption guidelines and/or develop a repository of exemplary textbook adoption guidelines currently in place at California community colleges and make them available to local colleges.

Recommend that every college or district develop textbook adoption guidelines under the leadership of faculty and in collaboration with bookstore managers and other stakeholders. When developing guidelines, colleges should consider including the recommendations developed by the Statewide Academic Senate in its report, *Textbook Issues: Economic Pressures and Academic Values*, Spring 2005, pages 17-20. The guidelines may deal with several components of a textbook adoption process including

selection of course materials; communication between faculty, publishers and the bookstore; and structures for maintaining recommended processes once developed. Textbook adoption guidelines should address cost to students and should address:

- Lower cost options such as customized cover and content editions, paperback versus hardback, alternatives to automatic bundling of supplemental materials with textbooks, and digital and/or free texts and course materials from open educational resource repositories when appropriate.
- Timeliness of textbook adoption submissions so that
 - Bookstores may secure the largest number of used books when available.
 - Ample time will be given to program coordinators serving disabled students to procure appropriate alternatives.
- Length of time for which a text will be adopted.
- Making textbooks required **only** if they will be used in class.
- Working with publishers and librarians to obtain complimentary copies for library reserves.

Once guidelines are developed, chief instructional officers and other administrators should:

- Monitor compliance with textbook adoption guidelines and timelines to ensure best price and/or availability of used books and the bookstore's ability to buy back textbooks from students.
- Encourage departments to be efficient in scheduling, since late scheduling means late textbook adoptions and fewer used books, and cancelling classes leads to great bookstore expense which is passed on to students.

3. College Textbook Affordability Task Force

Recommend that every college or district establish an ongoing textbook affordability committee or task force to develop textbook adoption guidelines and to evaluate and implement other strategies to improve textbook affordability. The textbook task forces should include representatives of the local academic senate, student government, librarians and disabled student services, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) offering student textbook related support, as well as the bookstore manager, chief instructional officer, chief student services officer, and other important stakeholders as determined by the college or district.

4. Clarify language in articulation policies for student transfer related to digital textbooks and learning materials.

Recommend that the System Office work with the California State University and the University of California to change language related to textbooks in transfer and articulation agreements to clarify that digital textbooks of high quality or equivalent digital learning materials are acceptable substitutes for commercial textbooks for transferable courses.

Recommend and request that the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges initiate a discussion of processes to accommodate digital textbooks and learning materials with their UC and CSU counterparts.

5. Educate college stakeholders on the available options for reducing textbooks costs.

Recommend that the System Office and local districts and colleges work to educate stakeholders through the following methods.

Administrators and Program Coordinators

- Work through various administrators and program coordinator association conferences to present workshops on textbook cost reduction strategies. The CCC Committee of the California Association of College Stores and the System Office have already developed a power point presentation, which may be adapted for this purpose.

Faculty

- In collaboration with local Academic Senates, include textbook adoption policies in orientation programs for both new full- and part- time faculty.
- Bookstore managers, local academic senates and chief instructional officers should collaborate to develop and sponsor faculty development workshops to educate faculty on negotiating strategies in working with publishers to obtain the desired texts, bundled or unbundled with supplemental materials, for the lowest price.

Students

- With the collaboration and concrete support of the chief executive officers, statewide and local academic senates and faculty, student services and instructional officers, and bookstore managers, the State Student Senate should develop student information brochures, materials and strategies to provide to local college associated student organizations to educate the general student population on strategies students can use to reduce textbook costs. Information should be made available in registration and orientation materials, student newspapers, posters and

brochures in bookstores and/or other effective means of communication with students.

- The Student Senate should consider providing information on strategies such as searching online, participating in student-to-student book swaps, bookstore buyback, setting up textbook rental programs, utilizing library resources, and/or making faculty aware of the availability of open educational resources as substitutes or supplements for commercially published textbooks and learning materials. The Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) have information already developed on their website that may assist students in this area.

6. Textbook Rental Programs.

Recommend that the System Office, in collaboration with representatives of colleges that have successfully implemented these programs, develop step-by-step guidelines for colleges interested in setting up textbook rental programs. The guidelines should be made available online and colleges should be encouraged to consider implementation.

Recommend that the System Office work with the Foundation for California Community Colleges to explore the potential for external funding to support start-up costs in the form of grants or loans to colleges that wish to start textbook rental programs.

7. Promote Library Textbook Reserve.

As a standard practice, publishers provide complimentary copies of textbooks that are adopted upon faculty request. Faculty are not always aware that this is the case.

Recommend that faculty work in collaboration with librarians to request a mutually agreed upon number of library reserve copies from publishers of any text and supplementary materials that are adopted.

Recommend that information about requesting complimentary library copies be included in local textbook adoption guidelines and new faculty orientations.

8. Provide student financial aid for textbooks in time for the first day of class.

Recommend that colleges examine their student financial aid policies and practices to ensure that students are able to obtain their books by the first day of class. Many colleges have accomplished this by implementing a book voucher or bookstore credit system or by providing students a first disbursement of financial aid funds on or prior to the first day of classes.

9. Explore systemwide volume discounts on custom cover editions of widely used textbooks.

Recommend that the System Office, in collaboration with the Foundation for California Community Colleges and the Community College Committee of the California Association of College Stores explore the possibility of pursuing volume discounts from publishers on customized cover and customized content textbooks widely used throughout the System.

Medium- to Long-term Recommendations

10. Promote awareness, development and adoption of free, open educational resources (OER) in the California Community Colleges as alternatives to high cost textbooks and learning materials.

Several prestigious universities (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rice University, etc.) have been involved in developing online repositories of free, high-quality open education resources taking the open source software movement as a model. The Hewlett Foundation and others have been active in promoting the development, organization, use and reuse of these materials worldwide. In addition, the Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources (CCCOER), a joint effort by the Foothill-DeAnza Community College District, including one-third of the California Community Colleges, and many other community colleges in various regions of the United States, is working to develop and use open educational resources (OER) in community colleges. Finally, at least one new commercial publisher is working to produce commercial-grade textbooks by leading academics, open for faculty to modify, and free for students to read online. Through this publisher, students will be able purchase alternative offline formats including print and audio versions at low costs.

Many types of open educational resources are readily available in a variety of disciplines for faculty use in lieu of traditional textbooks and learning materials. Currently however, there is a shortage of OER material appropriate to the particular needs of community college students. There is a need for OER products for community colleges that are easily reusable in diverse settings, accommodate students with disabilities, are available in more disciplines, and are made easily available to faculty in a way that meets or exceeds the current availability of commercial textbooks. The CCCOER and other organizations are working to make OER more widely available and useful. OER materials have the potential to be equivalent or superior replacements to traditional textbooks and learning materials – in terms of quality, accessibility, customizability, interoperability, cultural relevance, and price.

Recommend that the system support the OER concept; OER related legislation, and professional development to help faculty develop and use OER; as well as the continued efforts of organizations like CCCOER, and others to discover, create, and deploy OER.

Recommend that the System Office collaborate with the Statewide Academic Senate and the CCCOER on a pilot to expand the use of OER textbooks and materials in community colleges.

11. Support the participation of the California Community Colleges in the development of the California State University sponsored Digital Marketplace.

Although currently in the early design stages, once completed, the Digital Marketplace has the potential to significantly reduce the cost of textbooks and other learning materials, while increasing the potential to improve student learning. The system will provide faculty with a broad selection of commercially developed and/or free, OER content from which to select materials, and allow them to provide digital textbooks or create customized textbooks and materials that match their teaching styles and meet the learning needs of their students. Course materials will be available both in digital and print-on-demand formats.

Recommend that the System Office continue to participate in the design, development and implementation of the California State University Digital Marketplace.