



# Digest

Digest means an item that has been through internal review of the Chancellor's Office and the review entities. The item now has form and substance, and is officially "entered into Consultation." The Council reviews the item and provides advice to the Chancellor.

## CONSULTATION

**Title:** Textbook Affordability

**Date:** April 17, 2008

**Contact:** Linda Michalowski, Vice Chancellor, Student Services & Special Programs Division

**Issue:** As part of the Strategic Plan implementation of Goal A, College Awareness and Access, the Student Services and Special Programs Division has been holding a series of Textbook Affordability "Summits" to investigate options to reduce the cost of textbooks to students. This item proposes the committee's recommendations that the System Office, districts and colleges can implement to improve textbook affordability for students.

**Background:** The Board of Governor's heard an informational presentation on the topic at the March, 2008 meeting. See the March agenda, Item 6.2 for more information<sup>1</sup>.

According to several recent studies by the Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), and others, students nationally now spend an average of \$900 per year on textbooks -- or about half the average cost of tuition at 2-year colleges nationwide and 150 percent of the cost of community college enrollment fees in California. According to these studies textbook costs have been increasing at four times the rate of inflation. These studies also examine the reasons for escalating textbook costs. They liken the textbook market to the pharmaceutical industry where those who "prescribe" the product are different than those who pay for it, and point to several problems that give publishers an unusual degree of control over the market.

The System Office joined with the Community College Committee of the California Association of College Stores to launch a concerted systemwide effort to address textbook affordability by bringing together all of the interested parties in a series of Textbook Summits. The group includes representatives of the Academic Senate Textbook Affordability Task Force, the Student Senate, chief executive officers, chief instructional, business and student services officers, bookstore managers, librarians, publishers, used textbook retailers, representatives of the California State University (CSU) Digital Marketplace in which the CCCs are a partner and student access advocacy organizations.

**Recommendation:**

The Council will be asked to comment on the attached textbook affordability recommendations and to offer suggestions on how the Consultation Council can support their implementation.

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<http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/BoardofGovernors/BoardofGovernorsMeetingSchedule/March342008/Agenda/tabid/1050/Default.aspx>