Texas State University

Affordable Learning Materials and Texas State University

First Year Report from the Managing Textbook Costs Committee

2020

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Affordable learning materials initiatives already planned at Texas State could save students over $1.27 million in 2020.

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Content

Managing Textbook Costs Committee

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Executive Summary

Rapid increases in the price of textbooks and other learning materials over the past several years have contributed to the rise in costs of attendance at colleges and universities (The real cost of textbooks, n.d.). Exploration of affordable learning materials is increasingly of interest to students and parents, is actively encouraged by legislators, higher education coordinating entities, and influential foundations, and is being pursued by a growing faculty community of practice. In August 2019, Texas State University formed a Managing Textbook Costs Committee composed of students, faculty, and teaching and learning support staff to study the issue. During the 2019-2020 academic year the committee:

- scanned departments and colleges for on-going affordable learning materials activity;
- surveyed students and faculty about learning materials and their costs;
- explored best practices for adoption of an affordable learning materials initiative;
- conducted a literature review on affordable learning materials; and
- studied approaches for engaging faculty and students on the subject.

Current affordable learning activities at Texas State include low-cost textbook adoptions in at least 17 separate academic units and three pending faculty grant applications for adopting or creating open education resources (OER) to create several no-textbook-costs courses. In addition, the Faculty Senate and Student Government adopted resolutions supporting these efforts and the work of the Managing Textbook Costs Committee. The activity scan also revealed work to support faculty efforts in adopting low- and no-cost textbooks and other learning aids within the University Libraries, Office of Distance and Extended Learning (ODEL), University Bookstore, and the Office of the University Registrar.

Highlights of results from a faculty survey on affordable learning materials (n=312) includes:

- that only 19 percent of respondents use a traditional textbook for their courses;
- over 25 percent of respondents said that students in their classes pay nothing for learning materials in the courses they teach;
- more than 80 percent of those who answered the survey say they consider costs to students when selecting learning materials; and
- respondents indicate that almost a third of the academic departments have formally discussed the costs of learning materials.

While response rates to the student survey were low (n=275), those who did complete the instrument indicated that slightly more than half did not purchase required course materials for a course because of cost. Most reported that they spent less than $300 on textbooks per term. Meanwhile, just under 3 percent indicated the use of OER or other free materials were used in their course in contrast to the results of the faculty survey.

The literature review yielded a set of best practices for affordable learning materials adoptions including (Commonwealth of Learning, 2015):

- incorporating affordable learning materials into institutional strategy;
- incentivizing adoption and creation of low- and no-cost learning materials;
- developing skills and awareness among faculty about adoption of alternatives to traditional textbooks and other commercial learning supports; and
- valuing student engagement in integrating affordable learning materials into the curriculum

Literature on the subject also described common quantitative and qualitative student success measures for assessing the effectiveness of affordable learning materials initiatives

(Carey, Davis, Ferreras, & Porter, 2015; Lane, 2007; McAndrew & Cropper, 2010; Pitt, Ebrahimi, Arundel, McAndrew, & Coughlan, 2013; Weller, de los Arcos, Farrow, Pitt, & McAndrew, 2015). Course completion rates and end-of-course grades were among the quantitative measures. Students' ability to make use of the materials (obtain them and access them), student perceptions about the usefulness of the materials, and faculty perceptions about how much and how deeply students engaged with the alternative materials are among the common qualitative measures. Findings overall in studies of OER show modest positive or no impacts on student success measures and significant financial savings to students along with virtually unlimited access to the open learning materials.

After assessing the implications of this study, the Managing Textbook Costs Committee makes the following recommendations for action:

SHORT TERM
- Develop a faculty awareness campaign regarding affordble learning materials.
- Create a faculty incentive program for adoption and development of affordable learning materials.
- Initiate a catalog of textbooks that may be accessed from the library rather than being required for purchase.
- Develop and deploy a public dashboard indicating the successes of any affordable learning materials initiatives.
- Make low- and no-textbook-costs courses easily identifiable in the schedule of classes.

LONG TERM
- Create a low- no-textbook-costs path through the General Education Core Curriculum.
- Negotiate lower sales margins with the University Bookstore vendor.
- Build a culture that values the use of affordable learning materials.

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Efforts to lower the overall cost of attendance at colleges and universities in the United States draw the attention of legislators, higher education administrators, students, and their families. As a component of higher education costs passed to students, learning materials expenses including textbooks, subscriptions, online homework platforms, software, and hardware have increased significantly over recent years (The real cost of textbooks, n.d.; Vitez, 2018). These costs have not been as transparent to students upon enrollment as tuition and fees. Further, costly learning materials can have negative impacts on student learning, progress toward degree completion, access to higher education, and student welfare. When the costs of learning materials are high, surveys show that students (Nagle & Vitez, 2020):

- delay purchase of required learning materials sometimes well into the academic term;
- reduce the number of credit hours attempted in a given term; and
- defer or eliminate purchases of food and other necessities and trips to visit family during breaks in the academic calendar.

In addition to the abovementioned deleterious impacts on student success, the cost of learning aids is difficult for students to mitigate. Unlike most consumer markets, the textbook market disrupts the process where the consumer (student) has direct control over the evaluation of the product's (textbook or other learning tool's) price and utility. Instead, faculty evaluate and select the materials to be purchased. Utility and price of the learning materials are largely determined without the involvement of the student. Ultimately, the overall cost of the materials may be one of many considerations faculty use in making a choice. Marketing of the value of instructional aids is made to faculty by textbook publishers or technology vendors who may offer additional value to faculty by including free teaching tools and other instructional conveniences. Specifically, commercial textbook publishers have employed a series of strategies designed to encourage

the selection of new textbooks including (Nagle & Vitez, 2020):

- releasing new textbook editions more frequently;
- linking online homework platforms based on the text to one-time use digital access codes that must be purchased and cannot be resold; and
- supplying faculty who adopt a text with free teaching aids such as presentation slides, test banks, and complete course web sites.

Therefore, recognizing that faculty engagement and institutional buy-in are needed to reduce the costs of instructional materials, philanthropists, governments, activists, and higher education leadership have developed a variety of approaches to encourage the adoption of low- and no-cost instructional materials. Some institutions including the Austin Community College and Houston Community College systems have extended the idea to create so-called Z-Degrees (ACC Z-Degree, n.d.; HCC Z-Degree, n.d.) where entire academic programs feature courses free from student costs for learning materials.

An active area of exploration of affordable instructional materials is in OER. OER are learning materials (textbooks, articles, learning aids, test banks, presentation materials, teaching modules, and entire courses) with copyright protection that enables redistribution, retention, remixing, reuse, and revision of the materials at no cost (Open education, n.d.). As an example of philanthropic interest in OER, the Hewlett Foundation has invested millions of dollars in projects devoted to creating, storing, sharing, and studying the impact of OER in higher education (Education: open education,

THE HEWLETT FOUNDATION AND OER

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (https://hewlett.org) has led the exploration and growth of OER since 2002 through grantmaking that has evolved with the open education movement. The Hewlett Foundation has awarded 36 new grants in 2020 totaling $14 million.

n.d.). Faculty using OER are organized into learning communities ranging from groups formed at a campus level to the Open Education Community of Practice within the OER Commons organization (Open education community of practice, n.d.). Through these groups, faculty advocate with their colleagues for creation and adoption of no cost learning resources.

And in 2017, the Texas Legislature, like several other state governments, adopted Senate Bill 810 (S.B. No. 810, n.d.) to support the development and use of OER in higher education. The law calls for the creation of a public repository for OER, communication to students about courses that use OER for learning materials, and funding for a grant program for faculty to support projects that create and adopt OER. In part, the Managing Textbook Costs Committee is a response to this growing emphasis on OER and other affordable learning materials and a desire on the part of university leadership to build on what interest and activity might already exist at Texas State.

To further adoption of affordable learning materials, a Managing Textbook Costs Committee was formed in August 2019 at Texas State University to explore how learning materials are selected, the costs borne by students for their textbooks and other learning resources, and what efforts might be undertaken to make learning materials more affordable while preserving the best traditions of academic freedom and quality instruction. The committee met throughout the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020 and:
- conducted departmental and college scans for activity around existing use of affordable learning materials;
- surveyed faculty about how learning materials are selected and about faculty awareness of affordable learning materials strategies;
- surveyed students about the costs of learning materials;
- explored best practices for adoption of an affordable learning materials initiative including examination of existing and planned infrastructure and policies supporting or impeding adoption of affordable learning materials;
- reviewed literature regarding higher education studies of the impacts of affordable learning materials on learning outcomes and other measures of success; and

- investigated strategies for engaging faculty and students in creating awareness of affordable learning materials.

What follows describes the results of the activities of the Managing Textbook Costs Committee. This report incorporates a definition of affordable learning materials that includes OER, texts and resources that are free or at a low cost to students such as journal articles or library texts, and commercial textbook discount purchase plans commonly referenced as inclusive-access arrangements. Finally, a set of short and long-term recommendations for action are proffered.

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CURRENT AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS ACTIVITY

Chapter Two

CURRENT AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS ACTIVITY

While a relatively small number of Texas State faculty are exploring the use of affordable learning materials, the Managing Textbook Costs Committee discovered a broader interest in the topic. Likewise, academic support units are preparing to support faculty in adoption of affordable learning materials. Affordable learning materials initiatives already planned at Texas State could save students over $1.27 million in 2020.

Academic unit level activity

INCLUSIVE ACCESS TEXTBOOKS

Faculty teaching Biology 1330/1331 began incorporating affordable learning materials in courses in fall 2018. The courses involved had an approximate enrollment of 1500 students who would have been asked to acquire a textbook at just over $96. Working with the bookstore and the commercial textbook publisher, faculty established an Inclusive Access textbook arrangement. In Inclusive Access, the student's textbook cost is billed at the time of enrollment along with tuition and fees through Student Business Services. Students may opt out but the program provides a discounted book price of $68 per unit resulting in a $28 savings per student. Scaling for enrollment, Inclusive Access would save students over $42,000 per term ($28 savings x 1500 students = $42,000). Inclusive Access has been used in these courses in each subsequent term and through spring 2020, and students would save just over $160,000 if no students opt out of the discounted pricing program. Inclusive Access is also planned for adoption in several other courses.

COURSE	SECTIONS	ENROLLMENT	ORIGINAL PRICE	DISCOUNT PRICE	TOTAL SAVINGS
BIO 1330	12	2032	$204.98	$68.75	$276,819.36
BIO 1331	4	758	$204.98	$68.75	$103,262.34
BLAW 2361	1	50	$260.00	$79.68	$9,016.00
COMM 1310	106	4655	$128.50	$100.00	$132,667.50
CS 4328	2	100	$220.00	$44.00	$17,600.00
GEO 2410	4	170	$208.25	$29.05	$30,464.00
MATH 1319	18	863	$187.50	$100.00	$75,512.50
MATH 1329	21	915	$166.50	$100.00	$60,847.50
MATH 2417	16	624	$223.00	$68.75	$96,252.00
MATH 2471	15	429	$191.75	$47.50	$61,883.25
MATH 2472	7	276	$191.75	$47.50	$39.813.00
MATH 2473	1	38	$191.75	$50.00	$5,386.50
MATH 3323	6	181	$191.75	$50.00	$25,656.75
MC 3367	2	402	$111.00	$43.75	$27,034.50
MGT 3303	13	993	$127.25	$100.00	$27,059.25
MKT 3343	3	580	$166.00	$100.00	$38,280.00
PHYS 1310	7	630	$260.00	$68.75	$120,487.50
PHYS 1320	5	450	$208.00	$68.75	$62,662.50
PHYS 1340	2	200	$171.00	$68.75	$20,450.00
POSI 2310	21	4249	$85.00	$83.75	$5,311.25
POSI 2320	15	1782	$85.00	$83.75	$2,227.50
PSY 3315	1	96	$152.75	$100.00	$5,064.00
REL 1300	3	60	$98.75	$39.37	$3,562.80
SOCI 1310	5	414	$143.00	$81.00	$25,668.00

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

For the MUS 2313 course, faculty in the School of Music adopted Cengage Unlimited in lieu of a textbook for the Spring 2020 term in a pilot program. For $119, students had access to the necessary text for the course and also had access to 76 other textbook titles covering subjects in multiple disciplines. Prior to the pilot program, students were asked to purchase a textbook retailing at just over $230. If the program is successful in the pilot, a broader adoption across multiple sections of the course is anticipated for Spring 2021.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Dr. Jeffery Helgeson has adopted original source documents and several other OER to drive down the cost of textbooks for students in two undergraduate history courses. He has shared this work with colleagues in the department and is actively encouraging others to consider affordable learning materials when planning courses.

Grant applications in support of affordable learning materials

OER GRANT APPLICATIONS

Three formal grant applications were prepared by faculty in response to a call for proposals by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) OER Grant Program (Open educational resources grant program, n.d.). The grant program supports two types of grant applicants: adoption grants where existing OER are integrated into a course and development grants where faculty would create new OER that will subsequently be designed into a course. One Texas State proposal would explore adoption of OER in a general education history course. Another, if funded, would allow for the development of OER in a course included in the Southwest Studies program. The third proposes to redesign the general education College Writing II course to use OER. Combined, the projects could result in thousands of dollars in savings to students annually. Members of the Managing Textbook Costs committee from the ODEL and the University Libraries actively advertised the grant opportunity at Texas State, encouraged these applications, and assisted with information useful to describing the grant project and objectives.

University support for the initiative

FACULTY SENATE AND STUDENT GOVERNMENT RESOLUTIONS

The Texas State Faculty Senate and Student Government adopted resolutions in spring 2020 supporting an affordable learning materials initiative. Copies of both resolutions are attached as appendices to this report.

TEXAS STATE AND THE APLU POWERED BY PUBLICS INITIATIVE

Texas State and 7 other universities have worked together since 2018 to share ideas about "data-informed approaches to increasing achievment and success of under-resourced students" including an planning for an affordable learning materials project.

GENERAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

In spring 2020, the co-chairs of the Managing Textbook Costs Committee provided a report on the activities of the committee to the Texas State General Education Council (GEC). The GEC has expressed continuing interest in an affordable learning materials initiative at Texas State and was supportive in encouraging applications to the THECB OER Grant Program which funds faculty creation and adoption of OER in general education courses.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

University Libraries provide leadership in the area of textbook affordability for students through several simultaneous initiatives. By way of staff professional development, librarians recently attended a training from the Open Textbook Network, a membership-based OER consortium that will help faculty discover and vet OER content. Also, in the area of discovery, the library's acquisitions teams are piloting a tool from vendor EBSCO intended to assist librarians in discovery of OER and digital rights management (DRM)-free e-Books for courses. Acquisitions is also creating a catalog of existing e-Book content that comes with the rights for students to print-on-demand at low or no cost, and strategizing campus partnerships for affordable printing services. In addition to this catalog, the librarians plan to increase discoverability of this content through enhanced metadata.

Meanwhile, the library is completing a benchmarking assessment of undergraduate syllabi, determining the full extent of affordable textbook adoption in the General Education Curriculum. This should be complete by the end of summer 2020. An initial assessment was

submitted by mid-spring. Lastly, in fall 2020, the library will launch a Canvas-based faculty-focused "Textbook Affordability Community of Learning" initiative to facilitate a community of faculty learning and to advance this issue. The plan is for the faculty participants to launch their own continuing Community of Practice from this project.

OFFICE OF DISTANCE AND EXTENDED LEARNING
ODEL has offered and will continue to offer faculty professional development workshops on OER. Over 30 faculty participants have already engaged with the workshops. Additionally, instructional design and course development staff in ODEL have participated in a variety of professional development and self-guided study experiences to sharpen abilities in the department to support faculty who wish to pair course or program redesign with adoption of affordable learning materials. The department has also invested a technical toolkit that will enable the creation and adaptation of OER in support of faculty teaching.

UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE
The University Bookstore is actively engaging faculty and commercial publishers to arrange discounted Inclusive Access textbooks where students are offered a discounted digital textbook access plan. As noted above, more than 25 courses will opt for one of these plans for their students in fall 2020. Auxiliary Services and the University Bookstore have developed an Inclusive Access adoption procedure document in collaboration with the Office of Registrar and Student Business Services to assist faculty in exploring this affordable learning materials option. In addition, the University Bookstore has technical capacity for OER textbook adoptions that can be selected by faculty and accessed as easily through the bookstore as any other text.

OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR
The Office of the University Registrar maintains a web page that provides "a searchable list of courses and sections of courses that require or recommend only open educational resources." In addition, the Registrar will deploy by spring 2021 an attribute in the published schedule of classes indicating if a course requires or recommends some form of affordable learning materials.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

In 2018, Texas State University joined 130 other higher education institutions to participate in the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) Powered by Publics initiative (Powered by Publics, n.d.). Organized in a work group with other institutions that enroll a high percentage of Pell-eligible students, Texas State began sharing ideas with their peers about student financial wellness and affordable learning materials as contributors to student success. The work group is currently developing process maps for designing and deploying successful affordable learning materials initiatives.

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AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS FACULTY SURVEY

Chapter Three

AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS FACULTY SURVEY

The Managing Textbook Costs Committee conducted an online survey of faculty in March 2020 to assess their knowledge and use of affordable learning materials. Though the response rate was only 9 percent, respondents came from every college with the exception of the Honors College and spanned multiple departments within each college through all faculty ranks. Analysis of responses suggests many faculty would like to pursuing affordable learning materials for their courses.

Seventy-three percent of faculty respondents reported that they select the learning material used in their courses. However, only 19 percent use traditional textbooks, suggesting that faculty would not necessarily be hesitant to adapt to different learning materials. Twenty-six percent of the respondents estimated that their students already pay $0 for the learning materials in their class. When asked to rate what factors were most important in selecting learning materials, faculty rated "cost to student" third highest, behind only "clarity" and "complete coverage of subject matter." Eighty-three percent of all faculty said that they considered cost when selecting learning materials.

Thirty-one percent of respondents reported that their academic departments had formally discussed the cost of learning materials, while another 30 percent said they would be interested in having departmental discussions. Sixty percent said that they had heard of OER; however, only 34 percent had heard of textbook purchasing plans such as Direct Digital Access and IncludED Access. Together, these statistics indicate that responding faculty are both aware of and concerned about the cost of learning materials, as well as open to making changes to reduce these costs.

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BEST PRACTICES FOR AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS INITIATIVES

Chapter Four

BEST PRACTICES FOR AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS INITIATIVES

When considering how to tackle the total cost of learning materials to students, the committee looked for best practices that can help with a multitude of learning material types including textbooks, online homework systems, software, hardware, and course syllabi. In 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Commonwealth of Learning published Guidelines for OER in Higher Education (Commonwealth of Learning, 2015). The report provides a summary of best practice guidelines for institutions, faculty, and student bodies that endeavor to establish OER initiatives. Many of their guidelines can be adapted broadly to all types of affordable learning materials.

FOR INSTITUTIONS
- Incorporate affordable learning materials into institutional strategy.
- Provide incentives such as stipends or release time for creation and adoption of affordable learning materials into the curriculum.
- Establish a process for evaluating the quality of affordable learning materials.
- Adapt institutional copyright policies to encourage open resource licensing schemes.
- Provide infrastructure that supports redistribution, retention, remixing, reuse, and revision of affordable learning materials.
- Create a review process for the implementation of affordable learning materials.

FOR FACULTY
- Develop skills to evaluate alternatives to commercial textbooks and other commercial learning materials.
- Seek skills development for remixing, reusing, and revising of affordable learning materials.
- Provide data including student feedback to be used to evaluate the success of affordable learning materials initiatives.
- Develop understandings of various copyright strategies such as Creative Commons licensing.

FOR STUDENTS
- Advocate for affordable learning materials.
- Provide constructive feedback for faculty about the quality and effectiveness of affordable learning materials.
- Use affordable learning materials for self-study.

A formal beginning for an affordable learning materials initiative may be structured based on creating awareness on the topic first followed by steps toward a broader implementation. The Open Textbook Network, an organization devoted to the promotion and effective use of OER, teaches that course transformation and faculty transformation follow a model of "awareness to engagement to adoption" (Ernst, n.d.). Short-term strategies can tackle the task of awareness and early adoption strategies. Engagement bridges the divide between short- and long-term strategies. The full adoption or transformation will be part of our long-term goals.

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STUDENT SUCCESS
MEASURES FOR
AFFORDABLE
LEARNING MATERIALS
INITIATIVES

Chapter Five

STUDENT SUCCESS MEASURES FOR AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS INITIATIVES

In repeated surveys of faculty about adoption of affordable learning materials and particularly use of OER (Carey, Davis, Ferreras, & Porter, 2015; Lane, 2007; McAndrew & Cropper, 2010; Weller, de los Arcos, Farrow, Pitt, & McAndrew, 2015), impact of adoption of these materials on student success emerges as a concern. In response, many published evaluations of affordable learning materials initiatives include some evaluation of efficacy of the new materials on student learning and other student success metrics (Hilton III, 2016; McNeal, 2016; Redden, 2011; Rodriguez, 2018; Ruth, 2017). While the student success measures vary from study-to-study, more common measures include a mix of quantitative and qualitative variables:

- course completion rates (Croteau, 2017; Fischer, Hilton III, Robinson, & Wiley, 2015);
- course withdrawal rates (Bazeley, et al., 2015; Croteau, 2017);
- ending course grades (Bazeley, et al., 2015; Colvard, Watson, & Park, 2018; Croteau, 2017; Robinson, 2015);
- number of credits taken per term (Fischer, Hilton III, Robinson, & Wiley, 2015; Robinson, 2015);
- student perceptions of affordable learning materials (Bazeley, et al., 2015; Griffiths, et al., 2018; Pitt, Ebrahimi, Arundel, McAndrew, & Coughlan, 2013); and
- faculty perceptions of affordable learning materials (Griffiths, et al., 2018; Pitt, Ebrahimi, Arundel, McAndrew, & Coughlan, 2013).

Research on the Efficacy of Affordable Learning Materials Use in Higher Education Applications

Most research regarding affordable learning materials adoption and student success has been conducted as a result of OER adoption initiatives. A regularly updated review of the OER research literature is maintained John Hilton III, Stacie Mason, and Virginia Clinton on the Open Education Group web site: https://openedgroup.org/review. Taken broadly, research findings across all the success variables are neutral. When compared to the student success achieved when using traditional, commercially-produced learning materials, there are typically no observed differences in learning outcomes after adoption of OER. Yet, when student costs are reduced by use of affordable learning materials, a neutral impact on student success metrics is often considered an acceptable outcome.

COURSE COMPLETION RATES

Researching the outcomes of the Affordable Learning Georgia initiative, Emily Croteau (2017), found no significant difference in course completion rates across 8 courses when comparing pre- and post-course transformations from traditional textbook use to adoption of OER (p. 100). Meanwhile, the same study reported that students saved approximately $760,000 in learning materials expenses. Fischer, Hilton, Robinson, and Wiley (2015) researched a no-cost textbook adoption across multiple institutions comparing the course completion rates of over 16,000 students in courses using OER to those in a control group—students enrolled in comparable courses using a traditional textbook. Again, while students saved on textbook costs in courses where OER was adopted, course completion rates in OER courses were found to be the same as the completion rates in courses where traditional textbooks were used (p. 7).

COURSE WITHDRAWAL RATES

In a study of large enrollment courses at the University of Georgia, Colvard, Watson, and Park (2018) found a 2.68% drop in withdrawal rates in OER-based courses comparing those courses to courses using traditional textbooks during the same academic term (p. 269). Breaking down the data further, the researchers found that students eligible for

Pell grants withdrew from courses less often in OER courses (4.43%). Also studying withdrawal rates, Emily Croteau (2017) reviewed data across 24 courses in the Affordable Learning Georgia initiative and found no difference between the historical withdrawal rates when traditional textbooks were used and in subsequently transformed courses that adopted OER (p. 79).

ENDING COURSE GRADES
Colvard et al. (2018) found that "there was a statistically significant improvement in final course grades for students in OER courses compared to non-OER courses" (p. 268) in a study involving eight undergraduate courses at the University of Georgia. The same study found a notable increase in grades in OER courses for students who receive Pell aid and a 13.13 percent grade increase in OER courses for non-white students (p. 269). Part-time student performance also improved. Meanwhile, Thomas Robinson (2015) compared the effects on student learning outcomes across seven courses taught at seven different institutions using OER and found (while controlling for a number of potentially confounding factors) no statistically significant difference in ending course grades in five of the seven courses when compared to historical performance in those courses before the adoption of OER and when traditional learning materials were in use. The remaining two (business and psychology courses) showed slightly diminished student performance where OER were used when compared to historical student performance in these same courses.

NUMBER OF CREDITS TAKEN PER TERM
In research across multiple institutions, Fischer, Hilton, Robinson, and Wiley (2015) found that students enrolled in courses using affordable learning materials enrolled in more credit hours during the term than their peers who had no OER courses in their schedules (p. 10). Looking to the semester immediately following the initial term under study, the researchers found that "even when controlling for differences in previous enrollment, students in courses using OER enrolled in a significantly higher number of credits in the next semester" (p. 11). Thomas Robinson (2015) also found that students in OER-based courses enrolled in a higher number of credit hours than their peers who had no courses making use of OER.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS

Griffiths et al. (2018) reports that students found the OER materials were "more relevant, easier to navigate, and better aligned with learning objectives than traditional textbooks" (p. iv). Meanwhile Pitt, Ebrahimi, Arundel, McAndrew, and Coughlan (2013), found that 83% students expressed satisfaction with their OER course materials (p. 7) and 87% would recommend these materials to their fellow students (p. 6).

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS

Almost all faculty in the study of affordable learning material use (Pitt, Ebrahimi, Arundel, McAndrew, & Coughlan, 2013) found that students who completed the course under study had gained mastery of the subject matter. Bliss, Hilton, and Wiley (2013) surveyed faculty using OER and found that 89% indicated that their students were equally or better prepared by open resources compared to traditional textbooks (p. 10). Likewise, Jung, Bauer, and Heaps (2017) asked a similar question of faculty and found 88% agreed that students using OER were equally or better served by the more affordable texts.

PROPOSED STUDENT SUCCESS MEASURES FOR TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Following this review, Texas State University may want to link an affordable learning materials initiative with a mix of quantitative and qualitative student success measures. A sample of such measures may include:

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES
- Pass rates on standardized assessment
- Number of students demonstrating mastery of learning outcomes
- Course completion rates
- End of course grades
- Number of student who have obtained required learning materials at the beginning of the term
- Measured engagement with the learning materials

QUALITATIVE MEASURES
- Student confidence with learning using the materials
- Student impression of alignment of materials to measured learning

on assessments
- Student evaluation of the currency, relevance, and utility of the learning materials
- Student comparison of quality of low-cost learning materials to traditional sources

Prior to beginning pilot projects or funding grant initiatives, the university should collect baseline data at the course level regarding course grades, historical standardized exam performance, drop/withdrawal rates, and course completion rates. Establishing baseline student performance on these metrics with collection of demographic data as well will improve subsequent assessment of the efficacy of any changes to course materials. Likewise, qualitative measures such as perceptions by students of their ability to access and process the material and perceptions of faculty regarding student mastery of learning objectives can be collected and will allow comparison to other studies of affordable learning materials projects. Requiring the collection and reporting of a base set of metrics should accompany any grant or award to fund pilot projects.

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STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT AND
AFFORDABLE
LEARNING MATERIALS

Chapter Six

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS

Affordable instructional materials have the potential to directly impact accessibility and boost student engagement in higher education. Unfortunately, the current campus environment seems to indicate that cost is a major barrier for students when making decisions about instructional materials. A 2011 study conducted by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group reported 7 in 10 students did not purchase a textbook at least once due to cost (Redden, 2011). If students do buy the textbook, many delay purchasing until they receive their financial aid. And despite acknowledging a negative impact on learning without the textbook, students still make the unfortunate choice to forego purchasing due to cost. Students also reported being negatively impacted by a publisher releasing a new edition due to 1) eliminating the potential to resell their used book and 2) preventing them from buying a used textbook. The practice of "bundling," packaging a textbook with CDs and passcodes to material, can also be a hurdle because codes get lost and material expires. In some cases, material is published exclusively for an institution, also making access to used textbook resources difficult (Nagle & Vitez, 2020).

As universities begin to adopt affordable learning materials initiatives, savings reports climb into the millions of dollars. For example, OpenStax claimed $145 million in savings for the 2017-18 academic year with their resources alone (Ruth, 2017). Indiana University claims a $3 million savings for students each year (Cortez, 2017). Universities and community colleges are promoting the adoption of Z-Degrees, degrees with no textbook costs and all based on the use

of OER. The state of California announced 38 community colleges would adopt Z-degrees by 2020 (McNeal, 2016). But the initiative is even closer to home because both Austin and Houston Community College are offering the opportunity in a number of academic programs (ACC Z-Degree, n.d.; HCC Z-Degree, n.d.). The appeal for program designs like Z-degrees is the straightforward cost of a program. This is especially appealing in an environment high in Pell eligible, first-generation, minority students. OER removes the barrier and uncertainty of cost for enrolling in a program. For many students, use of OER also effectively eliminates any gap between the beginning of instruction and the student's access to the text or other learning materials.

Although it is easy to focus on the cost savings to students, results from the Achieving the Dream's Open Education Resource OER Degree Initiative reported "students who took multiple OER courses on average earned more college credits over time than otherwise similar students who took no OER courses" (Griffiths, et al., 2020). Furthermore, cumulative exposure to OER courses may offset the number of hours students work outside of school allowing more focus time on their studies though further research in this area would help to better understand the extent of this potential benefit.

The Student PIRGs, a nationwide organization aimed at helping students organize and mobilize around campaigns important to them, has an active campaign focused on making textbooks affordable (Student PIRGs, n.d.). Examples of specific activities this organization is involved in include encouraging statements signed by professors in support of open textbook adoption, campus-wide programs encouraging open textbook use, and publishing reports "documenting the problems and harms with traditional textbooks and why open textbooks are the solution" (Nagle & Vitez, 2020). Currently, Texas is not listed as a state in which the Student PIRGs are active. However, the organization's resources may be helpful as student interest on campus grows.

APPLICABILITY TO TEXAS STATE
The University Star published an article in 2018 reporting that Student Government had launched an initiative to bring OER to

the university (Rodriguez, 2018). Student Government also joined an advocacy group made up of 25 student governments across Texas to advocate for open-source textbooks during the 86th Texas legislative session. The article also highlighted work done by the English Department to create an open-source book for use in introductory writing classes. More recently, Student Government passed a statement about the use of OER on campus.

In early March 2020, the Managing Textbook Costs Committee surveyed a subsection of the student population at the university. Of 7,000 students surveyed, 275 responded (at least partially), a 3.9 percent response rate. Although a mix of students responded, undergraduate, residential students from a variety of disciplines provided most of the responses (84 percent). Of this sampling, 28 percent reported taking out loans, 26 percent have outside employment, 21 percent have grant assistance, and 7 percent have used a food bank. Some students had preferences for digital versus print textbooks (8 percent vs 35 percent respectively) but more than half (57 percent) simply preferred the cheapest option. As for knowledge of OER, 10 percent of students had heard of OER before the survey, 6 percent reported they may have heard of OER previously, and an overwhelming 84 percent had not heard of OER before the survey.

Although 86 percent of students acquired some or all of their required materials, slightly more than half (55 percent) reported not purchasing course materials or the textbook for a course this semester due to cost. Some students (22 percent) felt they received a poorer grade without the textbook and 12 percent reported taking fewer courses due to course material cost. When students did not have the textbook or required course materials, they borrowed from friends, searched the library or online for free equivalents, or took the risk of simply not having the resource. In some instances, students mentioned that without the textbook they made sure to go to class, listen well, and take good notes. Others stated that although they did not buy the course materials they fared "pretty well."

Of those students purchasing textbooks, 71 percent reported spending $299 or less (20 percent spending <$100, 28 percent between 100-200, and 23 percent between $200-299). Approximately 22 percent spent between $300-$499, while just a dozen spent more than $500

during the survey semester. Notably, 2 students spent over $900 on required course textbooks (one Nursing undergraduate student and a master's student who did not identify the program). Approximately 78 percent spent less than $200 on other required course materials (e.g. clickers, online access codes) in spring 2020. As for recommended course materials, there is about a 60/40 divide between those students who acquire all or some versus those who acquire few to none. And a majority (57 percent) of those who do choose to acquire recommended materials and spent less than $100 whereas 27 percent spent between $100-299 in spring 2020.

SOURCE	%
PURCHASED FROM AN INTERNET VENDOR	19.3%
RENTED FROM A RENTAL SERVICE	14.2%
PURCHASED AT A CAMPUS BOOKSTORE	11.1%
DOWNLOADED FROM THE INTERNET (NO COST)	9.4%
I PURCHASED USED COPIES OF TEXTBOOKS	8.0%
DOWNLOADED FROM THE INTERNET (WITH A COST)	7.6%
BOUGHT DIGITAL CHAPTERS OF A BOOK	7.1%
BORROWED/SHARED MATERIALS (E.G., FROM A CLASSMATE)	5.3%
ACCESSED THROUGH THE LIBRARY COURSE RESERVES	4.5%
PURCHASED A COURSE PACK CREATED BY MY INSTRUCTOR	4.5%
BORROWED FROM A LIBRARY	3.3%
USED OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OR OTHER FREE MATERIALS	2.8%
RECEIVED AN INSTRUCTOR SUPPLIED COURSE PACK (NO COST)	1.6%
OTHER	1.4%
TOTAL	100%

Responses to how students acquired their course materials was varied enough to warrant a table of all options provided to students in the survey. Students were asked to select all that applied. Notice the campus bookstore was the third most utilized source below rental service and purchased through an internet vendor. A small number, 18 or 2.8 percent, of students selected "Used Open Educational Resources or other free materials." Sources noted in the "Other" section were having to purchase specialty paper stock (a Communication Design student), interlibrary loans, and renting

through the bookstore. Sources noted in the "Other" section were having to purchase specialty paper stock (a Communication Design student), interlibrary loans, and renting through the bookstore.

When asked if required course materials were assigned or used in class, 55 percent of students report Frequently or Always whereas 17 percent reported required materials were used either Rarely or Never.

Students seem to lean toward selling their textbooks back at the end of the semester in that 25 percent of students reported keeping all their textbooks and course materials. The remaining either sell back all or a portion of their textbooks and materials. Rationale for keeping materials is primarily relevance to the student's major and/or keeping materials that may have future use. One particularly entrepreneurial student reported selling textbooks to the incoming class directly rather than selling to a third-party provider or the campus bookstore.

7

STUDENT WELL-BEING, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
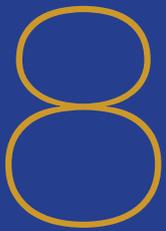
Chapter Seven

STUDENT WELL-BEING, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Surveys and research about affordable learning materials suggests that adoption of low- and no-cost textbooks and other teaching aids is likely to have positive impacts on student well-being as well as equity and inclusion. When surveyed, many students reported that they had forgone textbook purchases due to food and housing insecurity (Dubick, Mathews, & Cady, 2016). Among the recommendations of the 2016 Hunger On Campus report is to lower textbook costs in order to help students cope with hunger and homelessness. Likewise, a 2018 nationwide poll of college and university students found that 40% of students reported skipping meals and 33% forgo trips home to visit family as a tradeoff for purchasing learning materials (Cengage, 2018).

A study involving 744 students at a large public university in 2018 (Nusbaum, Cuttler, & Swindell, 2020) compared student survey responses across OER and non-OER introductory psychology courses. Researchers found that first generation college students were more likely to drop a class and take fewer classes as a result of textbook costs than other students (p. 4). Further, when compared with first generation college students as a whole, first generation college students who identified as part of an ethnic minority more often reported that they earned a poor grade because they could not afford the textbook (p. 6). Similarly, a 2020 study of university students in Southern California (Jenkins, Sánchez, Schraedley, Hannans, & Navick, 2020) found that Latinx students in the survey were more likely to suffer the negative effects of higher textbook costs than the overall survey rates. These effects included not have access to course materials on the first day of class, avoiding a class due to textbook costs, and failing a college course (p. 5). The study also found that

low-income students and first-generation college students reported negative effects of textbook costs disproportionately to students outside this demographic (p. 6). While all students are likely to appreciate reduced textbook costs as a result of an affordable learning materials initiative, these surveys and studies and other like them indicate that creating courses that use low- and no-cost learning materials can help historically under-served students access quality higher education.

Additionally, the nature of copyright for OER fosters access and equity. While many copyright licensing formats may be effectively used with OER including the Free Art License (Free Art License 1.3, n.d.) and the Public Domain Dedication and License (Open Data Commons Public Domain Dedication and License, n.d.), the suite of Creative Commons Licenses (Home, n.d.) is most often used when licensing learning materials for open access. The most open of the six Creative Commons license types is CC BY which "allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, as long as attribution is given to the creator" (About CC licenses, n.d.). This licensing scheme would allow faculty and students to retain the textbook or other teaching aid to build a personal learning library, permit translations to support non-native English speakers, and support captioning, audio recording, or remixing the content as an aid to students who may need accommodation. All these options create access to learning and support institutional efforts toward equity.

8

IMPLICATIONS OF THE
WORK OF THE
COMMITTEE

Chapter Eight

IMPLICATIONS OF THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Scans of affordable learning materials activity at Texas State and surveys of faculty and students reveal emerging awareness of options related to affordable learning materials. While off to a promising start with active grant applications for and implementations of low- and no-cost textbook projects, overall activity lacks coordination and communication. Identifying, describing, evaluating, and celebrating affordable learning materials work is currently challenging and the scattered nature of the initiatives does not promote benefits of scale. Strategically encouraging affordable learning materials initiatives, for example, through an internal grant program would begin to centralize information, establish and coordinate faculty support systems, and elevate awareness of the value of considering low- and no-cost learning materials when developing courses. In addition, evaluating and sharing the success of affordable learning materials projects would drive improved teaching and learning across and between academic divisions. Standardizing processes for adopting these strategies would streamline workflows and encourage additional efforts by leveraging lessons learned and institutionalizing expertise in support units such as the Office of the University Registrar, University Libraries, ODEL, and the University Bookstore.

Another short-term goal made easier by a deliberate affordable learning materials initiative will be to create awareness among students, parents, and other stakeholders about sincere efforts to save students money on textbooks and other learning aids while maintaining high-quality teaching and learning. Developing processes to make transparent the costs of learning materials associated with particular courses will empower students. Feedback from students, parents, legislators, and other stakeholders clearly signals a desire

to create paths to affordability in higher education. The ability to describe the impact of Texas State efforts to make use of more affordable learning materials while achieving academic excellence will establish another point of institutional pride.

A synthesis of the implications presented here inform specific short-term and long-term recommendations from the Managing Textbook Costs Committee.

Recommendations for Action

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a faculty awareness campaign for affordable learning materials (Belikov and Bodily, 2016)
    1.1. Action Items
        1.1.1. Establish partnership between the University Libraries, Office of Faculty Development, ODEL, and the Managing Textbook Costs Committee.
        1.1.2. Study research and survey faculty to uncover locally meaningful issues.
        1.1.3. Develop and deploy a campaign to include training, marketing, promotion, and a communication plan.
    1.2. Required resources
        1.2.1. Cross-departmental task force
    1.3. Timeline
        1.3.1. Develop in three months
        1.3.2. Deploy for two years

2. Develop a short-term faculty incentive program focused on engagement and then adoption of affordable learning solutions
    2.1. Action items
        2.1.1. Secure funding for a faculty incentive program from Electronic Course Fees for FY21 (see draft plan in report appendix)
        2.1.2. Develop guidelines and processes for a faculty incentive program

      2.1.3. Create a list of required student success measures to be used to document success of the incentive program

      2.1.4. Establish a committee to review faculty incentive awards

      2.1.5. Market the incentive program

      2.1.6. used to document success of the incentive program

      2.1.7. Establish a committee to review faculty incentive awards

      2.1.8. Market the incentive program

  2.2. Required resources

      2.2.1. Funding for an incentive program and its administration

      2.2.2. Faculty committee for review of incentive awards

      2.2.3. Human resource commitments from academic support units including the University Libraries, ODEL, and Office of Faculty Development

  2.3. Timeline

      2.3.1. Develop in Fall 2020

      2.3.2. Deploy in Spring 2021

3. Develop a "Textbooks at the Library" catalog (Bailey and Agee, 2016)

  3.1. Action items

      3.1.1. Establish partnership between the University Bookstore and the University Libraries to receive a list of textbooks adopted by faculty for courses

      3.1.2. Create process for the University Libraries to evaluate the list against library holdings and publish a list of matched materials on the library website

      3.1.3. Import OER already assigned in courses into library's repository and catalog for preservation and discoverability

  3.2. Required resources

      3.2.1. Library and bookstore staff resources

3.3. Timeline
    3.3.1. Develop in Fall 2020
    3.3.2. Deploy in Spring 2021

4. Develop a dashboard on success toward objectives of an affordable learning materials initiative
  4.1. Action items
    4.1.1. Identify success measures (both student and institutional) for an affordable learning materials initiative
    4.1.2. Gather baseline data on all success measures
    4.1.3. Establish protocols for gathering data from target success measures throughout the affordable learning materials initiative
    4.1.4. Set timelines and procedures for publishing success measures
  4.2. Required resources
    4.2.1. Staff and faculty time to collect and report necessary dashboard data
  4.3. Timeline
    4.3.1. Develop in Fall 2020 in stages
    4.3.2. Deploy stages as developed in rolling release
5. Identify courses using low to no-cost materials in the schedule of classes
  5.1. Action items
    5.1.1. Complete actions by the Office of the University Registrar to add appropriate attributes to the Banner system
    5.1.2. Promote the use of these attributes among academic units during the creation of the schedule of classes
  5.2. Required resources
    5.2.1. Staff time to promote the use of the attributes
    5.2.2. Staff time to make use of the attribute when building the schedule of classes
  5.3. Timeline
    5.3.1. Develop attributes through the Office of the University Registrar in Summer and early Fall 2020
    5.3.2. Make available for Fall 2021 schedule of classes

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt a path within the General Education Core Curriculum with at least one course section using zero-cost learning materials
    1.1. Action items
        1.1.1. Identify a likely path of courses through the general education core curriculum where OER may be adopted
        1.1.2. Identify suitable OER resources through a faculty review and adoption process
        1.1.3. Incentivize instructional design and course development using OER in targeted course sections
        1.1.4. Identify the zero-cost learning materials path for students
        1.1.5. Measure project success
    1.2. Required resources
        1.2.1. Staff time in the University Libraries, ODEL, and Office of Faculty Development
        1.2.2. Faculty time in redesign of targeted course sections
    1.3. Timeline: 3 years

2. Negotiate a lower margin (markup) rate for textbooks purchased through the University Bookstore
    2.1. Action items
        2.1.1. Investigate negotiated markup rates prevalent at peer institutions
        2.1.2. Negotiate lower markup rates as appropriate
    2.2. Required resources
        2.2.1. Staff time for research and negotiation
    2.3. Timeline: Next contract cycle

3. Build a culture that values affordability of learning materials
    3.1. Action items
        3.1.1. Identify an existing university support unit where primary responsibility for affordable learning materials initiatives may be housed
        3.1.2. Extend awareness and engagement program to the

department chair and program coordinators for leadership

3.1.3. Integrate awareness and education regarding affordable learning materials with new faculty training programs

3.2. Required resources

3.2.1. Staff time to generate awareness of affordable learning materials among academic leadership

3.2.2. Staff time to develop professional development for new faculty regarding affordable learning materials

3.2.3. Timeline: Ongoing with outcomes and measures adopted each year

9

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND
APPENDICES

Chapter Nine

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDICES

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Acheiving the Dream OER Initiative	Focused on evidence-based institutional improvement among community colleges in the United States, Achieving the Dream (ATD) began an OER initiative in 2016 with the goal of facilitating the adoption of OER in courses leading to complete degree programs offered to students with no learning materials costs. In the first year, the project encouraged 58 degrees and certificates offered using OER at 38 community colleges. A report on the initiative is available on the website: https://www.achievingthedream.org/resource/16746/launching-oer-degree-pathways-an-early-snap-shot-of-achieving-the-dream-s-oer-degree-initiative-and-emerging-lessons.
Affordable Learning Materials	A spectrum of low- and no-cost textbooks and other learning aids may be considered affordable learning materials: • OER are licensed as free materials that include textbooks, online homework systems, syllabi, interactive lessons, learning modules, and whole courses; • learning materials in the public domain are often available at no cost to the student; • while paid for by the institution, library resources such as reserves, journals, databases, and print materials are free for students to access; • excerpts of copyright-protected material may sometimes be used without cost under fair use permissions; and

	• Inclusive Access/Direct Digital Access text-books sold at reduced rates by traditional textbook publishers may represent significant cost savings to students.
APLU Powered by Publics Initiative	The Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) launched the Powered by Publics initiative in 2018 to help universities produce more graduates particularly among minority, low-income, and first-generation students, cut the achievement gap among under-represented students, and open communication and encourage data sharing among the 130 partner institutions. The initiative divided participant universities into 16 transformation clusters with shared challenges and goals. Texas State participates in Cluster 11 with 7 other institutions that typically enroll a high number of students who receive Pell grant funding. The focus area if Cluster 11 is developing data-informed approaches to increase academic success of under-resourced students. More information is available on the APLU website: https://www.aplu.org/projects-and-initiatives/center-for-public-university-transformation/powered-by-publics/index.html.
Commonwealth of Learning	The world's only intergovernmental body concerned solely with the promotion of distance learning and sharing of open learning and OER, the Commonwealth of Learning was formed in 1987. The organization's current strategic plan is committed to equitable access to quality lifelong learning for all. The Commonwealth of Learning operates in 5 regions: Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Americas, Europe, and Pacific.

The organization's web site (https://www.col.org) features an open access repository called Oasis storing learning resources and publications.

Creative Commons

The Creative Commons Corporation was organized as a non-profit in 2001 design methods and technologies to facilitate sharing of scientific, creative, and intellectual works with the public. Among the organization's significant contributions to encouraging the development and use of affordable learning materials are a set of six copyright licenses that content creators may freely use to protect their intellectual property while providing free access to those works. Creative Commons also operates a robust web site featuring tools for content creation and a repository of Creative Commons licensed images: https://creativecommons.org. The Association The Association

Digital Rights Management (DRM)

DRM are a set of technologies used to protect copyright-protected works from unauthorized distribution, copying, or editing. The earliest forms of DRM employed a digital key or serial number that was unique to the product and had to be entered by an end-user before the content could be unlocked or installed. Some digital rights management tools require that a person who accesses the content must have a live connection to the internet so that authorized use of the material may be verified with a remote server.

Digital Textbook

A digital book or e-Book are content that has been rendered into an electronic format such that the material may be read or otherwise

accessed via a computer, mobile device, or e-Reader (a digital tablet designed specifically for accessing digital texts). Textbooks in this format may be licensed in a variety of ways including OER and traditional copyright schemes. Digital books may be owned or leased to an end-user. Access to a leased digital text may be limited to a certain duration—often a matter of months—or may be restricted to a certain number of times a user may have discrete access to the work.

Hewlett Foundation

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation was established as a non-partisan, charitable foundation in 1966. The Hewlett foundation awarded over $450 million in grants in 2019 in areas including the environment, global development, the performing arts, and education. The Hewlett foundation has had a significant impact on affordable learning materials adoption and development through funding or partial funding of many OER initiatives. More information about the Hewlett Foundation's efforts in open education may be found on their web site: https://hewlett.org/strategy/open-education/.

High Pell Institution

Colleges and universities who admit and enroll a high percentage of students who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants are considered high Pell institutions. As Pell Grants target low-income students, institutions that serve a high percentage of Pell-eligible students often find that additional student support programs and an emphasis on affordability encourage student success.

Inclusive Access Textbook	Textbook publishers may use a variety of names including Direct Digital Access (DDA) or IncludED Access, Inclusive Access textbooks and other learning materials involve special arrangements with traditional textbook publishers to reduce the cost of textbooks to students by taking steps to ensure that nearly 100% of students in a course will purchase the material. Often the textbook is available as a digital text and is accessible to the student as a lease meaning the text is only available during a semester or matter of a few months. Currently, adoption of an Inclusive Access textbook requires the coordination of the campus bookstore, Office of the University Registrar, and Student Business Services. Students pay for their book at the same time and in the same way that they pay tuition. Students may also opt out of the program. Savings realized by the student vary widely.
Open Educational Resources (OER)	Creative Commons defines OER as teaching, learning, and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities– retaining, remixing, revising, reusing and redistributing the resources.
OpenStax	Rice University's non-profit OpenStax initiative started in 2012 with a single textbook. Their online repository now contains thousands of peer reviewed OER textbooks, learning modules, and instructor slides in disciplines across science, humanities, business, math, and social sciences. OpenStax (https://openstax.org) also features an online tutoring system and Rover, an online math homework system.

Open Textbook Network	The Open Textbook Network promotes the development and adoption of OER by co-sponsoring the Open Textbook Library (OTL) repository. Books in the OTL (https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/) cover Business, Computer Science, Education, Engineering, Humanities, Journalism, Math, Medicine, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences.
Student PIRGs	Active since the 1970's, Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) (https://studentpirgs.org) have advocated for social and education change. The current agenda for the organization includes Affordable Higher Education. In 2017, Student PIRGs created a Open Textbook Alliance to encourage student government organizations to adopt policies supporting OER use in college courses.
UNESCO	An agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) works with its 193 member states to create international cooperation on matters of science, education, and culture. UNESCO's involvement with affordable learning materials can be traced to a 2002 forum on open courseware—an event where the term OER was first used and described. Since then, UNESCO has helped member states create capacity, policy, and information-sharing for OER. As an outcome of strategic planning in 2019, UNESCO started the OER Dynamic Coalition. More on UNESCO and OER can be found on the organization's web site: https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer.

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION

TEXAS ★ STATE ®
FACULTY SENATE

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS: Texas State University abruptly shifted all classes to remote learning in March, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS: The majority of faculty and students had never taken an online or remote learning class; and

WHEREAS: The Division of Information Technology (DOIT) rapidly deployed personnel, software, and hardware resources; and

WHEREAS: The Office of Distance and Extended Learning (ODEL) provided numerous training opportunities and resources for faculty in both synchronous and asynchronous formats; and

WHEREAS: Faculty Development created and delivered multiple training classes, assembled and made available numerous resources to support faculty, and provided personal consultation options; and

WHEREAS: The expertise and responsiveness of these units enabled the university to successfully complete spring 2020 classes.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the Faculty Senate of Texas State University commend staff in the Division of Information Technology, the Office of Distance and Extended Learning, and Faculty Development for their timely preparation and extraordinary response in this emergent situation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Faculty Senate of Texas State University recognizes, thanks, and appreciates the dedication, professionalism, and patience bestowed upon faculty and students during this emergent situation.

_____   June 6, 2020
Janet Bezner, Chair   _____

STUDENT GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

AUTHOR
DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION JULES PERRODIN

SPONSORS
SENATOR COLTON HALTER
SENATOR CODY DESALVO
SENATOR HUNTER ROLLINS

DATE OF FIRST READING: JANUARY 27TH, 2020
S.R.2019.2020.29

A RESOLUTION

To be entitled "The Affordable Learning Materials Resolution" encouraging Texas State University faculty to consider the impact on students of the rising costs of instructional materials when selecting required course textbooks and other learning materials and to take an active role in making learning materials more affordable for students.

WHEREAS: student government serves as the official voice for students at texas state university; and
WHEREAS: research conducted by the college board has found that the average student should budget more than $1200 per year for books and supplies; and
WHEREAS: the price of college textbooks rose 88% between january 2006 and july 2016 according to data collected and published by the u.S. Bureau of labor statistics; and
WHEREAS: the cost of college textbooks and other required learning materials are often a major affordability issue for students, who take on additional loan debt to pay for textbooks, or undercut their own learning by forgoing the purchase of textbooks; and
WHEREAS: it is the prerogative of faculty to select the course materials that are most appropriate for a course and academic program; and
WHEREAS: several learning materials options exist that offer affordable, comparable and flexible alternatives to expensive,

commercial textbooks and other learning materials; and

WHEREAS: it is appropriate to seek and consider low- and no-cost options, including open textbooks, as long as there is no reduction in educational quality; and

WHEREAS: faculty and students both share a concern about textbook affordability and its impact on student success; and

WHEREAS: Texas State University has formed a committee to study and recommend best practices on the appropriate use of affordable learning materials; and

WHEREAS: a representative of Student Government participates on this committee;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that Student Government supports the adoption of affordable learning materials whenever possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Student Government encourages faculty to consider low- and no-cost textbooks and other course materials when selecting required learning materials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Student Government encourages Texas State University to offer support to faculty to consider and adopt affordable learning materials, when academically appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Student Government encourages faculty to work with and support the findings of the university's affordable learning materials committee in an effort to remediate the impact on students of required textbook and other learning materials costs.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: This legislation shall be forwarded to the Student Body

FACULTY AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS SURVEY

Introduction

Thank you for taking a few moments to assist us in discovering more about how learning materials are selected and used by faculty at Texas State. The questions below apply to the courses you have or are teaching this year. Please answer as completely as possible.

Your name [optional]:

_____

Please select your college from the list below:
   Applied Arts ... University College

Please select your department/school from the list below:
   Aerospace Studies ... Social Work

How long have your been teaching in a post-secondary setting?
o   1-5 years
o   6-10 years
o   11 years or more

Please select your faculty role:
o   Non-tenure track
o   Pre-tenure
o   Tenured
o   Emeritus

Please select your employment type:
o   Part-time
o   Full time

What types of learning materials did you assign this year? [check all that apply for all courses]
>   **Books**
>   **Textbooks**
>   **Journal articles**
>   **Course packs**
>   **Electronic/digital books**
>   **Workbooks**
>   **White papers, case studies, or reports**
>   **Lab manuals**
>   **Online homework system/aid**
>   **Online video or audio**
>   **Video or audio on fixed media (DVD/CD)**
>   **Web sites**
>   **Original source documents or artifacts**
>   **Lab kits**

List any other type of learning materials that were not already indicated above:

_____

This year, did you recommend sources for students to acquire the required learning materials? [check all that apply]
>   No
>   Yes. Bookstore.
>   Yes. Openly accessible materials or OER.
>   Yes. Library resources.
>   Yes. Online retailer.
>   Yes. Course reserves.
>   Yes. Subscription.
>   Yes. Uploaded to the learning management system (TRACS or Canvas).

Who has the primary role in selection the learning materials in the courses you teach? [check all that apply]

I am responsible for selecting materials for my own courses.

I lead a committee or group that makes the selection.

I am a member of a committee or group that makes the selection.

A faculty committee of which I am not a member makes the selection.

A department coordinator makes the selection.

Thinking of a course you teach where the cost to students of learning materials is lowest, please estimate what a student is likely to pay.

o $0
o $1 - $99
o $100 - $199
o $200 - $299
o $300 or more

Thinking of a course you teach where the cost to students of learning materials is highest, please estimate what a student is likely to pay.

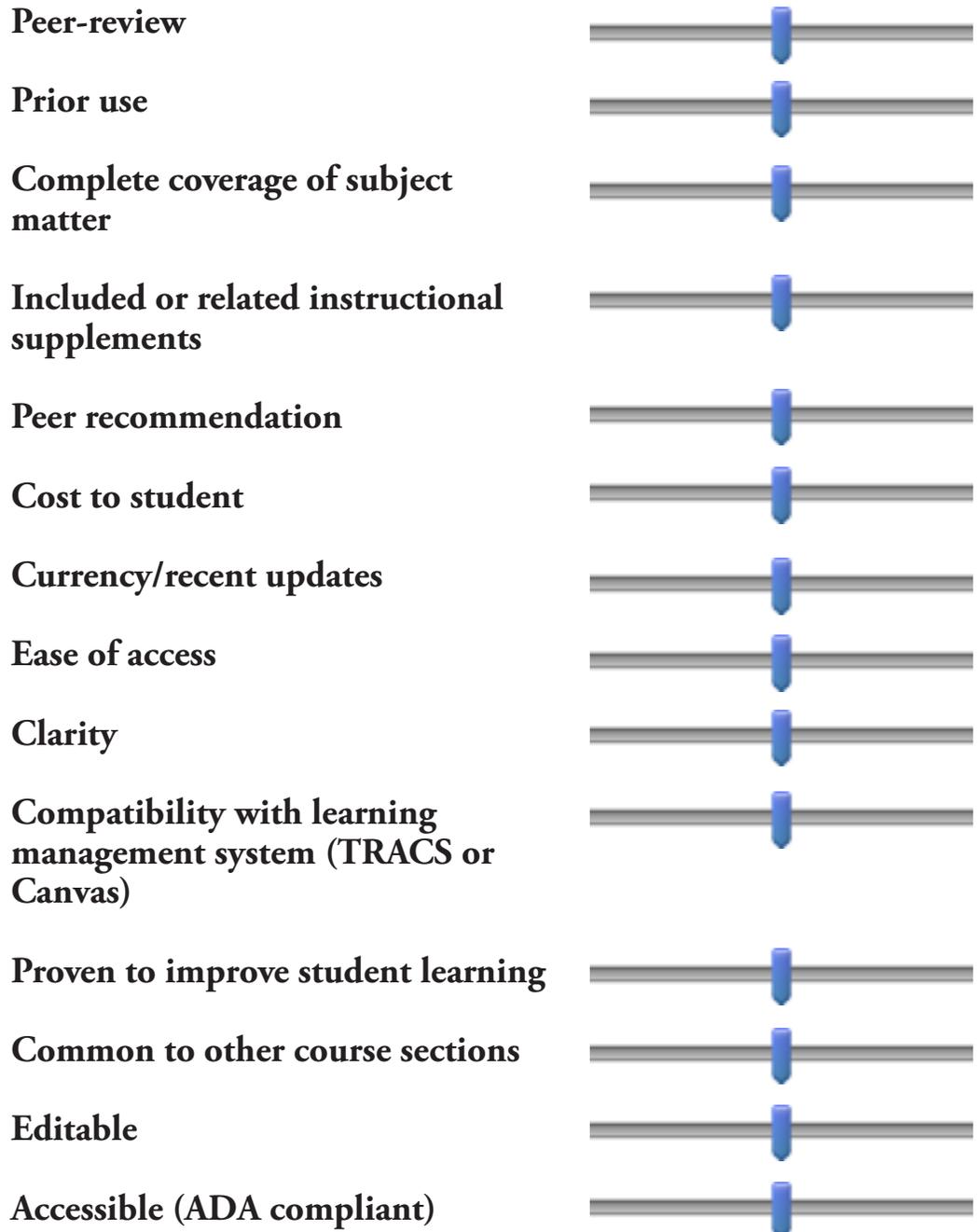o $0
o $1 - $99
o $100 - $199
o $200 - $299
o $300 or more

Do all or nearly all of your students have access to the books and other learning materials at the beginning of the academic term?

o   Yes.
o   No.
o   Unknown.

Please use the slider to indicate the importance to you of each factor in selecting appropriate learning materials for courses you teach. [1 = not important; 7 = extremely important]

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Peer-review

Prior use

Complete coverage of subject matter

Included or related instructional supplements

Peer recommendation

Cost to student

Currency/recent updates

Ease of access

Clarity

Compatibility with learning management system (TRACS or Canvas)

Proven to improve student learning

Common to other course sections

Editable

Accessible (ADA compliant)

When selecting a textbook or other learning materials (lab kits, online homework systems, classroom response devices [clickers], etc.) for your courses, were your choices consciously influenced by the cost of the materials?

o   Yes.

o   No.

How was your choice in learning materials influenced by cost to students? [select all that apply]

       Chose a different textbook.

       Reduced the number of required books.

       Delayed adopting a new textbook edition.

       Chose not to require a book.

       Chose not to use an online homework system or other learning tool.

       Opted for a negotiated price break with the bookstore or publisher such as Direct Digital Access or IncludED Access.

       Developed a course pack.

       Uploaded PDF copies of book chapters, articles, and other resources to the course site on the learning management system (TRACS or Canvas).

       Link to book chapters, articles, and other resources available through library subscriptions.

       Adopted, adapted, or created an open educational resource (OER) instead of a textbook.

       Other.

Given that cost to students did not influence your choice of learning materials, why not?

       Unaware of alternatives.

       Did not know where to begin in the process of adopting an alternative text such as an open educational resource (OER).

       Considered the cost of currently adopted learning materials already low.

       Found the cost of the currently adopted learning materials appropriate to their value.

       Other

Has your academic department, as a group, formally discussed the cost to students of textbooks and other learning materials?
o   Yes.
o   No.
o   Unknown.

Would you be interested in exploring the issue of affordable learning materials through: [check all that apply]
        Departmental discussions.
        Workshops or other professional development.
        A general awareness campaign.
        Examples of success stories from colleagues.

If there are other methods you would suggest to learn more about affordable learning materials, please list them.

_____

Before this survey, had you heard of open educational resources (OER)?
o   Yes.
o   No.
o   Unsure.

Before this survey, had you heard of Direct Digital Access, IncludED Access, or similar textbook purchasing plans?
o   Yes.
o   No.
o   Unsure.

If we have follow-up questions, may we contact you?
o   Yes.
o   No.

Please enter your Texas State email address.

_____

STUDENT AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS SURVEY

Introduction

This survey is part of an institution-wide focus on how students think about and use instructional materials. All Texas State University students have been invited to take this survey. The survey is anonymous. Your responses will help inform decisions made by a dedicated university committee committed to reducing textbook costs for students. The survey should take no longer 10 minutes to complete.

Which degree are you currently pursuing?
o   Bachelor's
o   Master's
o   Doctoral
o   Other _____

What is your major?
o   Accounting
o   Advertising and Mass Communication
o   Agriculture

Approximately how many credit hours have you completed towards the degree you are currently pursuing?
o   < 30
o   31-60
o   61-90
o   91-120
o   121 +

How many credits are you enrolled in at Texas State University this semester and last semester (by delivery mode)?

_____ Face-to-Face (this semester)
_____ Online (this semester)
_____ Hybrid (this semester)
_____ Face-to-Face (last semester)
_____ Online (last semester)
_____ Hybrid (last semester)

This semester, has the cost of required course materials/textbooks caused you to: (check all that apply)

Take fewer courses.
Not register for a specific course.
Drop a course.
Withdraw from a course.
Receive a poor grade because you could not afford to buy the textbook.
Not purchase the book.

Describe how you managed in the course without the textbook(s) and/or other course materials?

_____

_____

What proportion of your required course materials, including textbooks, did you acquire this semester?

o   All required materials
o   Some required materials
o   Few required materials
o   No required materials

What did you spend in total on required textbooks (only) this semester (online and/or face-to-face)?
o < $100
o $100 - $200
o $200 - $299
o $300 - $399
o $400 - $499
o $500 - $599
o $600 - $699
o $700 - $799
o $800 - $899
o $900 +

What did you spend in total on other required course materials (e.g., clickers or online access codes) this semester)?
o < $100
o $100 - $200
o $200 - $299
o $300 - $399
o $400 - $499
o $500 - $599
o $600 - $699
o $700 - $799
o $800 - $899
o $900 +

What proportion of your recommended course materials, including textbooks, did you acquire this semester?
o All recommended materials
o Some recommended materials
o Few recommended materials
o No recommended materials

What did you spend in total on recommended course materials this semester?

o   < $100
o $100 - $200
o $200 - $299
o $300 - $399
o $400 - $499
o $500 - $599
o $600 - $699
o $700 - $799
o $800 - $899
o $900 +

How did you acquire your required course materials, including textbooks, this semester? Check all that apply.

Purchased at a campus Bookstore
Purchased from an internet vendor
Rented from a rental service
Bought digital chapters of a book
Downloaded from the Internet (with a cost)
Downloaded from the internet (no cost)
Accessed through the Library course reserves
Purchased a course pack created by my instructor
Received an instructor supplied course pack (no cost)
Borrowed from a library
Borrowed/shared materials (e.g., from a classmate)
Used Open Educational Resources or other free materials
I purchased used copies of textbooks
Other _____

On average, how often this semester has your required course materials been assigned or used in your classes?
o   Always
o   Frequently
o   Sometimes
o   Rarely
o   Never

After a course ends, do you sell back your materials?
o   I keep all of my textbooks and course materials
o   I sell back all the textbooks and course materials I can
o   I sell back a portion of my textbooks and course materials

How do you decide which textbooks and/or course materials you sell or keep?
_____
_____

Which type of textbook do you prefer?
o   Print
o   Digital
o   The cheapest

Open Educational Resources (OER) or Open Textbooks are teaching and learning materials that have been specifically licensed to allow use and reuse at no cost, and without needing to ask permission. Unlike copyrighted resources, OER have been authored or created by an individual or organization that chooses to retain few, if any, ownership rights. Before this survey, had you ever heard of Open Educational Resources (OER) or Open Textbooks?
o   Yes
o   Maybe
o   No

Which of these resources, if any, have you used this semester? Check all that apply.

A food bank
Grant assistance (e.g. Pell Grants)
Reduced cost housing
Financial counseling
Loans
Work study
Other employment
Other _____

_____

Is there anything else you would like to share about the role of required textbooks and course materials in your education?

_____

_____

Sex
o   Male
o   Female
o   Non-binary/Gender Non-conforming
o   Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity
o   American Indian or Alaska Native
o   Asian
o   Black/non-Hispanic
o   Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
o   Hispanic/Latinx
o   Multi-race, non-Hispanic, non-Black
o   White/non-Hispanic
o   Other
o   Prefer not to answer

Age
o   < 18
o   18 - 25
o   26 - 35
o   36 - 45
o   46 - 55
o   56 - 65
o   66 +

How many dependents do you have? (for example, children and/or parents, grandparents, or other individuals you care for)?

_____

DRAFT FACULTY INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR ADOPTION OF AFFORDABLE LEARNING MATERIALS

Introduction to Grant
The Office of Distance and Extended Learning in the Division of Academic Affairs is pleased to announce the Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant, a competitive program designed to promote affordable learning experiences at the University.
Up to three grant recipients, annually, will receive up to $2500 (depending on the level of effort), one-semester of instructional design, faculty development, and library support, as well as recognition at an award reception. All recipients will be asked to present their work to the campus community.
The awardees may be asked to assume a leadership role in promoting open education resources at Texas State and serve on a future grant award selection committee.

Purpose of the Grant
The grant award program supports the development and use of open educational resources (OER) in Texas State courses. Grant award recipients may choose to do one or both of the following for a substantial redesign of a course they will teach in the future.
- Implementation: Newly adopt (or adapt) openly licensed materials or textbook
- Development: Create new openly licensed materials or a textbook

Timeline
- Accept nomination form and documentation: April 1, 2020 - October 23, 2020.
- Judge entries: November - December 2020
- Announce award recipients: January 2021

Eligibility Criteria
To be eligible to receive a grant award, faculty must
- teach a minimum of half-time and/or have a continuing appointment,
- collect student success metrics outlined by the grant award coordinator
- teach the course identified as part of the grant in the following academic year, and
- agree to the terms of Texas State's Intellectual Property policy for work produced as part of this grant award.

Grant Award Criteria
The grant will be awarded based on the following minimum criteria:
- overall quality of the application,
- description of performance measures and outcomes, and
- the greatest cost savings to students (student enrollment x average cost of materials/textbook being replaced).

Submission Directions
Applications <link to application> are submitted using Qualtrics. You will be asked to provide the following information:
- Grant category (Development or Implementation)
- Proposed course(s)
- Project Summary and Goal Statement
- Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes
- Assessment of Need
- Project Budget
- Student Performance Measures and Outcomes

If you have questions, please contact distanceed@txstate.edu

Award Selection Committee
The Managing Textbook Costs Committee appoints a selection committee. The committee is comprised of the following:
- Committee chair
- Three committee member representatives from different departments (may be filled using previous award recipients)
- One representative from the Office of Distance and Extended Learning
- One representative from the University Libraries

Restrictions

A previous grant recipient
- may receive a grant more than once, but not more than once every three years; and
- cannot receive a grant for the same course more than once (e.g., if a faculty member received a grant for work done on TXST 101, he/she may not receive a grant subsequently for TXST 101 but may apply with a different course).