To: The Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (CIC)

Date: May 14, 2015

From: The Affordable Solutions Subcommittee

Subject: Information on Activities of ALS Subcommittee, Request for Support,
            and Recommendations to Forward to the Academic Senate

<u>Actions Requested</u>:

We ask CIC to accept this report and forward it to the Senate for information.

We suggest that CIC members pay particular attention to Appendix II, Potential
solutions/considerations (which begins on p. 6).

We ask that CIC members support the following recommendations and request that
they be forwarded to the Senate for action:

- That faculty be reassured that affordable learning solutions efforts are
  designed to encourage faculty to seek alternatives and provide help to faculty
  in doing so, not to dictate or demand such alternatives
- That the Bookstore be invited to provide a short demonstration of the new
  ordering system in early fall (5-10 minutes)
- That the ALS Subcommittee also be invited to present to the Academic Senate
  a short update of key issues affecting the selection of textbooks for our
  current students.

Affordable Learning Solutions Subcommittee

Report and Recommendations

May 14, 2015

Background

The ALS Subcommittee was voted into formal existence on Nov. 4, 2014. Since that time, the committee has met three times. In addition, parallel activity related to the Chancellor's Office grant continued and is described below.

Committee Activity

As an early exercise, the Subcommittee developed a list of "perceptions" that students, faculty, and staff hold about each other when it comes to textbooks (Appendix I). Regardless of how accurate or inaccurate these perceptions, all three groups provided valuable points to factor into solutions. The Subcommittee brainstormed possible solutions (Appendix II). More general observations are below in connection with the Subcommittee's recommendations.

The Subcommittee Chair (Soules) and the Accessibility representative (Napolis) attended the Textbook Affordability Conference in February 2015. Presentation slides from the conference are available at https://drive.google.com/a/csueastbay.edu/folderview?id=0B8ZbKuFol2D7TW1JMUpDV0dqNXc&usp=sharing

In conjunction with the conference, a display of OpenStax textbooks was set up in Faculty Development and will remain there through spring quarter. Some faculty has provided feedback, both positive and negative, about these materials.

The Subcommittee also reviewed the Bookstore adoption form and process to see if improvements could be identified.

As part of one meeting, there was a demonstration of Faculty Discover, a new service from the Bookstore, and another demonstration of what the student sees when ordering textbooks now that HEOA is in place (Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, with 2010 revisions to make textbooks more affordable). For more on HEOA, see http://www.studentpirgs.org/resources/textbook-price-disclosure-law

<u>Observations</u>

Students, faculty, and staff require more education about affordable options. The Subcommittee now facilitates conversation among these groups, which begins to address this issue. One discovery, for example, is that none of us really understands what each other actually sees. Just as with BlackBoard, where faculty does not see a student view (unless s/he requests a "student account"), faculty doesn't see what the student sees when ordering textbooks and there is currently no way to establish a "student view" for faculty. As a result, it is difficult to recommend ways to improve processes or information availability when working "blind."

Greater clarity is required about open access and copyright. When OpenStax says that they have a CC BY 2.0 license, what does that mean? A visit to the Creative Commons site at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/ reveals that this particular license allows the user of that text to share or adapt the material, including remixing, transforming, and building on the material. This frees the faculty member to use all or part of the text, insert video, rewrite sections, include his/her own material or material from other sources, such as MERLOT (http://www.merlot.org), the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching.

A major consideration is time. For faculty, clicking a button that orders a textbook in a moment is a valuable asset. Seeking open access or alternative cheaper options takes more time; however, some faculty have embraced this process, either on their own or through a grant incentive and are achieving some amazing outcomes. A brief description of some projects is given in Appendix III. The Subcommittee invites other faculty to join this movement.

For students, cost is the main factor, but time is an additional factor. Some students purchase textbooks in time-desperate situations. One example is when students do not know how to find the required text from the Bookstore and assume the only way to get the needed information is either by emailing the professor or waiting to ask the professor on the first day of class. As a result, students can miss some cheaper options. Once desperation sets in, the quick way is just to buy it the fastest way possible, if a copy is still available. Some students miss some information in the complexities of purchasing or renting textbooks, information that might enable them to buy some unbundled options.

There are other issues, but these give a general picture of the complexity of the challenge, the need to find simplifications (if possible), and the deep need for education all round. As we move to semesters, when students will need to acquire learning materials for four to five classes at a time rather than three or four, the issue of expense and time will be exacerbated.

Chancellor's Office Grant

Seven faculty members are currently receiving financial support from the C.O. grant to work on alternatives. The final report, which will be sent to the C.O. later in the term, will also be forwarded to CIC.

Questions for Faculty to Consider

Is there a way you can provide a cheaper alternative for your course? For inspiration, see Appendix III.

Even if you do not like some of the open access or free options, is there a way you can adapt them to create a viable cheaper alternative?

One concern expressed about the OpenStax textbook was that it was not "college level." Is that a content issue or a linguistic issue or both or something else? At the TAC 2015 meeting, speakers presented evidence that if a textbook is too overwhelming, students do not read it. If it is less overwhelming, more students will try reading it, at least in part. This raises the question of whether it is better to select a text that's written in complex language that students may find overwhelming and not read, or whether it better to use a text written in simpler language that more students will read. Early studies show that there are multiple reasons for student preferences of open educational resources, reasons which are not all cost-related. A brief bibliography is provided at the end of this report for interested readers.

Recommendations

We ask CIC to accept this report and forward it to the Senate for information.

We suggest that CIC members pay particular attention to Appendix II, Potential solutions/considerations (which begins on p. 6).

We ask for CIC members' support for the following recommendations and request that they be forwarded to the Senate for action:

- That faculty be reassured that affordable learning solutions efforts are designed to encourage faculty to seek alternatives and provide help to faculty in doing so, not to dictate or demand such alternatives
- That the Bookstore be invited to provide a short demonstration of the new ordering system in early fall (5-10 minutes)

○ That the ALS Subcommittee also be invited to present to the Academic Senate a short update of some key issues affecting the selection of textbooks for our current students.

<u>Appendix I: Perceptions (with some additional notes)</u>

Faculty Perceptions

- While students legitimately complain about textbook expenses, some students don't place enough priority on buying the materials they need to be successful in class. It is true, however, that some students genuinely cannot afford their learning materials.
- Whether students do or do not buy a textbook, some students do not complete assigned readings. Reasons may include: a) being overwhelmed by the text, either due to content or language complexity, b) time constraints, and c) not understanding the purpose of the reading.

Staff

- There are risk management issues with faculty choices, e.g., copyright compliance in the case of course readers ordered off site, and sales licenses/university permissions/sales tax licenses (when faculty bring readers to class to sell). Raising faculty awareness of these issues is important.
- Staff believes it would be helpful to allow students to purchase cheaper previous editions of textbooks, when such editions are suitable and available. Two related points should be noted: 1. Some students ask for the title of the textbooks early to order them from another source at a cheaper price and in the hopes of having the book arrive before class begins. This path, however, means they cannot use their financial aid for that purchase. 2. The caveat to choosing an older edition lies in the degree of difference between that and the one the faculty member has chosen. Students may miss out on new parts of the text. Perhaps a "standard disclaimer" can be developed for course syllabi.

Students

- Some professors require textbooks and never refer to them in class.
- Some professors require textbooks with web access and never use the web access. As a result, students must purchase the newest edition with web access when either the new edition (book only) or an earlier edition would work. The subcommittee discussed this at length and were given a demonstration of the latest Bookstore system. Some faculty are not fully aware of multiple versions or how to request multiple ISBNs for various versions of the text. It would be helpful to ask the Senate for 5-10 minutes for a short demonstration of the new Bookstore ordering system.
- Some professors require textbooks and only use a chapter or two.
- Some professors do not use free equivalents.
- Some professors use their own versions of a book. This is expensive because there is only one place to get the book.
- Some professors require students to purchase the physical book rather than a digital text, which can cost more.
- Some professors require the latest edition when older editions will work.
- There are insufficient books on reserve in the library. If faculty members can put additional copies on reserve, particularly for large classes, this is very helpful. Faculty do need to be reassured that they can put publisher copies on reserve. What they cannot put on reserve are "review" copies that are not yet published.
- E-books and books on reserve cannot be used on tablets.
- The loan period for textbooks on reserve in the library is too short.
- Additional websites professors assign for online homework use a different interface not associated with Blackboard but by the textbook corporation. Even if there is an option to buy only the access code, purchasing the online textbook is an additional cost to complete assigned online homework.

Appendix II: Potential solutions/considerations

- Are there alternative versions of the selected textbook? One example is Human Anatomy and Physiology by Elaine N. Marieb and Katja Hoehn. The new, hardbound version is expensive, but there are versions in notebooks, and an e-copy, which is affordable for two quarters of classes.

- Is it possible to exert more pressure on publisher representatives about alternative options? For example, in addition to a new, color edition, are there black and white options?
- Does faculty intend to use any accompanying web access? If web access is required, the student will need a current edition. If not, can that information be made available to students early enough to enable them to buy or rent a cheaper edition with no web access?
- Is there a way to provide faculty with more information about different prices across different versions, perhaps through the bookstore or through an independent searching process initiated by the library? The Subcommittee recommends a short demonstration by the Bookstore at an early fall Senate meeting.
- Various options are made available as part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). Currently, CSUEB's HEOA requirement is met by Follett with purchase and rental options. Follett has offered to include a link to the library for those options that are on reserve in the library.   Another thought was to provide all options in chart form and include possible reductions if adoption dates are met. This possible solution must be explored for viability.
- The Subcommittee will explore providing a "starting" list of places where faculty can publish open access in order to encourage the use of open access in return. Some suggestions: http://www.doaj.org, http://home.highwire.org/, http://luminosoa.org/
- CSU's ALS website offers open access options (see http://als.csuprojects.org). We need to promote this, along with links to other Open Educational Resources (OER).
- Can we promote groups of books for a CSU-wide subscription? One example is Springer e-books, where a print copy is $24.99. See http://www.springer.com/gp/eproducts/springer-ebooks/springer-s-mycopy-ebook-printed-for-just-24-99/9300
- Continue to promote to faculty about how to embed URLs for e-books and articles into BlackBoard. While this does not always work, it's progress towards copyright compliance and also helps students to learn how to access library materials.
- Continue to try to get the library embedded in each individual course in BlackBoard. This has not been viable to date.

- Post book adoption submission deadlines long term. Reminder emails are not always early enough, resulting in faculty picking the easiest option in order to meet the deadline.
- Help students, faculty, and staff understand various Creative Commons license options. OER, for example, carries a CC BY 2.0 license, enabling faculty to use all or part of the text, adapt the text, insert their own materials, and so on.
- Ask faculty to use at least four chapters of a book before it is mandated as a purchase. If fewer chapters are needed, investigate whether ordering the chapters for library reserve or separately would be cheaper.
- Allow students to select their format of choice—electronic or print. Some students are fine with digital texts; others prefer print. It's the content that counts.
- Consider using services like Chegg, an online textbook rental site similar to cheaptextbooks.com, where students can rent books for approximately three to four months. This option does not allow students to use financial aid for their textbooks because the purchase does not go through the university bookstore.
- Consider providing PDF versions of books, when available, either as subscription or on tablets. Be aware, however, that there may be accessibility issues. If you plan this course of action, please consult Accessibility Services.
- Consider using an interface that will make available various publisher textbooks (Pearson, McGraw-Hill, etc.) on a <u>single</u> interface. Again, this could result in accessibility issues if the interfaces are not completely accessible, e.g., not compatible with screen readers. Please consult Accessibility Services.
- Reconsider library reserve loan periods, particularly in relation to overnight loan.

Appendix III: Current Faculty Engaged in ALS Projects

<u>2014-2015 grantees</u>

Caron Inouye: For four courses, with approximately 1,000 students per year, a textbook with Mastering that costs $192 (loose-leaf) or $212 (hardbound) will be replaced by an e-book and online resources costing $110 (or $150, if students choose to purchase a print version of the e-book).

Penny McCullagh: For nine courses, with approximately 700 majors, Kinesiology is moving to MERLOT. Currently, this will enhance rather than replace textbooks unless sufficient materials are hosted on MERLOT that a text will no longer be needed.

Holly Vugia: For four courses, with approximately 650 students per year, the plan is to replace a $235.50 text with an alternative costing $45. In addition, Dr Vugia plans to go paperless for the numerous assignments and documents that need to be completed and learn to use a student portfolio tool that could span over several courses in order to save students additional costs.

Erica Wildy: For one course (a lab), with approximately 700 students per year, a $22 lab manual will be replaced by a free or $5 option.

2015-2016 grantees

Li-Ling Chen: For one course, with approximately 25 students per year, a $88 textbook will be replaced with free options. Additionally, this course is part of an Online & Hybrid Course Quality Transformation Granat.

Christina Chin-Newman: For one course, with approximately 45 students per year, two textbooks costing $155 to buy or $95 to rent will be replaced by an option that is either free or $25 (estimate).

Appendix IV: Brief Bibliography

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