TO: Academic Senate

VIA: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC)

FROM: ALS Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Information on Affordable Learning Solutions (ALS), Open Educational Resources (OER), and the work of the ALS Subcommittee

PURPOSE: Provide information to CIC and the Academic Senate

ACTION REQUESTED:

That this report be accepted by CIC and the Academic Senate and be forwarded to thE Provost and the Academic Deans

Background: Legislation

AB 798, the College Textbook Affordability Act was approved by Governor Brown on Oct. 8, 2015. It established the Open Educational Resources (OER) Adoption Incentive Program. In spring, 2016, CSUEB's Academic Senate adopted a resolution to increase student access to high-quality OER and reduce the cost of textbooks and supplies for students. Subsequently, CSUEB submitted a grant proposal in June 2016 and received an award of $31,000 grant on March 2017 to implement the goals of AB 798.

SB 1359, the "Public postsecondary education: course materials act" was approved by Governor Brown on Sept. 13, 2016. The act adds Section 66406.9 to the Education Code and requires each campus of the community colleges and of the CSU to identify in the online version of the campus course schedule those courses that use, exclusively, digital course materials that are free of charge. The bill is scheduled to become operative on January 1, 2018. Relevant CSUEB

campus staff are working on this now and the ALS Subcommittee sent forward a memo on the subject for CIC to move forward to Senate (16-17 CIC 80).

Affordable Learning Solutions (ALS) at Cal State East Bay

For several years, multiple initiatives have been implemented at CSUEB. The bookstore has offered a rental program for a number of years. Through A2E2 funding, the University Libraries put the most expensive textbooks on reserve in the Hayward campus library and, more recently, in the Concord campus library. Many faculty supplement library reserves with their own Instructor Copies, which are heavily used.

The university has also been fortunate to receive grants, first from the Chancellor's Office (C.O.) and, more recently, from the AB 798 grant that runs from 2016-2018. C.O. grants were used to incent faculty to create their own alternative options, e.g., a lab manual for Biology. The AB 798 grant asks faculty to convert course sections to alternatives that already exist—open educational resources (OER), library resources, open web sites, and other open learning objects.

As part of the grant effort, faculty on the grant have been asked to offer a survey to their students to gather student perceptions on the impact of OER/ALS on their use patterns with textbooks and how they think these options impact how much they engage with these materials and the impact on their success in the course. The ALS Subcommittee provided excellent suggestions to improve the survey. Some members were also interested in offering the survey more widely; however, a new survey instrument would be required to distinguish between students who had actually experienced an OER/ALS course and those who were responding theoretically. 2016-2017 results will be analyzed this summer for student perceptions to vet questions for a wider survey in 2017-2018.

New technologies and companies are emerging to help select OER sources. In winter quarter, some faculty on the AB 798 grant conducted a trial of IntellusLearning. This is one example of a platform that searches for OER, library resources, and other content, connects that content to the learning management system (LMS), and provides more detailed information on student use of the materials than can be provided by the LMS, although there are some concerns regarding privacy. A number of similar products are now appearing on the market.

As another program, San Diego State University and the University of California, Davis provide students with digital access to materials from approximately a week before class through the add/drop period, after which students must "opt in" or "opt out" of the textbook. As a result, there are discounts for these texts as more students opt to purchase them. The ALS Subcommittee discussed this program and, along with the student representative on the committee, prefer that students be asked to "opt in," not "out." There was also concern about making these texts available to students who are wait listed. The provost is reportedly investigating this option for CSUEB.

A workshop on Affordable Learning Solutions was conducted for faculty in December, 2016. Guest speaker, Maryann Hight of CSU, Stanislaus, spoke about a course for faculty on OER and

ALS that she spearheaded at Stanislaus. The course is offered through their LMS, BlackBoard. The C.O. is working to make the course available CSU-wide.

Marketing of ALS has also been conducted with students through Pioneer ads, flyers inserted into "Welcome" bags, and other efforts.

The ALS Subcommittee also attempted to survey major publishers about their current options in terms of texts, web access, and other features, as well as their approaches to textbooks in light of the growing OER movement; however, only Pearson responded to the survey and it was considered unproductive to continue the effort.

Key Issues

Promoting OER and ALS requires continued work. While grateful for those faculty who participate in this initiative, several challenges continue to impede the progress of this effort:

1. Time: Faculty finds it quicker and easier to push a "renew my textbook" button than spend time searching for OER or ALS. This explains the increasing number of platforms like IntellusLearning that are coming into existence to facilitate the selection process, but the time factor continues to be a challenge.

2. Copyright: Regardless of reassurances that the "O" or "Open" of OER means copyright-free, many faculty continue to worry about violating author rights. Open resources are designed to be changed, amended, used, revised by anyone. Continued education is required to help faculty feel comfortable with this aspect of the OER movement.

3. Quality: Many faculty question the quality of OER and ALS; however, quality materials exist and peer-reviewed options are available. Also, library resources are available to students and are of high quality. As for OER, excellent sites are provided through the ALS libguide's "Finding resources" tab at
    http://csueastbay.libguides.com/als/resourceideas

    Faculty may also consult their library liaison for help seeking materials or contact the ALS Coordinator, Aline Soules, at aline.soules@csueastbay.edu

4. Accessibility: When faculty selects OER texts, such as OpenStax, and makes changes to that text, it is critical that those changes be conveyed to Accessibility Services (AS); otherwise, AS makes the original OER text available to students with disabilities and the student is not in possession of the amended text. An awareness campaign will be conducted over the summer and into the coming year.