

Governor Newsom on high textbook prices:

"I am committed... in addressing... the racket that is textbooks in this country, **usurious** costs associated with textbooks, and so we will do more this year... because we in California have an obligation to disrupt that entire system nationwide."

January 2021



OER - Legislative Trends

• **Recent Legislation:** AB 2624 - Currently in committee, TBD based on state budget.

* "This bill would require each campus of the California Community Colleges to prominently display the estimated costs for each course of all required course materials, and fees directly related to those materials, for no less than 75% of the total number of courses on the online campus schedule."

* **Existing guidelines:** California Education Code 66406.9: Schedules must include textbook information "at time of registration" including a Zero Textbook Cost designation if applicable.

• **Coming up:** Clarification of AB 2624 (if it is voted on and passed) and codifying of ASCCC requests for transparency and other low/zero-cost guidelines.

OER Trends at De Anza

• According to 2021-22 student surveys, a consistent* **60% of students** report they must "carefully budget expenses" and appreciate free materials/textbooks.

• *Percent of students on a budget has stayed about the same since initial assessment began in Winter 2019.

• **Survey of COMM students by Shagun Kaur and Donna Stasio (end of 2020):**

* 39% of students have skipped buying a book due to cost, 25% have shared a book due to cost. Martinez published research findings in 21st Century.

* **OUTCOME:** 15% believe they earned a lower grade in at least one class due to not buying a required book.

• Recent **equity studies:** Reductions in DW of 5-10% in large GE classes. Statisticians might label results as a "small effect size" but small effects are fine, as they represent gains in student success.

* **However:** Students take a complex approach to choosing classes; availability of free materials is often simply a pleasant surprise, but 19% (nationally) of students indicate that costs of materials directly influence schedule decisions.

Trends at De Anza

Spring 2021 Sections

178 Zero-cost, 151 Low-cost

Census: 40,670

Spring 2022 Sections

201 Zero-cost, 170 Low-cost

Census: 36,170 (11% drop)

DA Trends (cont.)

• Increase in awareness by faculty, mostly due to increase in available titles/sources.

• Best strategy appears to be direct contact with faculty members, in line with corporate spam.

Heavy Adopters of FREE text/materials at De Anza:

- Astronomy – Over last several years, **Number One** most impactful department in reducing student material costs.
- Computer Information Sciences (CIS)
- Environmental Studies/Science (ES/ESCI)
- Geology and Meteorology
- Humanities
- Journalism
- Psychology

Of course, there are issues

- **Quality** - Not consistent across disciplines; some have struggled to find a free or low-cost solution.
- May take more work than turnkey approach and continuity of corporate textbooks and materials.
- **Somewhat reasonable** cost (under \$100) may be just fine, if materials are complete and satisfactory.
- "Zero Cost Degree" may allow purchase of hard copies of textbooks...so is it still zero cost?

Benefits realized by faculty OER users

- Ownership of discipline knowledge - Imagine media that truly fits your content knowledge and pedagogy!
- No more "I can't get the book yet."
- Students appreciate the difference, and tell you so.
- Increased richness and variety in auxiliary content
- **Social justice and equity:** Lowers cost of education for all of your students, with greater impact at lower income levels.