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# AFFORDABLE TEXTBOOKS

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A Policy Guide

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The U.S. PIRG Education Fund & the Student PIRGs  
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## **PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE**

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The purpose of this guide is to provide policy guidance to thought-leaders and decision-makers from all levels of institutions and government – from individual campuses considering policies that support open textbook use and development to state legislators that are considering approaches to making textbooks more affordable.

This guide contains:

Issue Background

Open Textbook Policy Ideas

Key Constituencies & Addressing Their Concerns

Additional Components of a Good Policy

Sample Policies

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## ISSUE BACKGROUND

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College textbook costs have skyrocketed in recent years. College textbooks remain one of the largest out of pocket expenses for students and families – meaning that high price tags are yet another threat to affordability and accessibility of higher education in the United States. According to the College Board, the average student spends \$1,200<sup>1</sup> per year on textbooks and supplies. That’s as much as 39% of tuition and fees at a community college and 14% of tuition and fees at a four-year public institution.

Worse, new textbook prices underpin the entire college textbook marketplace, and continue to grow at an explosive pace. Over the past decade, textbook prices have increased by 82% - that’s an increase of three times the rate of inflation.<sup>2</sup>

These high textbook costs are set to a backdrop of more than \$1 trillion dollars in college student loan debt and skyrocketing tuition. For many students and families that are already struggling to afford college, \$1,200 per year on textbooks is simply too much -- forcing them to incur more debt, work longer hours, or make choices that undermine academic progress.

### **Publisher Practices Drive Prices Skyward**

Over the past decade, the Student PIRGs have conducted numerous studies to investigate the rising cost of college textbooks and its impact on students. The underlying cause for high prices comes from a fundamental market flaw in the publishing industry. In a typical market, there is a direct relationship between consumer and provider. The consumer exercises control over prices by choosing to purchase products that are a good value, and the competition forces producers to lower costs and meet demand. In the textbook industry, no such system of checks and balances exist. The professor chooses the book, which is an essential component of academic freedom; however, the faculty has little control over the prices and options in the textbook marketplace. The student is forced to pay the price. Because of this, the student is, in essence, a captive market. Without the ability of the student to choose a more affordable option, publishers are able to drive prices higher without fear of market repercussion.

It is also important to note that just five textbook companies control more than 80% of the publishing market,<sup>3</sup> giving them near market monopoly and protecting them from serious competition.

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<sup>1</sup> Baum, Sandy. Trends in Higher Education 2013-14. Retrieved from <http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-estimated-undergraduate-budgets-2013-14>

<sup>2</sup> General Accountability Office. (2013). College Textbooks: Students Have Greater Access to Textbook Information. Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655066.pdf>

## Used books, rentals, and e-textbooks don't solve the problem

In recent years, alternatives to a new, print edition textbook have grown significantly. E-textbooks are becoming more and more widely available, and campus textbook rental programs have increased from 300 in 2009 to more than 3,000 by 2013.<sup>4</sup>

While these alternatives do offer students some upfront savings, they are fraught with problems. Used books and rental programs are easily undermined by the release of new editions – a practice that publishers undergo every 2-3 years. Rental programs and e-textbooks do not give students the ability to keep their book – they're due back at the end of the semester, or their digital license expires and the book is no longer accessible. E-textbooks include restrictions that limit the number of pages printed, or the number of devices that can access the book.

The most significant problem, however, is that the prices of used books, rentals, and e-textbooks are dictated by the cost of a new, print edition. Therefore – while these alternatives do offer students some upfront savings, they will never solve the problem.

## Enter Open Textbooks

The emergence of open textbooks represents a parallel track that can truly challenge the publishers' lock on new book prices in the marketplace. Open textbooks are faculty-written and peer-reviewed just like traditional textbooks, but are published under an open license – meaning they are free to read online, free to download, affordable in print, and professors can legally modify and update the books to meet students' needs.

Not only are open textbooks more accessible, but they have the potential to save students \$100 on average, per course, per semester. If every student at the University of Wisconsin – Madison were assigned *just one* open textbook each semester, it would generate over \$6 million in student savings in just one year.

The 'return on investment' for open textbooks is huge. Campus and state programs that invested in the creation and use of open textbooks have generated millions of dollars more in student savings in a single year than was originally invested.

In addition to upfront student savings, open textbooks can help reduce costs in the long run and drive real change in the market. Because open textbooks are hard-copy optional – meaning a student can choose between free or paying for a low-cost option – open textbooks give purchasing power back to the student. This removes the market failure that allows high prices for traditional textbooks and encourages competition to drive prices down while also protecting the right of faculty to assign the textbook they feel most appropriate.

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<sup>3</sup> Allen, Nicole. (2013). The Future of Digital Textbooks. *American Association of State Colleges and Universities*. Retrieved from <http://www.aascu.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6308>

<sup>4</sup> National Association of Campus Stores. (2012). College Stores Earn Gold Medal for Textbook Rentals. Retrieved from <http://www.nacs.org/advocacynewsmedia/pressreleases/collegestoresearngoldmedalfortextbookrental.aspx>

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# OPEN TEXTBOOK POLICY SOLUTIONS

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## 1. Fund Programs that Encourage Adoption of Open Textbooks

The single most effective way to reduce textbook prices is to encourage adoption of currently available open textbooks. Right now, more than 200 high-quality, classroom-ready open textbooks are available, primarily for high-enrollment courses. Due to lack of widespread knowledge about open textbooks among faculty, these currently available resources are entirely under-used.

That's why it has becoming increasingly important to help drive demand for open textbooks. As more and more open textbooks become available, it is vital that faculty get the technical support and training that they need in order to make the switch to an open textbook.

A strong open textbook policy would establish programs that provide education, training, and resources for faculty to make the switch to open textbooks. Action items could include:

- Organizing workshops or seminars to educate faculty about open textbooks and assist them in the adoption process,
- Providing information to faculty about current open textbook resources,
- Engaging experts in the field of open textbook as guides and mentors,
- Providing compensation for faculty that spend time adapting materials to better fit their class and teaching style,

See: Sample Policies & Programs – Institutional Pilot Program (Page 18) for a current example.

## 2. Fund the Development and Creation of Open Textbooks & Ancillary Materials

One of the largest barriers to wide use of open textbooks is the limited supply of classroom-ready textbooks available for adoption. The open textbook movement is relatively new, and, while the number of open textbooks available has grown significantly in recent years, it is still limited.

Projects from [OpenStax College](#) at Rice University, the [Open Course Library](#) in Washington State, and the [Open Textbook Library](#) at the University of Minnesota have helped make hundreds of open textbooks accessible to faculty.

A logical, high-impact place to start is with textbooks for the highest enrolled courses. This allows schools to maximize the potential for student savings and create a strong set of results to build on.

In addition to the creation of full open-source textbooks, there is significant progress to be made in developing ancillary materials to accompany a full textbook. These materials also require resource allocation, but cost much less than a full textbook.

In the traditional market, publishers will provide faculty with these supporting materials, and there is significant demand to develop these resources for open textbooks:

- Presentations/slide decks
- Test banks
- Syllabi
- Homework assignments

Additionally, an affordable textbook policy could include funding for faculty reviews of open textbooks – a feature that the traditional publishers offer for their books – to level the playing field and ensure that materials are recommended on merit.

See: Sample Policies – Grant Program Establishment (Page 14) for a real-life example.

### **3. Endorse the Use of Open Textbooks**

The simplest form of supportive policy comes from a policy endorsing the principle of open textbooks. Passing a policy that endorses open textbooks can have multiple effects.

First, an endorsement signals to other stakeholders in the field that an institution is interested in exploring open textbooks further. In many cases, it is the precursor to partnerships with private funders, educational technology developers, and others in developing an open textbook program. A policy endorsing open textbooks can also serve as a vehicle to elicit feedback and organize local constituencies including student leaders, librarians, faculty, bookstores, instructional designers and college leadership.

Language for a bill endorsing open textbooks would generally include the following points:

- Lays out the problem of high prices experienced by students and the need for affordable solutions
- Lays out the problem of a flawed marketplace that takes advantage of students and the need for a textbook marketplace that works for students
- Promotes and defines open textbooks as an ideal solution to open up the marketplace for students, in particular by driving down costs
- Calls for participation from other stakeholders, including faculty associations, campus administrators, and state officials to promote open textbooks.

See: Sample Policies – Student Government Resolution (Page 13) for a current example.

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# KEY CONSTITUENCIES & ADDRESSING THEIR CONCERNS

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## **Students**

### **1. Concern: Affordability**

For students, the main concern around textbooks comes from affordability. A college student's budget is already stretched thin – paying for classes and housing, rent and food. As is, the average student borrower graduates with more than \$29,000 in student loan debt.<sup>5</sup> That means students will go to lengths to avoid paying for high-priced textbooks.

**Response:** Open textbooks offer free access online, and the option to buy a hard copy for \$5-30 dollars. Our research shows that open textbooks offer the MOST savings of any alternative model by a large margin.

### **2. Concern: Accessibility**

The way students engage with their learning material is changing. With new technology, students are accessing learning materials in a host of new ways – online, on e-readers or a computer. Whatever textbook is assigned to students, they want to be able to access it in whatever form they are most comfortable with – without paying exorbitant prices.

**Response:** Open textbooks allow students to read books online for free, download to devices and print for free, or purchase a hard copy for a small cost compared to traditional textbooks. In contrast to many e-textbook models being developed and promoted by traditional publishers, open textbooks never expire so a student can access the material in perpetuity.

## **Faculty**

### **1. Concern: Academic Freedom**

Faculty members are often concerned with the effect of an open textbook policy on their right to assign whatever textbook they think best suits their class. Faculty place strong importance in the quality of their book and the knowledge they want to teach, and worry that an open textbook policy will dictate which books they can assign or teach from.

#### **Response:**

We respect and fully support faculty's right to academic freedom, and in no way want to tell them which book they must assign. Our goal is twofold: drive the creation of high-

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<sup>5</sup> (2013). Student Debt and the Class of 2012. *The Institute for College Access & Success*. Retrieved from <http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org/>



quality open textbooks that faculty will *want* to assign in their classes, and educate faculty about the options available and open textbooks they could use in their classes today. This concern can also be alleviated by including an academic freedom clause in proposed policy.

## **2. Concern: Quality**

There's a perception in this country that you get what you pay for. Many faculty express concerns that because the textbook is free and has an open license that the book will not be of such rigorous academic quality as a textbooks published in the traditional system.

**Response:** Just like traditional textbooks, open textbooks are written by faculty: leaders in their field – people who pride themselves in creating a strong body of work that will be viewed positively by their peers. In many cases, because the textbook is not restricted by traditional publisher requirements, faculty can engage an even broader spectrum of their peers in the creation and review process. Many, if not most, of the open textbooks available today are of equal or higher quality than traditional textbooks.

## **3. Concern: Compensation**

Many faculty raise concern over the 'free' aspect of open textbooks and its monetary implications. They express concern that open textbooks remove incentives for faculty to write quality textbooks or even write textbooks at all. Faculty may say, "It's not right to expect a faculty to do all that work without compensation."

**Response:** We understand that it takes a lot of work to create a good textbook, and we don't expect faculty to do it for free. There are a number of companies working to build sustainable business models around open textbooks and in the meantime, there are campus, state, and federal grant programs that will compensate faculty for their work.

## **College Admin & Campus Bookstores**

### **1. Faculty Concerns**

In many cases, college administrators will share similar concerns as their faculty about academic freedom, quality, etc.

**Response:** Faculty concerns are addressed in the above section.

### **2. Bookstore Profits**

Schools and campus administrators may express concerns that the growth of free, open textbooks may be detrimental to their campus bookstore.

**Response:** A very small portion of the money coming in from textbook sales actually remains with the campus bookstore – most of the profit goes directly to the publisher. In many cases, the campus bookstore can actually make more money through the print-on-demand function that open textbooks offer. In reality, many campus bookstores have played a critical role in the growth of other affordable textbook options, and

organizations like the National Association of College Stores have adopted open-textbook friendly policies.

## **Publishers**

### **1. Concern: Losing Business**

Publishers will be concerned with the impact of open textbooks on their profit.

**Response:** More than any other stakeholder or company, publishers are ideally suited to utilize and develop open textbooks as an affordable option for students. There is tremendous potential to create a strong business model around open textbooks, but to this date, publishers have largely ignored and resisted the growing changes to the market, instead choosing to continually increase prices to make up for lower sales. Publishers have the power to abandon practices that hurt students, and will eventually have to accept the growth of open textbooks or face becoming an obsolete business.

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## ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS OF A GOOD POLICY

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### 1. A Strong Definition of Open License

While there are many different types of open licensing, it is recommended to include a strong definition. There are degrees of ‘openness’ within open licenses, but in order to achieve the maximum benefit from a policy supporting open textbooks, it is important to use the strongest definition possible.

Here is an example of a strong ‘open’ definition:

OPEN LICENSE - The term ‘open license’ means a worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable copyright license granting the public permission to access, reproduce, publicly perform, publicly display, adapt, distribute and otherwise use the work and adaptations of the work for any purpose, conditioned only on the requirement that attribution be given to authors as designated.

*Note: the “open license” definition above leads one to the Creative Commons Attribution license<sup>6</sup> – a specific open license that may be used for open textbooks and in policies that support open textbook development.*

### 2. A Method to Promote Adoption

While a continued push for creation of new open textbook materials is important to expand their availability, it is also critical to include provisions in any open textbook policy that also encourages the use and adoption of open textbooks.

Simply put, open textbooks do not have the luxury of multi-million dollar advertising budgets that traditional textbooks have. We know from our experience that there are three barriers to faculty adopting and utilizing currently available open textbooks: lack of knowledge that an open textbook exists for their course, lack of training on how to actually engage with the material and use it in their class, and lack of ancillary materials to accompany the textbook.

In order to operate effectively, any good open textbook policy should also include a means to overcome these barriers. Here are some examples:

- Organize workshops or seminars to educate faculty about open textbooks and assist them in finding an open textbook for their course,
- Provide information to faculty about current open textbook resources,
- Engage experts in the field of open textbooks as guides and mentors,

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<sup>6</sup> <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

- Assist faculty in developing necessary materials to accompany their book,
- Educate students about open textbooks as consumers and active participants in the process.

### **3. A Statement Protecting Academic Freedom**

The right of faculty to choose whichever textbook is the best resource for their class is important to a high standard of quality education. A good open textbook policy should also include a statement addressing academic freedom and ensuring the protection of this right.

Here is an example of strong language protecting academic freedom:

“It is the sense of XXXX that institutions of higher education should encourage the consideration of open textbooks by faculty within the generally accepted principles of academic freedom that establishes the right and responsibility of faculty members, individually and collectively, to select course materials that are pedagogically most appropriate for their classes.”

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# SAMPLE POLICIES & PROGRAMS

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## **SAMPLE STUDENT GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION**

### **Endorse the Use of Open Textbooks**

#### **A Resolution in Support of Open Textbooks**

WHEREAS, research conducted by the College Board has found that average student spends \$1200 per year on textbooks,

WHEREAS, the price of textbooks has risen at four times the rate of inflation in the past two decades,

WHEREAS, the cost of college textbooks is 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;

WHEREAS, textbook publishers have not responded adequately to the concerns of student faculty, and other stakeholders,

WHEREAS, an 'open textbook' is defined as an: online, free to access, easy to share, and affordable to print textbook written by education professionals under an open license

WHEREAS, open textbooks offer an affordable, comparable and flexible alternative to expensive, commercial textbooks:

WHEREAS, it is the prerogative of faculty to select the course materials that are most appropriate for a class;

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

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

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that \_\_\_\_\_ supports the use of open textbooks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \_\_\_\_\_ encourages faculty to consider open textbooks and other low-cost course materials when selecting textbooks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \_\_\_\_\_ encourages XXXX University to offer support to faculty to consider and adopt open textbooks, when academically appropriate.

**SAMPLE GRANT PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT BILL**  
**Fund the Development and Creation of Open Textbooks**

# **OPEN COLLEGE TEXTBOOK ACT**

## **SEC. 1. FINDINGS.**

<<Legislature>> finds the following:

- (1) The growth of the Internet has enabled the creation and sharing of digital content, including open educational resources that can freely used by students, teachers and members of the public.
- (2) Nearly two-thirds of the 46.8 million job openings the economy will create by 2018 will require a postsecondary degree, but only than 80 percent of the 23 million jobs that will be created in the next 10 years will require postsecondary education, but only 36 percent of all 18- to 24-year-olds are currently enrolled in postsecondary education.
- (3) The high cost of college textbooks continues to be a barrier for many students in achieving higher education, and according to the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 200,000 qualified students fail to enroll in college each year due to cost.
- (4) The College Board reported that for the 2012-2013 academic year an average student spent an estimated \$1,200 on college books and supplies.
- (5) The Student PIRGs found that using open textbooks can save students 80% over traditional textbooks.
- (6) Making high quality open textbooks freely available to the general public could significantly lower college textbook costs and increase accessibility to such education materials.
- (7) Open textbooks can improve learning and teaching by creating course materials that are more flexible, adaptable, and accessible through the use of technology.

## **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

- (1) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION - The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).
- (2) EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE - The term 'educational resource' means an educational material that can be used in postsecondary instruction, including textbooks and other written or audiovisual works.

(3) OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE - The term “open educational resource” means an educational resource that is licensed under an open license and made freely available online to the public.

(3) OPEN LICENSE - The term ‘open license’ means a worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable copyright license granting the public permission to access, reproduce, publicly perform, publicly display, adapt, distribute and otherwise use the work and adaptations of the work for any purpose, conditioned only on the requirement that attribution be given to authors as designated.

(4) OPEN TEXTBOOK - The term ‘open textbook’ means an open educational resource or set of open educational resources that either is a textbook or can be used in place of a textbook for a postsecondary course at an institution of higher education.

### **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM.**

(a) Grants Authorized- From the amounts appropriated under subsection (i), the <<Agency>> shall make grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to support pilot programs that expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

(b) Eligible Entity- In this section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means an institution of higher education or group of institutions of higher education.

(c) Applications-

(1) IN GENERAL- Each eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the <<Agency>> at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the <<Agency>> may reasonably require.

(2) CONTENTS- Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include a description of the project to be completed with grant funds and--

(A) a plan for promoting and tracking the use of open textbooks in postsecondary courses offered by the eligible entity, including an estimate of the projected savings that will be achieved for students;

(B) a plan for evaluating, before creating new open educational resources, whether existing open educational resources could be used or adapted for the same purpose;

(C) a plan for quality review and review of accuracy of any open educational resources to be created or adapted through the grant; and

(D) a plan for disseminating information about the results of the project to institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity, including promoting the adoption of any open textbooks created or adapted through the grant.

(d) Special Consideration- In awarding grants under this section, the <<Agency>> shall give special consideration to applications that demonstrate the greatest potential to--

(1) achieve the highest level of savings for students through the expanded use of open textbooks in postsecondary courses offered by the eligible entity;

(2) expand the use of open textbooks at institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity; and

(3) produce--

(A) the highest quality open textbooks;

(B) open textbooks that can be most easily utilized and adapted by faculty members at institutions of higher education;

(C) open textbooks that correspond to the highest enrollment courses at institutions of higher education; and

(D) open textbooks created or adapted in partnership with entities that will assist in marketing and distribution of the open textbook.

(e) Use of funds—The recipient of a grant under this section shall use the grant funds to carry out any of the following activities to expand the use of open textbooks—

(1) professional development for faculty and staff members at institutions of higher education, including the search for and review of open textbooks;

(2) creation or adaptation of open educational resources, especially open textbooks;

(3) development or improvement of tools and informational resources that support the use of open textbooks;

(4) research evaluating the efficacy of the use of open textbooks for achieving savings for students; and

(5) partnerships with other entities, including institutions of higher education, for-profit organizations, or nonprofit organizations, to carry out any of the activities described in paragraphs (1) through (4).

(f) License— Educational resources created or adapted under subsection (e) shall be licensed under an open license.

(g) Access and Distribution— The full and complete digital content of each educational resource created or adapted under subsection (e) shall be made available free of charge to the public--

(A) on an easily accessible and interoperable website, which shall be identified to the Secretary by the eligible entity; and

(B) in a machine readable, digital format that anyone can directly download, edit, and redistribute.



(h) Report- Upon an eligible entity's completion of a project supported under this section, the eligible entity shall prepare and submit a report to the <<Agency>> regarding--

(1) the effectiveness of the pilot program in expanding the use of open textbooks and in achieving savings for students;

(2) the impact of the pilot program on expanding the use of open textbooks at institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity;

(3) educational resources created or adapted under the grant, including instructions on where the public can access each educational resource under the terms of subsection (g); and

(4) all project costs, including the value of any volunteer labor and institutional capital used for the project.

(i) Authorization of Appropriations- There are authorized to be appropriated \$XX,XXX,XXX to carry out this section for fiscal year 20XX and such sums as are necessary for each of the 5 succeeding fiscal years.

**SEC. 4. SENSE OF <<LEGISLATURE>>.**

It is the sense of <<LEGISLATURE>>. that institutions of higher education should encourage the consideration of open textbooks by professors within the generally accepted principles of academic freedom that established the right and responsibility of faculty members, individually and collectively, to select course materials that are pedagogically most appropriate for their classes.

**SEC. 5. REPORT TO <<LEGISLATURE>>..**

Not later than July 1, 2016, the Secretary shall prepare and submit a report to <<LEGISLATURE>>. detailing--

(1) the open textbooks created or adapted under this Act;

(2) the adoption of such open textbooks; and

(3) the savings generated for students and institutions through the use of open textbooks.

# INSTITUTIONAL PILOT PROGRAM

## Fund Programs that Encourage Adoption of Open Textbooks

AUGUST 2013

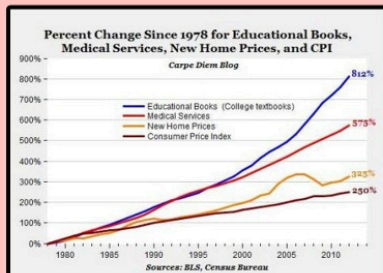


### MARYLAND OPEN SOURCE TEXTBOOKS

## THE PROBLEM

Textbook costs have become an enormous barrier to college affordability. College students in Maryland have enjoyed the smallest increase in tuition over the past seven years compared to any other state, but have not been spared from the increasing financial burden of textbooks.

- The price of college textbooks has **increased 812% since 1978**, faster than tuition, health care costs and housing prices, all of which have risen faster than inflation.<sup>1</sup>



- *College Board* estimates that the **average student spends \$1,200** per year on textbooks and materials.<sup>2</sup>
- A survey conducted by the *U.S. Public Interest Research Group* found that **high textbook costs prevented 7 out of 10 students from purchasing an assigned book.**<sup>3</sup>
- *Student Monitor* reports that **students buy only 77 percent of all required textbooks.**<sup>4</sup>

## OPEN SOURCE TEXTBOOKS

Open Source Textbooks are published under an open copyright license and made freely available to the public. Open source textbooks not only have the potential to save students millions of dollars per year, but also empower faculty with digital tools that traditional textbooks lack.

- A Florida Legislative Task Force found “*compelling academic reasons to use open access textbooks such as: improved quality; flexibility and access to resources; interactive and active learning experiences; currency of textbook information; broader professional collaboration; and the use of teaching and learning technology to enhance educational experiences.*”<sup>5</sup>
- Open Source initiatives are underway in states and universities around the country (*Washington, Ohio, California, Texas, Florida*)

## THE MOST INITIATIVE

The **Maryland Open Source Textbook (MOST) Initiative** is a student driven effort to promote the adoption and development of open source textbooks within Maryland. With the collaborative effort of faculty, staff, administrators, and experts in open source, USMSC will launch the MOST Initiative in three parts:

1. A Fall 2013 workshop on exploring open source textbooks, tailored for interested faculty of high-enrollment, entry level courses. Faculty will learn more about the features and benefits of open source textbooks, how to engage with the technology, and assess the feasibility of adopting the open source text.
2. A Spring 2014 pilot program that will gather and analyze data in order to evaluate textbook costs, explore how students are using their textbooks, and gauge faculty willingness to move to open source textbooks.
3. A state-wide workgroup to evaluate the feasibility of a state-supported open source program.

1. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/04/college-textbook-prices-increase\\_n\\_2409153.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/04/college-textbook-prices-increase_n_2409153.html)  
 2. <http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/college-costs/quick-guide-college-costs>  
 3. <http://www.studentpirgs.org/news/ap/high-prices-prevent-college-students-buying-assigned-textbooks>  
 4. <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/08/28/how-your-textbook-dollars-are-divided-up/page-2>  
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