

OERI Textbook Affordability and Cost Transparency Proposal

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Overview

In years past, the California Community Colleges have benefitted from funds to promote the adoption of open educational resources (OER) and expand zero textbook cost (ZTC) degrees, but the potential of OER and ZTC have never been fully realized. Intersegmental OER-related efforts were effective in driving OER adoption and ZTC funds served to further advance these efforts.

In 2016 \$5 million was appropriated to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to establish the Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant. The use of these funds was described in the Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant Program California Community Colleges 2020 Legislative Report (tinyurl.com/2021ZTC) p. 10:

The Chancellor's Office allocated 79% (\$3,962,571) of the \$5 million appropriation as competitive planning and implementation grants to colleges and districts. Planning grants (\$35,000 each) helped institutions identify potential ZTC degree programs and courses, coordinate stakeholders, and prepare for the creation and adoption of effective open educational resources to support the ZTC Program. Implementation grants (up to \$150,000 each) enabled colleges to develop and adopt open educational resources in course and program design, ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the federal Copyright Act of 1976, and implement ZTC degree programs on campus.

Thirty-two of the state's 115 accredited colleges (approximately 28%) received funds from the first Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant (Appendix A). Of these, nine received only a planning grant of up to \$35,000. Thirteen received one implementation grant of up to \$150,000. The remaining colleges received both types of grants (8), two implementation grants (1), or one planning grant and two implementation grants (1). During this funding cycle, nothing was done to prevent duplication and no structures were established for ensuring accountability. In addition, no efforts were made to encourage expansion or ensure sustainability. In contrast, the 2021 appropriation that is the focus of this document specifically references preventing duplication, sustainability, and collaboration (tinyurl.com/115forZTC).

During the summer of 2021, the California legislature designated 115 million dollars to expand ZTC degrees in the California Community Colleges. While the language of the bill and legislation is unclear and introduces definitions that conflict with existing definitions of OER and ZTC in California and beyond, it is hoped that appropriate constituencies can collaborate to ensure these funds are spent responsibly with an emphasis on growing the availability of no-cost course sections across the state in a sustainable manner. It is critical to begin by ensuring a minimum level of readiness at the colleges for growing local ZTC efforts and establishing a system for accountability. At present, compliance with related textbook affordability requirements and regulations is inconsistent, as is the level of support for ZTC and/or OER efforts more generally. As a primary goal of expanding the availability of ZTC awards (i.e., certificates and

degrees) is to make higher education more affordable, ZTC is associated with textbook affordability and cost transparency in this document.

This document has been developed by the ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI) and will provide recommendations with respect to the use of the allocated ZTC dollars, and data to support those recommendations. Unless otherwise indicated, the recommendations are not formal positions of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). ASCCC establishes positions through a resolution process that involves delegates from colleges and districts across the state. It is anticipated that the delegates will consider the resolutions contained in Appendix B at the 2021 Fall Plenary to be held in early November and, at that time, formalize support for elements of this document.

Ensuring ZTC Implementation Readiness

To ensure that the ZTC funds allotted to the colleges increase the availability of ZTC degrees and certificate pathways, there should be minimum standards with which the colleges must comply to access the funds and a local ZTC baseline should be established. Distributing dollars across the state based on a prescribed formula makes sense when every college has a comparable – or minimum – infrastructure for those funds or when all colleges are engaging in a specific activity. Absent a foundation for the work and a documentation of the college’s or district’s starting point, the potential impact of the funds cannot be accurately assessed and accountability can’t be assured. The proposal that follows is based on these concerns and existing ASCCC positions. As the legislation references the potential for funding “phases”, the initial proposed steps are organized into phases that delineate activities and presume funding to support those activities.

Please note that this document has been revised to reflect the feedback and questions received from ASCCC OER Liaisons and other OER advocates. The ASCCC Open Educational Resources Initiative (OERI) has established a network of college OER advocates (i.e., OER Liaisons) to ensure two-way communication between the OERI and the colleges. The content from the original draft of this document has been expanded and its organization and presentation has been modified based on these communications.

Phase 1 – Colleges Establish ZTC Readiness and Status

“Planning” grants in the prior ZTC funding cycle were intended to provide colleges with funds to prepare and plan for a large “implementation” grant. Given the amount of funding currently available, establishing a system that presumes and supports universal participation is warranted. With that in mind, specific activities are proposed during Phase 1.

1. Colleges must demonstrate compliance with existing requirements, regulations, and laws relating to textbooks and materials fees. At a minimum, this would mean:
 - a. the federal requirement that colleges provide textbook information in their online schedules at the time of registration (read more at tinyurl.com/TextLeg) and
 - b. mark no-cost (ZTC) course sections as required in California law ([California Education Code 66406.9](#)). This legislated unfunded mandate has yet to be universally implemented. An analysis of California Community College schedules for Fall 2021 revealed that at least 30 of the California community colleges appear to not provide textbook information in their online schedules and at least 33 colleges may not have fully implemented the legislated ZTC marking requirement.
2. Adopt local policies and practices that advance ZTC and textbook affordability more generally. At a minimum, this would include those necessary for compliance with existing regulation (e.g., Title 5 § 59404) and, ideally, policies to support the implementation of existing laws.
3. “Map” existing ZTC courses, determining what certificates and degrees can already be completed using ZTC courses and identifying what courses are needed to complete incomplete ZTC pathways.

Phase 1 – CCCC Supports College Readiness

1. Provide technical support to colleges to accomplish the Phase 1 college-level activities so that colleges may accomplish the Phase 1 college-level activities without expending additional resources. The support should be from credible sources that have a strong track record of effectively working with community colleges.
2. Develop a ZTC section-level MIS data element that colleges must implement to access ZTC degree development funds (when the data element is available for implementation). The requirement to implement a data element would elevate schedule-related textbook issues that are often overlooked, if not neglected. The implementation of a data element would facilitate the collection of data related to the effectiveness of the ZTC funds, ensuring consistency in reporting. At present, the metrics delineated in the bill language would be impossible to track in a meaningful way. As a consequence of observing local struggles to implement a ZTC mark in course schedules, the ASCCC has proposed the development of such a data element ([Advocate for Development of a ZTC Data Element, Resolution 11.02, Spring 2021](#)).

Phase 2 – College Planning or Implementation

While Phase 1 would serve to ensure some minimal level of preparedness for the launching of a local ZTC initiative, Phase 2 would provide additional support for those colleges that are new to ZTC work while providing an opportunity for colleges with advanced ZTC programs to further their work.

1. Prepare for implementation of the ZTC data element.
2. Apply for planning or implementation (ZTC degree development) funds.

Phase 2 – CCCCO Supports College ZTC Infrastructure Development and ZTC Resource Creation

1. Establish a formula to distribute some element of the funds to colleges to establish a baseline ZTC infrastructure. Such funds could be used to support specific ZTC-related activities, such as:
 - a. Ensure print copies of OER are made available in libraries, on reserve or for check-out.
 - b. Provide print copies of OER to students when they are required to have access to paper resources (e.g., lab manuals).
 - c. Purchase low-cost resources for students to use to allow courses that can't eliminate costs (i.e., those courses for which OER is not available) to be ZTC.
 - d. Fund staff to support faculty in adopting resources that require remediation due to accessibility concerns or require other modification.
Note: the provision of state-level accessibility remediation services would aid in preventing duplication of efforts and allow for local accessibility support to focus on local needs.
 - e. Professional development for faculty.
 - f. Release/reassigned time for faculty ZTC lead(s).
2. In the process of distributing funds to colleges, distinguish between local isolated professional development efforts and the development of resources intended to serve a statewide need. Encourage cross-district collaboration and intersegmental efforts (as referenced in the legislation).
3. Provide robust centralized support for the colleges with respect to:
 - a. Accessibility (critical)
 - b. Copyright and licensing
 - c. Copyediting (a need to explore)

ZTC Mapping

A critical component of Phase 1 at the local level is determining the ZTC status of existing certificates and degrees. The OERI has conducted OER “mapping” by C-ID, CSU General Education Breadth, and Transfer Model Curriculum TMC (see “Resources” at ASCCC-OERI.org for more information). In our work, we have determined that there are OER available to complete a transferable general education pattern. It should be noted that, in some instances, the college or district would need to cover the cost of printing or other minimal and unavoidable costs to make the identified OER ZTC. Printing is often required when a lab manual is being used and efforts to achieve ZTC status using OER may be thwarted when critical copyrighted resources are necessary. A contemporary literature course, for example, may require the use of

copyrighted materials. Thus, colleges should be encouraged and supported in removing any barriers that exist in pursuing sustainable OER for ZTC degrees.

Conclusion

If the potential impact of this historical support of ZTC is to be realized, it is critical that every college be prepared to use the funds effectively and that a centralized infrastructure be developed to prevent duplication of effort. Most notably, there are OER resources that faculty would like to use and/or are using that require remediation with respect to accessibility. An advantage of true OER is the ability to address such issues. Absent coordination, every college could invest time and money into remediating a given resource. Similarly, absent meaningful data regarding the availability of ZTC resources for specific courses, funds might be inappropriately used to simply incentivize faculty to transition to a new text.

The system is at a critical juncture when it comes to OER and ZTC and we are fortunate to have the \$115 million to advance this important work. We hope that this document will serve to advance the collaboration necessary to create a strong and sustainable future for OER and ZTC.

ASCCC OERI Request for Proposals Excerpt

In the ASCCC OERI's work, faculty have been asked to provide evidence of the need for a specific OER and resources that meet a statewide need have been emphasized. While the OERI's focus has been at the course-level, it has been tracking OER availability by C-ID and TMC (see "Resources" at ASCCC-OERI.org for more information). Without knowing how a course that a resource could serve fits into a degree, certificate, or general education area, we are unable to determine how it should be prioritized.

The following excerpt is provided to share the approach the ASCCC OERI has employed to prevent duplication and ensure statewide impact of resources.

Please identify which of the following you are proposing to do (select one):

- a. Make an OER text-equivalent available for a course commonly taught in the CCCs for which it has been established that OER are lacking.
- b. Improve upon an existing OER text-equivalent for a course commonly taught in the CCCs.
- c. Develop an ancillary resource or resources that will increase the likelihood of OER adoption by supplementing an OER text-equivalent for a course commonly taught in the CCCs.

For Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, please presume that "commonly taught in the CCCs" refers to all colleges that have the specified CTE program.

1. OERI Statewide Course Priorities - Indicate which of the following course priorities your proposal most directly addresses. In the "Project Description" section you will describe how the proposed project will meet the indicated priority. (select only one)
 - a. Text-equivalents or ancillaries for required courses in Associate Degrees for Transfer for which OER are generally not readily available.
 - b. Text-equivalents or ancillaries for career technical education (CTE) programs for which OER are generally not readily available.
 - c. Text-equivalents or ancillaries for commonly-taught general education courses for which OER are generally not readily available.

2. OERI Initiative-Related Priorities - Indicate which of the following initiative-related priorities your proposal most directly addresses. In the "Project Description" section you will describe how the proposed project will meet the indicated priority. (select only one)
 - a. Resources explicitly addressing equity concerns.
 - b. Resources that support the implementation of AB 705.
 - c. Resources that support the implementation of guided pathways.
 - d. Enhancements to available OER to better serve the students of the CCCs.

Please provide information on each of the following. All of the following elements of the application permit a narrative response. Responses should be concise. If an element does not apply to your proposal, please indicate "NA."

Statewide impact as assessed by the number of courses and colleges potentially impacted. Estimate the number of courses and colleges who would potentially adopt your product. (narrative)

Potential for student savings. List the cost of existing resources which your product would replace. List any other savings your OER would create for students. (narrative)

Impact of the project on OER, such as the development of high quality resources in areas for which no other OER are currently available. Provide a brief assessment of the existing OER, if any, in the discipline of your proposal and assert how your product would meet this criterion. (narrative)

Fall 2021 Schedule Review Data

(District only specified for colleges within a multi-college district.)

Colleges with No ZTC Mark (39 total, 5 do not currently provide a dynamic online schedule)

*District	College	Notes
FHDA	1. Foothill	Mark has been implemented at DeAnza.
LRCCD	2. American River	ZTC search available, but hard to find. Reportedly, ZTC icon is visible when students are logged in for registration purposes.
	3. Cosumnes River	
	4. Folsom Lake	
	5. Sacramento City	
NO	6. Cypress	
	7. Fullerton	
RCCD	8. Moreno Valley	No online schedule available at the time of review.
	9. Norco	
	10. Riverside City	
RSCCD	11. Santa Ana	ZTC noted after accessing section information.
	12. Rancho Santiago	
SBV	13. Crafton Hills	Although all course sections are presently ZTC, this is not reflected in the schedule
	14. San Bernardino Valley	
Yuba	15. Woodland Community	
	16. Yuba	
	17. Barstow Community	Schedule only available as PDF.
	18. Chaffey	
	19. City College of SF	Reportedly, ZTC icon is visible when students are logged in for registration purposes.
	20. College of the Canyons	
	21. College of the Desert	
	22. College of the Redwoods	
	23. College of the Sequoias	
	24. College of the Siskiyous	
	25. Copper Mountain	No web schedule available.
	26. El Camino	
	27. Feather River	
	28. Lake Tahoe Community	ZTC icon is visible in PDF of schedule – but it is not visible when browsing the course schedule. Reportedly, ZTC icon is visible when students are logged in for registration purposes.
	29. Mendocino	
	30. Merced	
	31. Monterey Peninsula	
	32. Mt. San Jacinto	
	33. Napa Valley	
	34. Ohlone	
	35. Palo Verde	
	36. San Joaquin Delta	
	37. Santa Rosa Junior	Free / Low Cost Instructional Materials note.
	38. Southwestern	
	39. Victor Valley	

Colleges with a Sub-Optimal ZTC Indicator (6)

The following colleges provide some indication of a section being ZTC without further investigation (without accessing section-level information or searching), but it is not an optimal mark.

College	Notes
1. Cuyamaca College	ZTC note buried in lengthy narrative via one search in "WebAdvisor". Transitioning to "Self Service" which shows ZTC.
2. Grossmont College	
3. Evergreen Valley College	Search and reference buried in narrative via "My Web Information Center". Students have a 2 nd search option which shows ZTC.
4. San Jose City College	
5. Lassen Community College	Buried in narrative. (WebAdvisor)
6. Pasadena City College	ZTC search. Small font.

Sub-Optimal Examples

Grossmont and Cuyamaca

Term	Status	Section Name and Title	Book Info	Location	Meeting Information	Faculty	Available/Capacity/Waitlist	Credits	Comments	Reg ID
Fall 2021	Waitlisted	PSY-120-5356 (5356) Introductory Psychology		Grossmont College	08/16/2021-12/18/2021 Internet 100% Days to be Announced, Times to be AnnouncedDistance Education/Online, Room WEB (Section 5356 is a distance learning course offered on the Internet. For more information, email the instructor at: maria.pak@gcccd.edu *ZTC* Zero Textbook Cost section: This course does not require purchase of a textbook and may use free Open Educational Resources (OER) or free textbook alternatives.)	M. Pak		0 / 50 / 1		3.00

San Jose and Evergreen Valley

FIRST PREV NEXT LAST JUMP Page 1 of 1

Term	Status	Section Name and Title	Book Info	Location	Meeting Information	Faculty	Available/Capacity/Waitlist	Credits	Comments	Reg ID
Fall 2021 Regular	Encl	COMS-018-101 (Reg ID:109339) Intro to Communication Studies	View Books	San Jose City College	08/31/2021-12/16/2021 Lecture Tuesday, Thursday 12:15PM - 01:35PM, Tech Center, Room T304	To be Announced	35 / 35 / 0	3.00	This is a ZTC (zero textbook cost) section. If there is a required textbook, you will be able to access it online for free or a print copy will be loaned to you. To find out more about ZTC and other ZTC courses at SJCC, visit the ZTC webpage: http://www.sjcc.edu/home/zero-textbook-cost-courses	109339

Lassen

2021 Fall	Open	PSY-1-M0402 (0402) Introduction to Psychology		Main Campus	HU 206. LEC, TTH 11:00AM - 12:15PM **THIS SECTION USES A FREE OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) TEXTBOOK. Student will be able to access the textbook FREE online or may request a printed copy from the LCC Book Store for a minimal fee.	T. Kareck		4 / 35 / 0		3.00
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Pasadena

CLOSED	HY	70899	3.0	Lecture	T			06:15pm - 07:40pm	C 421
				DE Online Lecture			1.7 Hrs/Wk of online work		Online

CRN 70899: Zero-textbook-cost option. Click CRN for details.

Colleges that Provide No Textbook Cost Information (36 total, 5 do not currently provide a dynamic online schedule)

District	College	Note
4CD	1. Contra Costa	
	2. Diablo Valley	
	3. Los Medanos	
GC	4. Cuyamaca	
	5. Grossmont	
Kern	6. Bakersfield	
	7. Cerro Coso Community	
	8. Porterville	
Peralta	9. Berkeley City	
	10. College of Alameda	
	11. Laney	
	12. Merritt	
RCCD	13. Moreno Valley	No information accessible.
	14. Norco	
	15. Riverside City	
VCCD	16. Moorpark	
	17. Oxnard	
	18. Ventura	
Yuba	19. Woodland Community	Bookstore link gives generic info about ZTC.
	20. Yuba	
	21. Barstow Community	PDF
	22. Chaffey	
	23. Citrus	Generic link to bookstore.
	24. College of Marin	
	25. College of the Canyons	
	26. College of the Redwoods	
	27. College of the Sequoias	
	28. College of the Siskiyous	
	29. Copper Mountain	No web schedule.
	30. Feather River	
	31. Gavilan	
	32. Lake Tahoe Community	
	33. Long Beach City	
	34. San Joaquin Delta	
	35. Sierra	
	36. Victor Valley	Generic link to bookstore provided.

Colleges that Appear to Provide Textbook Cost Information, But It Is Lacking (10)

These colleges provide what appears to be a link to section-specific information, but no information was available.

District	College	Notes.
FHDA	1. De Anza College	Search for no and low available
NO	2. Cypress College	Unable to find the requested Term.
RSCCD	3. Santa Ana College	Books total blank.
RSCCD	4. Santiago Canyon	Books total blank.
SBCCD	5. Crafton Hills College	Unable to find the requested Term.
WH	6. West Hills College -	Unable to find the requested Term.
	7. El Camino College	"Books total" and then no information.
	8. Hartnell College	Books total blank.
	9. Mt. San Jacinto College	"Books total" and then no information.
	10. Palo Verde College	ALL sections indicate TBD.

Noteworthy Issues in Course Schedules

While the section is clearly marked as being no cost, when the student accesses the text information, it appears that a rental is required.



The screenshot shows a course page for "Psychology (OER)". On the left is a book cover with the word "Psychology" on a green background. To the right of the cover, the word "required" is written in red. Below that, the title "PSYCHOLOGY (OER)" is displayed. Further down, the following information is listed: Author: OPENSTAX, Edition: 17, Published Date: 2017, ISBN: 9781938168352, and Publisher: XANEDU C. Under "Book Notes:", there are two items: "Summary" and "Rental Agreement", both with a checkmark icon. On the right side of the page, under the heading "Rental", the due date is "12/21/2021" and the price is "\$12.99 Rental". Below this is a dark blue button labeled "Add to Cart".

At one college that is reportedly paying for all texts, there is no indication that sections are no cost – and it looks as if a purchase is required.

Course Note

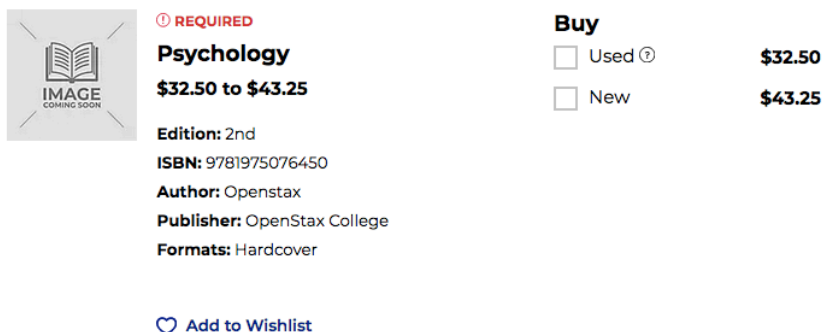
FALSE

Section Note

Free PDF at Openstax.org

Section Note

Follett ACCESS



The screenshot shows a course page for "Psychology". On the left is a book cover with an open book icon and the text "IMAGE COMING SOON". To the right of the cover, the word "REQUIRED" is written in red with a red circle icon. Below that, the title "Psychology" is displayed, followed by the price range "\$32.50 to \$43.25". Further down, the following information is listed: Edition: 2nd, ISBN: 9781975076450, Author: Openstax, Publisher: OpenStax College, and Formats: Hardcover. On the right side of the page, under the heading "Buy", there are two options: "Used" with a price of "\$32.50" and "New" with a price of "\$43.25". Below this is a blue heart icon and the text "Add to Wishlist".

Materials Fee Variable Most classes require a materials usage fee. The charge is noted under the appropriate class at the end of the description. Material fees must be paid at registration, and are not subject to waiver. (Chaffey)

Appendix A – Prior ZTC Funds

College	Amount	Grant type
1. Alameda, College of	\$150,000	Implementation
2. Allan Hancock	\$149,687	Implementation
3. American River	\$35,000	Planning
4. Berkeley City	\$35,000	Planning
5. Butte	\$185,000	Both
6. Chaffey	\$35,000	Planning
7. College of Marin	\$150,000	Implementation
8. College of the Canyons	\$271,763	Implementation (2)
9. Glendale	\$149,560	Implementation
10. Grossmont	\$150,000	Implementation
11. Lake Tahoe Community	\$185,000	Both
12. Laney	\$35,000	Planning
13. Lassen	\$34,944	Planning
14. Los Angeles Valley	\$150,000	Implementation
15. Los Medanos	\$48,458	Implementation
16. Marin, College of	\$35,000	Planning
17. MiraCosta	\$101,587	Both
18. Orange Coast	\$98,204	Both
19. Palomar	\$34,320	Planning
20. Pasadena City	\$185,000	Both
21. Reedley	\$150,000	Implementation
22. Rio Hondo	\$35,000	Planning
23. Saddleback	\$35,000	Planning
24. San Bernardino Valley e	\$149,840	Implementation
25. San Diego College of Continuing Education	\$220,000	Both/Implementation (2)
26. San Jose City	\$150,000	Implementation
27. Santa Ana College	\$185,000	Both
28. Santa Monica	\$185,000	Both
29. Skyline	\$149,816	Implementation
30. Taft	\$184,970	Both
31. West Hills College Coalinga	\$150,000	Implementation
32. West Hills College Lemoore	\$150,000	Implementation

Appendix B – Draft Resolutions Related to Textbook Affordability and Cost Transparency for Consideration at the Fall 2021 ASCCC Plenary

Develop Statewide Recommendation for Low-Cost Definition

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges supports efforts to increase student access to high-quality open educational resources and reduce the cost of course materials and supplies for students in course sections for which open educational resources may not be available to accomplish zero cost for students and encourages colleges to implement a mechanism for identifying course sections that employ low-cost course materials (Fall 2017, Resolution 13.01);

Whereas, Recognizing the need for an alternative to the legislated zero-cost designation (California Education Code §66406.9), some colleges and districts have implemented a low-cost designation with the definition of low-cost not being readily available or varying between less than \$30.00 to less than \$50.00;

Whereas, Efforts to mark course sections as zero-cost or low-cost should be informed by students' perspectives since the designations are intended to inform students of the financial burden of a given course section; and

Whereas, Students may register for courses at more than one college, and differing different definitions of low-cost at different institutions can be confusing and even misleading for students.

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the Student Senate for California Community Colleges to identify a recommended definition of "low-cost" to be considered for adoption throughout the California Community Colleges system.

Supporting Information - Low-Cost Definitions

College or District	"Low-Cost" is less than:
DeAnza	\$50
Glendale	\$40
Los Angeles CCD	\$50
Palomar	\$40
Reedley	\$40
San Jose-Evergreen CCD	\$30
Sierra	\$50
South Orange CCD	\$40

Faculty Responsibility for Confirming Course Resource Accuracy

Whereas, Faculty have both the freedom to select the course materials they deem most appropriate and the responsibility to consider the cost burden as they do so (California Code of Regulations Title 5 §59404);

Whereas, Provisions of the Higher Education Opportunity Act that went into effect in July 2010 require each institution of higher education receiving federal financial assistance to “disclose, on the institution’s Internet course schedule and in a manner of the institution’s choosing, the International Standard Book Number and retail price information of required and recommended college textbooks and supplemental materials for each course listed in the institution’s course schedule used for preregistration and registration purposes”;

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourages local academic senates to advocate for the implementation of a process for consistent, clear, and transparent messaging to students prior to registration regarding all material and supply costs in appropriate locations, including the schedule of classes and the bookstore (Resolution 20.02 F20); and

Whereas, Textbook information is commonly provided to students prior to and at the time of registration via a section-specific link to the bookstore, and the provided information may in some cases be inaccurate, misleading, or missing;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage local academic senates to urge faculty to submit their course resource information in a timely manner, regularly check the class schedule to ensure their sections are marked with a zero-cost or low-cost icon if appropriate, and ensure that their textbook and class resource information is clear and accurate.

Zero Means Zero

Whereas, Zero-Textbook-Cost (ZTC) refers to instances in which textbooks are available to students at no cost, and California Education Code §66406.9 requires that California community colleges “Clearly highlight, by means that may include a symbol or logo in a conspicuous place on the online campus course schedule, the courses that exclusively use digital course materials,” providing a mechanism for marking course sections that are zero-textbook-cost;

Whereas, California Education Code §78052, which originally established a zero-textbook-cost degree grant program in the California Community Colleges system, states that “Zero-textbook-cost degrees’ means community college associate degrees or career technical education certificates earned entirely by completing courses that eliminate conventional textbook costs by using alternative instructional materials and methodologies,” and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office has recommended that future ZTC funds should “ensure the ZTC programs and courses are truly zero cost to the students by eliminating hidden costs” (Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant Program Legislative Report, CCCCCO 2020);

Whereas, The 2021 revisions to California Education Code §78052 redefine “zero-textbook-cost degrees” to allow for “low-cost” to be recognized as “zero” in ill-defined instances, stating, “For purposes of this paragraph, ‘zero-textbook-cost degrees’ may include a low-cost degree option if a no-cost equivalent option is not available or cannot be developed”; and

Whereas, While open educational resources (OER) provide a mechanism to reduce or eliminate costs for instructional materials and textbooks, in some instances eliminating costs using OER is not possible because instructional resources require the use of such works as photographs, literature, and other materials that are under copyright;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges ensure that zero-textbook-cost has a clear and specific meaning by affirming California Education Code’s original definition of zero-textbook-cost that refers to “courses that eliminate conventional textbook costs by using alternative instructional materials and methodologies,” and recognize that a variety of approaches can be used to bring course costs for students to zero, including college library subscriptions, purchasing access to copyrighted resources, and purchasing print resources;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges recognize open educational resources as the preferred and most sustainable mechanism for eliminating course costs but acknowledge that instances will arise in which eliminating costs is not possible;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges assert that while open educational resources can reduce or eliminate instructional materials and textbook costs, resources should be dedicated to convening discipline faculty to

determine the most sustainable mechanisms for reducing the costs of course resources;
and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage the use of approaches that significantly reduce course resource costs such that course sections with a low-cost can obtain zero-textbook-cost status by virtue of the cost being absorbed by the college, district, or the state.

Supporting Information - 2020 Report - Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant Program

<https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/Reports/ccc-co-report-zero-cost-textbook-rev041221-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=168160F9653C3B1E707BF3E9F7DA90889314B0B7>

Local Senate Policies Regarding Textbook Adoption

Whereas, Faculty have both the academic freedom to select the course materials they deem most appropriate (Resolution 19.01 F04) and the responsibility to consider the cost burden as they do so (Title 5, § 59404);

Whereas, Provisions of the Higher Education Opportunity Act require each institution of higher education receiving federal financial assistance to “disclose, on the institution’s Internet course schedule and in a manner of the institution’s choosing, the International Standard Book Number and retail price information of required and recommended college textbooks and supplemental materials for each course listed in the institution’s course schedule used for preregistration and registration purposes”;

Whereas, California Education Code §66406.9 requires the California Community Colleges to “clearly highlight, by means that may include a symbol or logo in a conspicuous place on the online campus course schedule, the courses that exclusively use digital course materials that are free of charge to students and may have a low-cost option for print versions”; and

Whereas, Students who register for a course and act on the available course information, purchasing a nonreturnable text or choosing a section that is identified as no-cost or low-cost, should not be negatively impacted in the event that the instructor of record changes;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California for Community Colleges provide guidance to local senates in developing policies that both protect students and uphold academic freedom in cases where changes to faculty class assignments result in changes in required course resources by Fall of 2022; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California for Community Colleges encourage local senates to adopt policies that both protect students and uphold academic freedom in cases where changes to faculty class assignments result in changes in required course resources.

System-Level Zero-Textbook-Cost Resources

Whereas, The legislative intent of California Education Code §78052 is “that community college districts develop and implement zero-textbook-cost degrees and develop open educational resources for courses to reduce the overall cost of education for students and decrease the time it takes students to complete degree programs”;

Whereas, California Education Code §78052 requires that districts “Develop degrees with consideration for sustainability after grant funding is exhausted, including how content is updated and presented,” “ensure compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 104-197) and the federal Copyright Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-553),” “develop and implement a degree that other community college districts can use or adapt,” and “ensure faculty shall have flexibility to update and customize degree content as necessary within the parameters of this program”;

Whereas, The option to update and customize course content is only available when course resources are openly licensed; and

Whereas, Accessibility and licensing concerns may be barriers to resource adoption, curation, and development;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges request that the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, as part of the Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Program, explore the provision of centralized accessibility and licensing support to local colleges and districts.

Appendix C: ASCCC Resolution - Advocate for Development of a ZTC Data Element

Spring 2021; Resolution Number: 11.02

Whereas, California Education Code §66406.9 requires that each of the California community colleges “(1) (A) Clearly highlight, by means that may include a symbol or logo in a conspicuous place on the online campus course schedule, the courses that exclusively use digital course materials that are free of charge to students and may have a low-cost option for print versions,” a legislated mandate for which little guidance has been provided;

Whereas, [Resolution 9.01 F20](#) established that the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) recommends that the no-cost designation required by Education Code §66406.9 be used to recognize sections that use digital resources and sections that require a textbook yet are no-cost due to something other than a digital alternative, effectively aligning the requirements of the legislation and with those established by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) for courses that are zero textbook cost;

Whereas, California Code of Regulations Title 5 §59404 mandates that districts that require students to “provide instructional materials for a course shall adopt policies or regulations” that “shall direct instructors to take reasonable steps to minimize the cost and ensure the necessity of instructional materials”; and

Whereas, No mechanisms presently exist for gathering data regarding local efforts to reduce the cost of instructional materials, confirming or encouraging compliance with Education Code 66406.9, or assessing compliance with Title 5 §59404;

Resolved, That the ASCCC collaborate with appropriate constituent groups and the CCCCCO to implement a management information system course section data element that, at a minimum, is used to identify course sections that have no associated instructional materials costs;

Resolved, That the ASCCC support the establishment of a course section data element that, at a minimum, differentiates between sections requiring purchase of a textbook or other instructional materials including those requiring purchase of an access code and all instances when a printed resource is required and not provided, those sections that are zero textbook cost (ZTC) due to the use of no- cost open educational resources, those that are ZTC but the resources have a cost that is not passed on to students, those that use no textbook, and those that are low-cost as defined locally;

Resolved, That the ASCCC encourage the CCCCCO to make a proposed course section data element field regarding zero textbook cost materials available as soon as possible and include an appropriate timeline for its required use; and

Resolved, That the ASCCC support actions by the CCCCCO to encourage early adoption of a proposed data element regarding zero textbook cost materials, such as requiring its use in order to access zero textbook cost funding.