TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Business Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges

FROM: Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy, Vice Chancellor
Educational Services and Support

RE: Zero Textbook Cost Program: Acceleration II, Impact, and OER Expansion Grants

Background

The 2021 Budget Act appropriated $115 million in one-time funding to the California Community Colleges for the Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant (ZTC) program in §78050-78052. The program will develop and implement ZTC degrees and prioritize Open Educational Resources (OER) as a strategy to "reduce the overall cost of education for students and decrease the time it takes students to complete degree programs offered by community colleges."

The ZTC Degree Grant program was enacted via the Planning, Implementation and Acceleration Grant phases for colleges to acquire funding to develop and implement zero-cost academic pathways. The Chancellor's Office has provided information related to these prior funding opportunities with ESS 22-100-005 Zero Textbook Cost Program, ESS 23-04 Zero Textbook Cost Program - Updates and ESS 23-37 Zero Textbook Cost Program Additional Updates and Acceleration Grants. There is currently $66.5 million remaining to be allocated to colleges for the ZTC Degree Grant program.

New ZTC Grant Opportunities

Three new ZTC grant phase opportunities are being made available to colleges within the ZTC Degree Grant Program: the Acceleration II Grant, the Impact Grant and the ZTC OER Expansion Grant. The Acceleration II and OER Expansion grants became available on April 29, 2024 in NOVA, and the ZTC Implementation Grant will be available in NOVA by July 8, 2024.

As a condition of receiving the grants, grantees shall develop and implement program pathways and OER courses by the Fall 2026 semester. Colleges should consider their programs with the highest enrollment and completions to maximize benefit to students. ZTC degree pathways must include all required major courses and offer sufficient general education courses to satisfy all general education area requirements for a student to complete the degree without incurring textbook costs. Colleges may submit and certify program plans in NOVA until December 16, 2024, and grant award notifications will be issued on a rolling basis.

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The three new ZTC grant phase opportunities include the following parameters:

- Acceleration II Grants ($200,000 capped per eligible program, not per college) continue ZTC Degree Grant Program investment for pathways that are unique to a college and have not been awarded (specifically in a region) in prior phases. The grant allows colleges to submit program plans for unique and non-duplicative academic program pathways to make the program more accessible to a larger number of students. Colleges that were unable to prepare and submit a program plan for the initial ZTC Acceleration Grant are especially encouraged to apply for this grant opportunity, and they will be prioritized in consideration for awards.

- Impact Grants ($200,000 capped per eligible program, not per college) support high impact programs that benefit larger numbers of students at the institution. Colleges that did not submit initial ZTC Acceleration Grants in subject matter areas that were likely duplicative and/or missed the associated Collaboration Cohort efforts are strongly encouraged to apply. Impact Grant programs plans must leverage the efforts and materials from the ZTC Acceleration Grant's Coordination Cohorts. Collaboration Cohort documents will be available to colleges upon validation of completion by the OERI.

- OER Expansion Grants ($20,000 capped per eligible course, not per program or college) provide additional OER curation support for courses that can enhance the scale and impact of ZTC program pathways developed as part of the 2021 Budget Act ZTC Program. Courses submitted for OER Expansion grants must not have been identified in a prior ZTC Degree Grant Program pathway plan. A college can request up to $20,000 per course in an existing ZTC program pathway or a ZTC program pathway under development using this resource to convert course textbooks to OER. This grant may be a useful option for developing additional GE courses for students to complete their program of study in an expedited manner, per the authorizing legislation.

Timelines and Reporting

Progress reports, expenditure reports and reporting timelines for the Acceleration II, OER Expansion and Impact Grants will commence in December 2025. Please refer to Table 1 below for reporting timelines for all ZTC Degree Grant Program phases:

Table 1: ZTC Program Reporting Summary Chart

2023	2024	2025	2026
Planning Grant (formerly known as Phase 1) - $20K			
Expenditure Report – NOVA – 6/30/23			
Implementation Grant* (formerly known as Phase 3) - $180K			
Expenditure Report – NOVA 6/30/23	Progress & Expenditure Report 1 – NOVA 12/31/24	ZTC Pathway Implemented Fall 2025 Progress & Expenditure Report 2 – NOVA 12/31/25	Final Report** & Final Expenditure Report – NOVA 12/31/26
Acceleration Grant (formerly known as Phase 2) – up to $200K per pathway			
Intent to Apply & Program Plan – NOVA 9/15/23	Progress & Expenditure Report 1 – NOVA 12/31/24	Progress & Expenditure Report 2 – NOVA 12/31/25	ZTC Pathway Implemented Fall 2026 Final Report** & Final Expenditure Report – NOVA 12/31/26
Acceleration II Grant – up to $200K per pathway			
Program Plan – NOVA 4/29/24 – 12/16/24		Progress & Expenditure Report 1 – NOVA 12/31/25	ZTC Pathway Implemented Fall 2026 Final Report** & Final Expenditure Report – NOVA 12/31/26
Implementation Grant – up to $200K per pathway			
Program Plan – NOVA 7/8/24 – 12/16/24		Progress & Expenditure Report 1 – NOVA 12/31/25	ZTC Pathway Implemented Fall 2026 Final Report** & Final Expenditure Report – NOVA 12/31/26
OER Expansion Grant – up to $20K per course being added to a ZTC pathway			
Program Plan – NOVA 7/8/24 – 12/16/24		Progress & Expenditure Report 1 – NOVA 12/31/25	ZTC Pathway Implemented Fall 2026 Final Report** & Final Expenditure Report – NOVA 12/31/26

* For Implementation Grant, the Program Plan and the annual reports specified in the table above supersedes reporting and completion requirements in prior memos.
** XB-12 data is due three times per year, 30 days after each term ends. Data beyond XB-12 will be necessary to meet ZTC data reporting requirements.

Program Planning and Implementation Support

The Chancellor's Office is committed to prioritizing support to ensure the implementation of the ZTC Grant Program with fidelity and at scale. The Chancellor's Office will deliver various forms of Zero Textbook Cost Program updates via listserv notifications, technical assistance including office hours, community of practice opportunities, professional development support, coaching, and a help desk to assist in such topics as finding relevant OER and understanding open licensing. The Chancellor's Office Technical Assistance Provider (TAP), College of the Canyons, will continue to support colleges with different forms of technical assistance depending on the level of support that they need. The following supports are and/or will be made available:

A. NOVA Access - NOVA video tutorials are available online. For a new login or access to NOVA, please visit the request access page.

B. Ongoing ZTC Drop-in Office Hours – Ongoing ZTC drop-in office hours occur on the last Friday of the month from 9:00-10:00 am.

C. Subscribe to ZTC mailing list for updates: ZTC@LISTSERV.CCCNEXT.NET

D. New Grants Program Plan Information Sessions – Acceleration II, Impact and OER Expansion Program Plan Information Sessions will be offered on May 7, May 16 and May 21 from 12:00 – 1:00pm.

E. Data Requirements Webinar will take place May 8, 2024 at 12:00pm to prepare colleges' Institutional Research, MIS reporting and Instructional Office staff for data collection and reporting expectations.

F. ZTC Professional Development Courses – Courses are offered free of charge through the @One professional development platform. Contact ZTCTAP@Canyons.edu for questions regarding the following courses:

- Making the Case for ZTC: Pathways to Equity
- Building a Team: Training OER Support Staff
- Teaching with OER and Open Pedagogy for Equity
- Navigating the Future: Open Education with Generative AI

Additional ZTC Resources

I. Education Code Section §78050 – 78052 – Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant Program.

II. Education Code Section §66406.9 – Highlighting courses with free textbooks Zero Textbook Cost Program.

III. Education Code Section §66408 – Digital Open-Source Library.

IV. California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section §59404 – District Policies and Regulations for Instructional Materials.

V. Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges Open Educational Resources Initiative (ASCCC OERI) – expands the availability and adoption of high-quality open educational resources. They provide informational Webinars and events, offer links to OER resources, facilitate formal collaboration cohorts, and a team of local OER Liaisons serve as advocate for awareness, adoption, and support of OER materials.

VI. [Community College Consortium for Open Education Resources](#) promotes the awareness and adoption of open educational policies, practices, and resources. They provide resources, support, and opportunities for collaboration for learning, planning, and implementing successful open educational programs.

VII. [Cool4Ed](#) – is an OER repository service by the California State University Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) program.

VIII. [Open for Antiracism Program](#) is a year-long professional development program focused on using Open Education to make content and classroom practices antiracist.

IX. [Libretexts](#) is an online textbook platform open to students, faculty, and scholars.

X. [OpenStax](#) is a repository of textbooks available to instructors and students.

For questions regarding this memo or the ZTC program, contact ZTC@CCCCO.edu.

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