

AMENDED 03/26/09

DATE: March 26, 2009

S7

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Don Q. Griffin, Chancellor

**Subject: TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY
(Resolution No. 090326-S7)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

City College of San Francisco educates 100,000 students, including approximately 33,000 students who are enrolled in credit classes who transfer to four-year colleges and universities. To serve those students, the College offers approximately 3600 credit and 1900 non credit sections or classes each semester.

In addition to rising tuition costs, other hidden costs, namely the cost of textbooks, place a tremendous burden on students. An article that appeared in the *Guardian* on January 16, 2009, titled "High Textbook Costs Continue to Burden Students," cited how the costs of books for a student forced her to take fewer courses: "I'm taking just two classes because that's all I can afford. I guess I will have to hope my teacher doesn't use the book much." The California State Auditor concluded in an August 2008 report that textbooks account for 144 percent of fees at California Community Colleges. A student seeking to transfer as biology major, for example, can expect to pay \$1,583 to \$2,074 in a two-year period while at City College. Currently, purchasing used-books can save that student from \$356 to \$371 during that two-year period with additional savings from book buy-back programs. Highly successful efforts by students and the bookstore, especially the Associated Students of City College of San Francisco (AS) Book Loan Program, which provides free use of textbooks, have mitigated this growing problem facing students.

The California State Auditor's report further concluded that publishers employ various tactics to affect the costs of textbooks, citing a statement by a publishing company executive that demand will diminish and ultimately disappear if they never revise a book, while interviews with deans, department chairs and faculty showed that revisions to textbooks were not always warranted and were minimal.

The report also found that the pace and process by which faculty members submit book orders, often after the due date, results in the reduction of the potential supply of used books available at college bookstores. For example,

a sample of nine campuses at the University of California, California State University and California Community Colleges revealed that an average of only 20 percent of faculty members submitted their book lists to bookstores by the due date for each semester. Having booklists in earlier allows a campus bookstore to capture a greater inventory from national suppliers; late booklist submissions increase the likelihood that the used books are no longer available and students are forced to purchase new textbooks, which costs substantially more.

More importantly, the California State Auditor's report found that the rising costs of textbooks have significantly outpaced median household income and require students to delay or forego a college education. These costs make it prohibitive for students to afford a full-time course load, and limits access to City College, especially for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Fewer students enrolled also mean fewer monies allocated to the college from the state budget's general apportionment.

In May 2008, the California Community College Board of Governors adopted a number of recommendations to address this problem, including but not limited to improved "timeliness of textbook adoption submissions so that bookstores may secure the largest number of used books when available," increased "awareness, development and adoption of free, open educational resources (OER)" as "alternatives to high cost textbooks and learning materials," and the creation of a College Textbook Affordability Task Force to "develop textbook adoption guidelines and to evaluate and implement other strategies to improve textbook affordability."

An analysis provided by the General Manager of CCSF Bookstores confirms that the California State Auditor's percentage of timely booklist submissions is generally consistent with the percent of sections receiving booklists by faculty at City College of San Francisco. For example, only 35 percent of booklists for Fall 2008 term classes were timely submitted. The State Auditor's report stated that only 18 percent of sections were timely submitted for the Spring 2008 term. The CCSF Bookstores' analysis found that if 75 percent of sections received booklists from faculty on time that the Bookstore could increase its inventory of used books by 31 percent or \$390,000, displacing \$500,000 worth of new textbooks, and saving students at City College approximately \$110,000 per year in direct out-of-pocket costs. In other terms, every 1 percent increase in booklists submitted earlier leads to \$2,200 in savings for City College students. One percentage point represents approximately 36 sections or 9 faculty members.

SHARED GOVERNANCE REVIEW:

Yes _____; No ____; If yes, which committee: _____

Date of Review: _____

(A negative response indicates that a review is not necessary.)

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED: The San Francisco Community College Board of Trustees hereby establishes the College Textbook Affordability Task Force, the purpose of which is to “develop textbook adoption guidelines and to evaluate and implement other strategies to improve textbook affordability.” Pursuant to the recommendations of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, the Task Force “should include representatives of the local academic senate, student government, librarians and disabled student services, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services offering student textbook related support, as well as the bookstore manager, chief instructional officer, chief student services officer, and other important stakeholders”, including but not limited to representatives from the classified union as determined by the College.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: The board recognizes the academic freedom of faculty to select its own textbooks and other course materials, and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: The Task Force’s Chair shall convene meetings and hearings as necessary to effectuate the purpose of the Task Force, and report to the Board of Trustees a proposal or series of proposals to address the cost of textbooks. The Chancellor shall determine the composition of the Task Force, including the appointment of the Chair.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: Before such proposals are reported, the Board of Trustees urges that all faculty teaching credit classes work with the Bookstore to timely submit their list of books to the CCSF Bookstore to help reduce the cost of textbooks and that the Board shall set a goal of 75 percent of sections reporting lists on time every semester.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: The Chancellor shall carry out all administrative tasks as necessary to effectuate these resolutions and/or directives and the Chair of the Task Force shall provide a report to the Board of Trustees, no later than March 31, 2010.

Originators:
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