HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY WORKGROUP:
Final Report and Recommendations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to HB 4058 (2012), the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) convened a Workgroup to examine the issue of textbook affordability and submit a report to the Oregon State Legislature on its findings.[1] The 2012 Workgroup issued a series of recommendations, including:

- Alter the tuition and fee schedule at OUS schools to include instructional materials.
- Create an Open Education Resource website archive, wiki or portal.
- Promote use with Creative Commons and traditional copyright/licensing rights.
- Negotiate statewide licenses for full access to a publisher's library.
- Investigate the possible use of "custom editions" by faculty and publishers.

As part of HECC's strategic planning process, the HECC reconvened the Textbook Affordability Workgroup and over the past year, the Workgroup has been engaged in conducting a follow-up study to the 2012 Textbook Affordability Report. For this Report, the Final Report and Recommendations, the Workgroup consisted of Lee Ayers-Preboski, HECC Commissioner and faculty representative; Jeffrey Dense, President of the Inter-institutional Faculty Senate (IFS); and Donna Lewelling, HECC Academic and Student Affairs Policy Specialist. In an attempt to isolate promising practices in textbook affordability, the Workgroup conducted a review of the current literature, a statewide student survey with over 9,000 responses, along with a series of regional forums attended by students, faculty, bookstore representatives and student services personnel. As a result of these efforts, several textbook affordability promising practices were identified, including:

- Book Buying Consortiums
- Used Books/Rental Programs
- Student Book Exchange
- Fixed Fees
- OERs

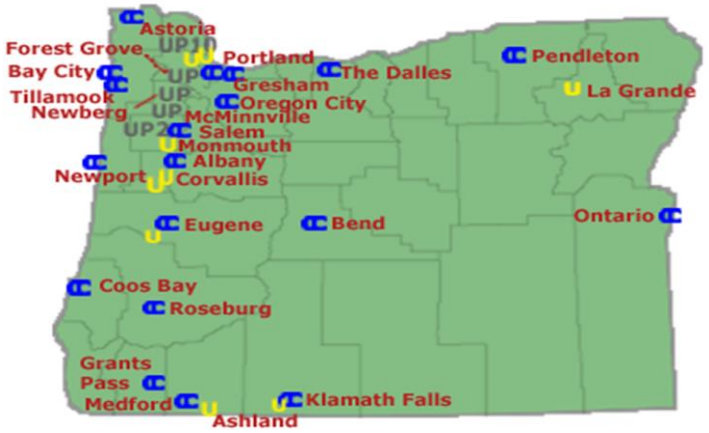
To further exam these promising practices, a statewide regional forum was recently held. Working in a facilitated focus group format, attendees conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis for each of the above promising practices. Approximately twenty representatives from seven community colleges and four public universities participated in the statewide convening, with the event framed by a presentation providing an overview of the journey taken by the HECC in exploring the topic of textbook affordability.

Following the Statewide Convening, the Workgroup met several times and constructed a matrix to provide a framework to guide institutional policies and practices, measure institutional progress, along with proposed guidelines for incentivizing institutional funding for addressing the issue of textbook affordability.

[1] HECC Textbook Affordability Workgroup. (2012) https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2013R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/18019

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

During fall term of 2014, the HECC Textbook Affordability student survey was administered via email using the Survey Monkey software package. The survey was made available from September 29, 2014 to November 25, 2014. All of Oregon's 17 community colleges and 7 public universities were invited to participate. 9149 student responses were collected and analyzed. Please see appendix B for detailed survey results.



CC: COMMUNITY COLLEGES U: PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

FIGURE 1

Map Source: http://www.orinfrastructure.org/assets/images/misc/edmap.gif

Of the 9149 responses collected:

- 45.7% were from a public 4 year institutions;
- 59.6% were from community college students;
- 32% were enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours; and
- 68% were fulltime.

Finding 1: Financial Aid Affecting Textbook Purchases

The results of the survey revealed 67% of the students are dependent on financial aid to purchase textbooks on time for the first day of class. For 56% of the students financial aid does not completely cover textbook costs (see figure 1). Survey results also indicate students are receiving financial aid from a variety of sources. More than half (56%) of survey respondents receive Federal Loans followed by Pell at 49% and the Oregon Opportunity Grant at 27%. Nearly 30% of students responding to the survey reported receiving no financial aid.

Financial Aid Types Received	
Received a Pell	49%
Received a Federal Loan	56%
Received an OR Opportunity Grant	27%
Received no FA	29%

If this survey sample were extrapolated, all of the Oregon students attending public institutions of higher education with all variables being held constant, over 300,000 Oregon students rely on financial aid for textbook purchases and nearly half of those still report additional out-of-pocket costs for textbooks (see Appendix C).

Finding 2: General High Cost of Textbooks

The student survey results indicated a significant number of students cannot purchase their textbooks on time for the first day of class, primarily attributable to the rising costs of textbooks. Nearly half of the students are paying over $250 per term for their textbooks with 8% paying $500+ per term (see Figure 2).

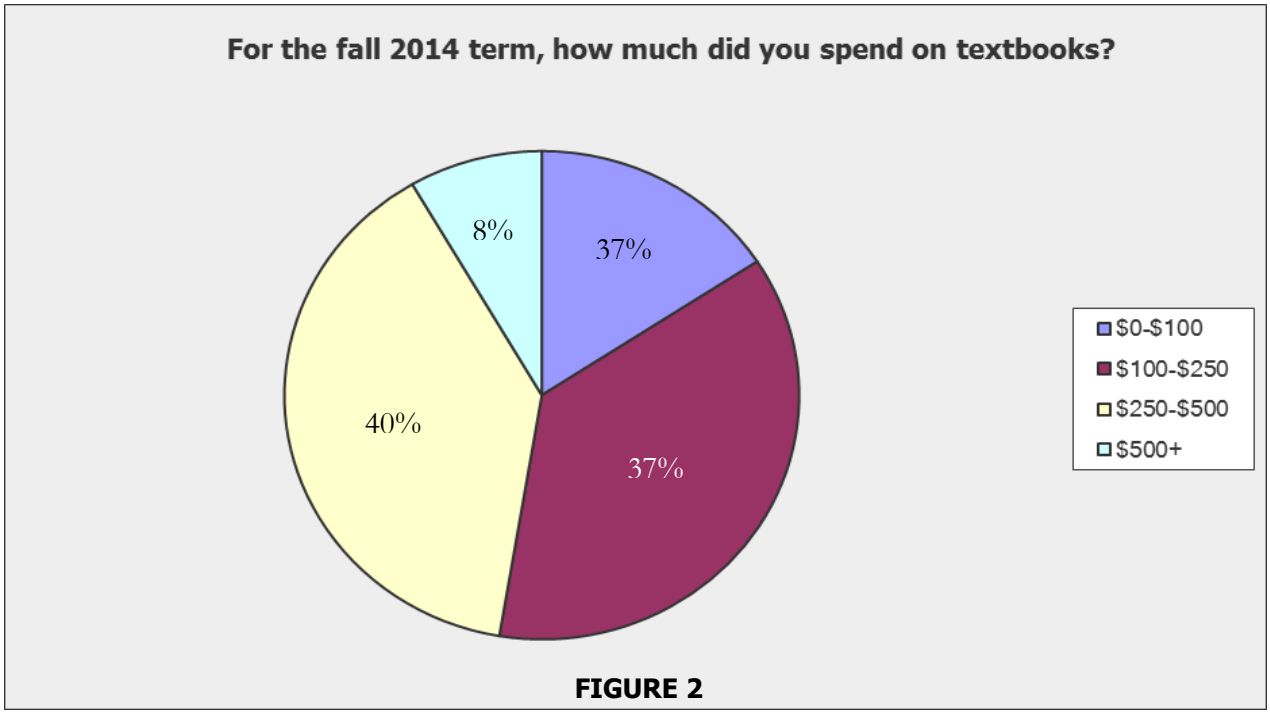


FIGURE 2

Of the students who responded to the survey, nearly a third (32%) are unable to purchase their textbooks before the first day of classes, and with a third of students needing to have their financial aid award dispersed before they can purchase their textbooks. If the results were applied to all Oregon students attending public institutions of higher education, over 245,000 students would pay up to $500 per quarter for textbooks. The timely disbursement of financial aid, along with the increasingly high cost of textbooks, provides a stern impediment to student success in higher education in Oregon.

Finding 3: Alternative Textbook Options

The student survey highlighted the fact that students consider a wide range of purchase, rental and other acquisition options. Students then apply their preferences when it comes to acquiring textbooks (see Figure 3). Approximately 40% of students purchase their books from the campus bookstore, and 40% obtain them online at sites such as Amazon. Only 2% of the students utilize a school library book loan program.

Rentals, Used books, sharing, small built-in fees for eBooks, and Open Access are some of the options considered by students when making their textbook acquisition decisions. Survey results revealed 86% of the students reported they would consider renting, 77% would consider sharing, 90% would consider paying a small fee, and 92% would consider paying a small fee to receive "Open Textbook" access.

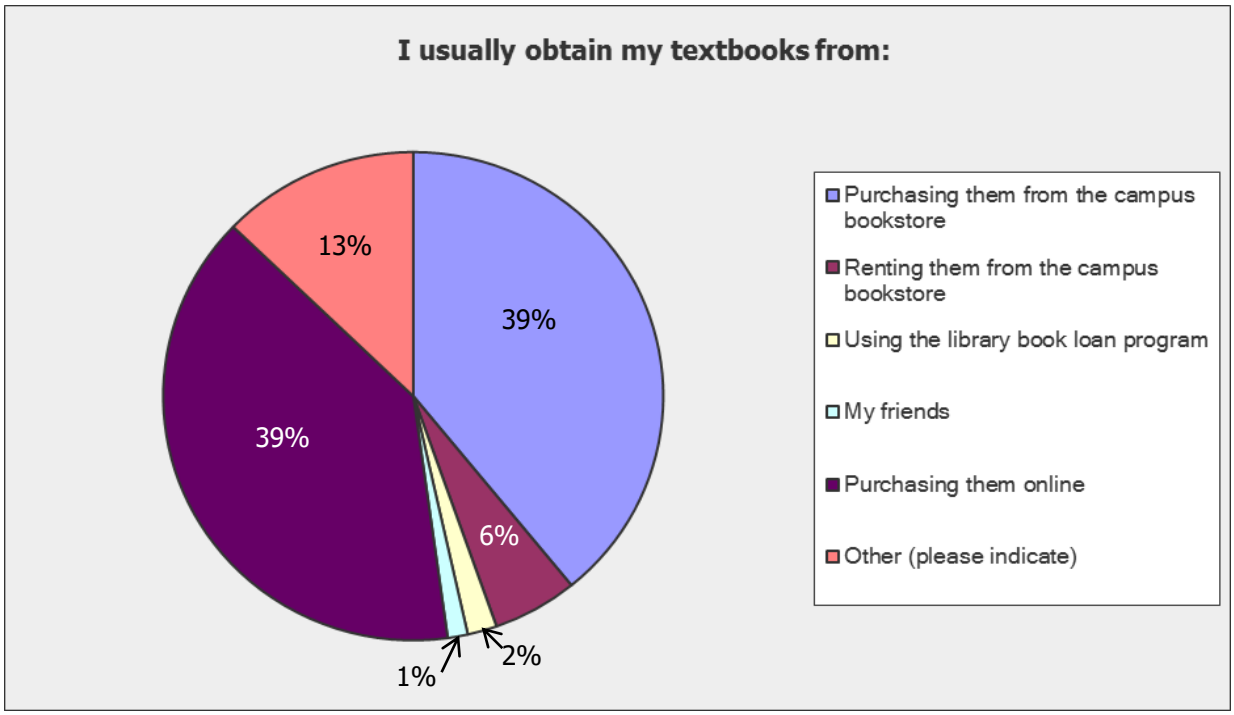


FIGURE 3

The survey results reveal students have diverse preferences when considering methods to purchase their textbooks. Assuming the reliability and validity of the survey sample, approximately 200,000 students will consider *any* alternative strategy to mitigate the high cost of textbooks.

A range of strategies should be considered in order to address the diverse needs of students and the textbook affordability challenges confronting Oregon students. As highlighted in the June 2014 HECC report, textbook acquisition strategies such as rentals, e-books, Open Resource and Access, and used books may need to be applied in various formats to meet unique student needs and preferences. As reported by the Student Public Interest Research Group "…the solution to textbook affordability must both reduce costs and address the diversity of student preference" [2]

[2] Allen, N. (2010). *A cover to cover solution.* Student Public Interest Research Group, Boston: MA. Available at: http://www.studentpirgs.org/reports/cover-cover-solution (See page 5)

REGIONAL FORUMS

In response to the information gleaned from the student survey, the workgroup determined a series of regional forums were needed to examine the findings of the survey in greater detail. Held the week before Thanksgiving in fall of 2014, these forums were made possible through a partnership with the HECC, Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate (IFS) and hosting institutions. The forums were convened in four locations across the state in an attempt to encourage participation from as many institutions as possible. Locations included Blue Mountain Community College, Clackamas Community College, Southern Oregon University and Lane Community College.

In order to ensure the most candid and robust responses possible, a roster of attendance was not taken. The identification of areas represented were identified by a show of hands. The regional forums were attended by over 100 participants representing diverse areas such as libraries, bookstores, financial aid, administration, faculty and students.

Remote participation was provided for all four locations via teleconferencing, and with the help of Lane and Chemeketa Community College, a videoconference 'bridge' was provided for video conference participation at the Lane forum. Participant comments were recorded by hand and were identified as anonymous.

The purpose of the forums was to gain additional insight and follow-up to the findings uncovered by the statewide student survey. An identical set of five questions was asked of each group of participants:

1. A majority of students stated a preference for buying used textbooks. Do you have any specific ideas for facilitating sales of used textbooks to minimize costs to students?
2. What is your institutional textbook buy-back policy? What are the problems and prospects of your institution's buy-back policy?
3. What is the policy for checking out textbooks at your library? What types of textbooks are available for checkout?
4. Do you see any barriers to using open education resources (OERs)? To make sure we are using the same language to describe OERs - OERs are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge[3].
5. Anything else you would like to share with us?

As a result of the discussion, several common themes were identified among the four forums and participants:

- "Bundling" of textbooks and the purchase of required access codes.
- The quality of OERs, including time needed to develop and overall quality of final product.
- Faculty commitment to using an edition for several years as a potential solution.

[3] Source: Hewlett Foundation: http://www.hewlett.org/programs/education/open-educational-resources

- Development of collaborative solutions, re textbook exchanges, common textbook adoptions, etc.
- Financial Aid plays an integral role in student choice.
- Academic freedom is important to faculty.
- Limited availability of textbooks for checkout at school libraries.

STATEWIDE CONVENING

As a result of the literature review, statewide student survey and regional forums, several promising textbook affordability practices were isolated. Subsequent to the regional forums, a statewide forum was convened to evaluate the identified promising practices. Working in a facilitated focus group format, participants in the statewide forum conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis of the following textbook affordability promising practices:

- Book Buying Consortiums
- Used books /Rentals
- Student Book Exchange
- Fixed Fees
- OERs

Approximately twenty representatives from seven the community colleges and four the public universities participated in the day's event. The day began with a presentation providing an overview of the process taken by the HECC in exploring the topic of textbook affordability, along with presentation of statewide student survey results. The following narrative provides a summary of the statewide forum SWOT analysis for each of these promising textbook affordability practices.

Book Buying Consortiums

Book buying consortiums have strengths as they provide institutions the potential for "purchasing power" and allow for a common purchasing authority. They have the potential for reduced textbook costs to students, and may increase the likelihood of textbook availability by the first day of class. The opportunities within these consortiums include the leveraging of publishers, the development of communication networks between campuses and an increased dialogue with faculty which may ultimately address the issue of transferability of courses between community colleges and public universities in Oregon.

Some of the weaknesses associated with book buying consortiums include the inability to address the "bundling issue"[4], a potential decrease in faculty choices for textbooks and the possibility of increased

[4] "Bundling" refers to the practice of taking multiple educational materials/resources including online access codes and

shipping costs if publisher will not allow multiple drop sites. In addition, there is not a guarantee that there will be savings to students as the numbers required to leverage large publisher discounts may be unrealistic.

Threats to be contemplated include reliance by several institutions, particularly community colleges, on adjunct faculty who may be hired at the "last minute", privately owned and operated campus bookstores and a perceived threat to faculty academic freedom. Publisher backlash was also an identified threat as the potential result of exclusive relationships with one publisher.

After review of the existing literature and consultation with stakeholders, the Workgroup has tentatively identified the following to be considered in relation to the development of book buying consortiums:

- Early faculty engagement/communication is key to the success of book buying consortiums
- Multiple-institutional partnerships should be leveraged as appropriate/possible.
- Conversations with publishers regarding shipping options should be identified in the beginning stages of planning and implementation.
- Privately-owned/independent bookstores should be engaged as necessary to help leverage consortium membership and buying power.

Used Books/Rental Programs

Used books and rental programs are different in terms of their implementation, cost effectiveness, and ready availability to students. Both of these textbook affordability strategies are well-known and widely recognized by Oregon students as a ways to save money. Rental programs and used textbooks allow students timely access while providing significant cost savings to students in relation to the purchase of new textbooks.

Despite their popularity, further opportunities exist to expand the availability, comparative price information, and access for both used and rental book programs. These textbook affordability strategies may assist in developing a "book recycle culture". Additionally, used textbooks and textbook rental programs may lead to an increased knowledge by faculty of the weighty effect of early adoption of textbooks and its correlation with textbook costs. These strategies also provide an opportunity for students to be educated on the dynamics related to textbook buy-back including the associated drivers with new editions, offering of courses from term to term and textbook conditions upon return.

Weaknesses within this promising practice include bundled access codes by publishers, lack of early faculty adoption of textbooks, customized textbooks and books not being readopted from year to

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bundling them into a package for purchase. Many time some of the materials that are bundled are not needed by students for their particular course and as such result in students paying for unnecessary materials.

year due to frequency of course offerings. Threats include the lack of knowledge regarding textbook buy-back and the associated dynamics, custom editions which decrease ability for students to share books inter-institutionally and competition with online vendors for used book buyback.

After review of the existing literature and consultation with stakeholders, the Workgroup has tentatively identified the following to be considered within used book buyback and/or rental programs:

- Buying used textbooks and purchasing new online access codes may be cheaper for students.
- Institutions may consider setting textbook cost goals such as "students should pay no more than $XX for textbooks per term/year".
- Institutional messaging campaigns regarding textbook buy-back policies and cost drivers.
- The effect of privatization of campus bookstores on book buy-back program flexibility.

Student Book Exchange Programs

Student book exchange programs are identified as a way for students to be engaged in the marketplace of textbooks acquisition while addressing cost. Student book exchange programs allow students to gain additional information on the cost and re-selling price of their purchased textbooks. The reduction of student costs and student body and student government engagement are the primary strengths of this promising practice.

Opportunities exist within this promising practice at institutions of all sizes. Smaller institutions may experience the most success with these programs due to ease of communication between students. However, any sized institution may easily implement these book exchange programs as an opportunity to increase student interaction and 'ownership' over the textbook acquisition process

Some of the weaknesses identified within this promising practice include the reliance on timely notification of faculty regarding which textbooks will be used for upcoming terms. The late hiring of adjunct faculty, especially at community colleges, limits student opportunity to isolate adopted textbooks via student textbook exchange programs. Moreover, online students, i.e. students studying at a distance, are not able to readily avail themselves of these textbook exchange programs. The implementation of a web portal based student textbook exchange program may require institutional investment and maintenance, although initiatives of this type can be operated by technologically savvy students, working in concert with student government.

Threats to the success of student book exchange programs include the availability of other markets such as Amazon®, CraigsList® and other online textbook sources. In addition the practice of bundling access codes, an extremely prevalent practice in accounting classes, creates a threat to student textbook exchange programs, as these access codes are generally for one time use only and not transferable to other students.

After review of the existing literature and consultation with stakeholders, the Workgroup has tentatively identified the following to be considered in relation to student textbook exchange programs.

- Institutional adjunct faculty hiring practices.
- Institutional investment or support of student textbook exchange programs.
- Active engagement of students and student government in the development and operation of such programs.
- Bookstore partnership with the textbook exchange program.

Fixed Fees

There are growing examples of fixed fees for textbooks, whether the fees are included as a part of tuition and fees or a set fee is charged per class/term for textbooks. This practice boasts strengths such as "truth in advertising" and compliance with federal laws. Another identified strength includes the possibility of students having books by the first of class.

The opportunities associated with the practices of fixed fees include the partnering with publishers to set lower, stable prices, faculty engagement/insight into the process and the ability to provide information to the financial aid office regarding "real costs" for textbooks.

Weaknesses related to fixed fees include the implementation including the identification of how the cost-basis is determined and timelines associated with faculty adoption and bookstore notification. Also, the practice reduces student options and may eliminate student "buy-back" programs. In addition to these weaknesses, the threat of publishers monopolizing the market because they are "guaranteed" a book order is concerning. The threat of reducing the "bottom line" of bookstores and/or the campus must also be considered.

After review of the existing literature and consultation with stakeholders, the Workgroup has tentatively identified the following to be considered for fixed fee models:

- Clear policies and procedures should be outlined to encourage and strengthen faculty engagement.
- Students should be consulted before this model is implemented.
- The overall effect on bookstore/campus budgets should be reviewed and addressed to avoid unintended ripple effects which may result in other fees/increased tuition costs to students.

Open Educational Resources

The primary strength identified included the relative low-cost of Open Educational Resources (OERs) to students. Additional strengths included customization of texts and the ability for OERs to inform pedagogy. Opportunities that were identified include faculty participation in OER development, faculty using their own books, library/faculty interactions and creating an institutional culture for OER use.

While OERs provide many opportunities for textbook cost reduction, they are not without associated weaknesses and threats. Identified weaknesses include that they are not always "free", students encounter barriers to access without the availability of high-speed internet. Investment of faculty time is needed to gain knowledge of the resources or develop them. In addition, high numbers of part-time faculty make the use of OERs difficult and delivery platforms often pose barriers to OER use.

Threats to the use of OERs include the quality of the content and/or the perception of the rigor associated with the materials. The lack of availability of funds to develop and/or research OER content is also a challenge. Many bookstores also contribute to the general fund of an institution, making OER development a form a competition. Alternative formats for students with disabilities were also identified as a potential barrier to their use.

After review of the existing literature and consultation with stakeholders, the tentatively identified 'best practices' related to the future utilization of OERs discussion revealed:

- A focus on statewide general education courses (such as those contained in the Oregon Transfer Module[5] should be considered as the starting area for Statewide OER development.
- Cross-institutional faculty engagement should be encouraged to support the increased use of Oregon OERs.
- Quality peer review should be included in the process associated with the development of OERs.
- Copyright issues should be addressed to ensure "free access".
- Ensuring American with Disability Act compliance will be vital to the ability for institutions to use OERs.
- Technology barriers such as access to high-speed internet should be considered and addressed.

[5] The Oregon Transfer Module is an approved 45 unit subset of general education courses (foundational skills and introduction to discipline courses) that are common among Oregon's colleges and universities.

CONCLUSION

One of the primary outcomes of this textbook affordability study is an integration of identified "best practices" into a matrix that can serve as the basis to measure institutional performance and, given appropriate budgetary commitment, provide future fiscal incentives to address the vexing issue of textbook affordability. The 'best practices' included in the proposed textbook affordability matrix (located in Appendix A) were isolated after an appraisal of the existing literature, in tandem with extensive consultation with a wide range of community college and public university stakeholders, including faculty, students, book store representatives, financial aid officers and administrators at regional and statewide forums. These textbook affordability strategies have the capacity to positively impact the access and affordability linchpins of the state's ambitious 40/40/20 goals. The strategies include faculty engagement, student education, accessibility, textbook rentals, textbook exchange, library check-out, and open educational resources (OERs).

Faculty Engagement

It is important to note the crucial role faculty play in addressing textbook affordability. Dialogue with stakeholders revealed several fairly easily implementable strategies centering on faculty involvement that have the potential to positively impact textbook affordability. Increasing the percentage of faculty who submit textbook requisitions by institutional deadlines can minimize late shipping charges incurred by campus bookstores adding additional costs which are thus increasing textbook prices. This easy to implement strategy also provides students an opportunity to obtain their textbooks in a timely fashion, ultimately improving the chances for student success. The Workgroup suggests that in order to maximize the impact of this textbook affordability strategy, a uniform statewide calendar for textbook requisitions be developed for community colleges and public universities. Adoption of this proposal may provide an enhanced opportunity for collaborative purchase agreements between institutions, with the potential to further reduce textbook prices for students. Timely adoption of textbooks provides a cost-effective strategy for addressing textbook affordability.

One of the most surprising findings unearthed in the regional and statewide convenings was shared by a number of stakeholders. It appears that many faculty may be relatively unaware of the scope and breadth of the textbook affordability issue. In addition, faculty may lack awareness of 'best practices' readily available and easy to adopt. As a result of this finding, one of the Workgroup's primary policy recommendations is institutions should take ownership of educating *all* of their faculty on available textbook affordability strategies. It is recommended that each institution hold faculty professional development workshops annually.

These workshops could be conceivably embedded within fall orientation activities on each campus, thereby increasing the opportunity to short-term implementation of textbook affordability best practices. In order to maximize the benefits of faculty education on the issue, the Workgroup suggest two separate, yet related measures be included in the matrix related to these faculty textbook affordability workshops; the percentage of total faculty in attendance, along with the percentage of newly hired faculty in attendance at these workshops. By an institution ensuring the textbook affordability workshops are required for all faculty the first year the matrix is implemented, the requirements for following years would be limited to holding workshops solely for new faculty. While implementing the university wide textbook affordability workshops in the first cycle may be easily

attained by the Technical and Regional Universities (TRUs), this all at once approach may not be physically feasible for the larger universities. The Workgroup suggests implementation of the faculty workshops on textbook affordability by academic units at the larger universities. An alternative approach would be to leverage available technological resources (such as webinars), although face-to-face sharing of textbook affordability best practices is preferred. In order for textbook affordability strategies to be implemented by faculty in a timely fashion, these institutional textbook affordability workshops should be held during the fall 2015 academic term. Faculty education of best practices holds significant promise in addressing the textbook affordability issue in Oregon.

Student Education

A review of remarks from stakeholders at the regional and statewide textbook affordability forums, along with over 3,000 individual comments generated by the textbook affordability survey, reveals a number of students are savvy consumers who seek to maximize their 'bang for the buck' when purchasing textbooks. This textbook acquisition strategy requires comparative price shopping between a number of outlets including the campus bookstore and external vendors. The Workgroup recommends adoption of a 'one stop shopping' approach, where information on textbook prices are provided alongside external vendors is provided at point of purchase in the campus bookstore. Much, but not all, of this information can be garnered from several websites (e.g. Texts.com) that are dedicated to addressing the textbook affordability issue. The Workgroup recommends institutions should provide a short narrative on how this information is provided to students (computer terminal located in campus bookstore with sole access to textbook affordability websites, placards at point of sale denoting comparative prices, etc.), with the hope 'best practices' are shared between institutions.

While campus bookstores, particularly those operated by profit-driven corporations, may balk at this policy proposal, it is imperative that all stakeholder groups realize the impact that textbook affordability has on campuses. There are long-range reaching implications for students as well as institutions if partnerships are not forged with student-centered best practice solutions

Textbook affordability is a key to student success which leads to maximizing the number of graduating (or associated degree attaining) students, one of the key indicators embedded within the new Outcomes Based Funding model for Oregon public higher education. Textbook affordability is a key factor to student success. As institutions begin being measured by graduation rates, an indicator which is now embedded in the University Outcomes Based Funding Model, then this piece of success must be addressed. Textbook affordability should be seen as an economic issue for not only the student but the institution. For students that stop out of school, many never return due to the increasing cost of textbooks. This decision has long-term budgetary implications on the institution, and moreover, the economic future of the state of Oregon.

Accessibility: Financial Aid

Another problematic issue affecting textbook affordability, and student success, is the effect of financial aid availability on the ability for students to obtain their textbooks in a timely manner. Noted within the student survey findings is the impact financial aid award timing directly has on student ability to purchase textbooks. If awards are not received until after the term starts, textbooks are not in hand on the first day of class. Students often encounter financial aid 'holds' that inhibit acquisition of textbooks until after classes begin. This places students in a precarious position, especially in classes with quizzes, exams and other assignments due early in the term. The Workgroup

recommends institutions develop and implement methods for students to obtain textbooks before the release of financial aid. There are several readily available methods to achieve this goal, including but not limited to faculty providing excerpts or chapters of textbooks to be covered the first week of class, dispersal of textbook purchase vouchers prior to disbursement of financial aid, and timely availability of textbooks placed on reserve by instructors. The Workgroup realizes there may be a lengthy list of alternative approaches to addressing the problematic linkage between financial aid disbursement and timely textbook acquisition. As such, the Workgroup recommends each institution provide a narrative on how they have addressed this indicator, with the hope best practices can be shared among institutions. Given the large percentage of community colleges and university students who are reliant on financial aid to obtain their textbooks, and more importantly, complete their education, strategies to allow at-risk students with financial aid holds to obtain their textbooks in a timely manner is called for.

Textbook Rentals

A review of the literature, along with results of the student survey and corresponding comments, revealed textbook rentals to be one of the principal strategies employed to address the textbook affordability issue in Oregon. The new for-profit ownership of campus bookstores often prohibits faculty from even suggesting to students that more affordable options exist. The model used for some of the privately owned bookstores is used book are only 25% off the original price of the textbook and rentals still may be as much as 25% above the fee directly noted on the publishers website. Also students do not receive any return from a rental. Many institutions do not share that the cost of renting versus the cost of buying (upfront cost) and selling at the end (a return for the student) may be economically beneficial to the student depending on their financial situation. Over and over again the Workgroup heard from students that choosing to eat or purchase a textbook has become a choice faced by too many students, Textbook rental programs hold promise when implemented under the best practice model; however, not all rental programs are created equally.

The Workgroup recognizes faculty commitment to utilizing an edition of a textbook over several years is a key variable in this textbook affordability strategy. Campus bookstores who adopt this rental-based textbook affordability strategy could conceivably see their bottom-line rise, as textbook rentals would be re-diverted back on campus from external vendors. The textbook rental business has become increasingly competitive between vendors, and coincidentally, increasingly popular with economically challenged students for whom having to purchase a textbook, often to be used for only one academic term, is a decision between textbook purchases and eating. No student should be confronted with having to make that choice. Textbook rental programs instituted by campus bookstores hold considerable promise in addressing the textbook affordability issue.

Textbook Exchange Programs

Similar to textbook rentals, textbook exchange programs provide an easy to implement and cost-effective strategy for addressing the textbook affordability issue. The Workgroup recommends the creation of web-based textbook affordability portals on each campus, which would help to facilitate the exchange/purchase/trade of textbooks between students. This proposal would require a time investment by campus Information Technology (IT) personnel to set up the portal, However, it is the hope of the Workgroup this initiative be eventually managed and operated by student government on the individual campuses. While a statewide web portal to facilitate textbook exchange holds significant promise, there are multiple barriers (payment for exchanged texts, timely shipping, etc.)

that may inhibit timely implementation of a proposal of such scale. It must be duly noted that certain stakeholder groups, in particular campus bookstores and textbook publishing companies, may be opposed to the concept of a campus based textbook exchange portal. However, given the overarching goal of 'driving down' textbook prices, campus based textbook exchange web portals may prove to be a 'win-win' between participating students.

Library Check Out

One of the long-time established best practices in textbook affordability centers on faculty providing copies of required texts for check out by students at the institutional library. A common practice disclosed at several of the convenings included library resources and textbooks provided to the reserve desk by faculty. Some campuses even noted purchasing textbooks which cost over $100 through student fees or other funds to make sure students who cannot afford textbooks have access, even if it limited. The Workgroup recommends expansion of this tradition. Textbook publishing companies are generally willing to provide an extra desk copy to instructors. In fact, instructors can utilize their considerable leverage when making textbook adoption decisions to insist on providing this extra copy. While there are some issues related to this proposal (re, number of copies of textbooks placed on reserve for large classes, limited time period for students to check out reserve texts, amount of library shelve space, etc.), expansion in the number of required textbook titles available for checkout at the campus library or placed at the reserve desk for viewing would invariably positively effect a number of economically challenged students. Implementation of this policy proposal can be expedited by highlighting this practice to faculty during the institutional textbook affordability workshops mentioned above.

Open Educational Resources (OERs)

One of the primary emerging trends utilized to combat the textbook affordability issue is the creation of Open Educational Resources (OERs). While several stakeholder groups have advocated for OERs, the Workgroup has recognized a series of weighty concerns associated with this 'silver bullet', including quality related issues (peer review of materials), the significant time commitment required for faculty to create quality OERs, the effect of OERs creation on faculty workload, the impact on faculty tenure and promotion process and decisions, and the immutable fact that a number of OERs are, in fact, not free of cost to students. Given these weighty factors, the Workgroup unequivocally asserts *there is no singular solution to the textbook affordability problem in Oregon.* While Open Educational Resources hold significant promise in addressing the textbook affordability issue, as do the other strategies previously noted, a comprehensive approach that incorporates a wide range of textbook affordability 'tools' intended to best serve student needs is necessary.

As such, the Workgroup recommends two empirical measures related to OERs be included in the proposed matrix; the percentage of courses utilizing OERs and the percentage of total faculty participating in the creation of OERs. Stressed several times during the SWOT analysis, academic freedom and a number of associated issues, the Workgroup recognizes that mandating any solution to faculty should not be recommended. Mandates would invariably result in significant faculty push-back, and ultimately inhibit textbook affordability efforts. Instead, the Workgroup recommends institutions provide incentives to faculty members to create Open Educational Resources and encourage faculty to select from OER options. Narratives should be generated by each institution to serve as the basis for sharing of OERs best practices among community colleges and universities.

It must be noted that this incentive for faculty to create OERs does not have to be monetary. For example, during the regional and statewide forums the Workgroup heard testimony on how faculty members received technology (I-Pads) that could be utilized as part of their pedagogy as compensation for creating OERs. Worth noting as one of the primary impediments to widespread adoption of this textbook affordability strategy is the development of the recognition that OER creation should be equated with scholarship, a requirement of faculty seeking tenure and promotion.

Institution Specific Measures

As part of the development of this proposed textbook affordability matrix, the Workgroup readily recognizes a 'one size fits all' approach to addressing the textbook affordability issue makes little sense, given the relative uniqueness of Oregon's community colleges and universities and as such would be impractical. Community colleges, along with their university partners each face their own distinct set of challenges in attempting to address the needs of their student body's demographic profile, life concerns, socio-economic backgrounds, and a range of other important issues that cannot logically be condensed into one textbook affordability strategy For example, students at several campuses have ready access to local, off-campus vendors of used texts while students attending rural and more geographically isolated campuses are at a greater disadvantage. Moreover, economically challenged students may not be able to afford the added cost of a laptop computer (or whose family, career or lifestyle obligations preclude spending significant time at the library/campus computer lab) which may inhibit their ability to maximize the utility of the above textbook affordability strategies. A degree of flexibility in institutional approaches to addressing the issue of textbook affordability is required.

The Workgroup recommends, in addition to the above textbook affordability strategies, community colleges and universities be encouraged to generate an institutional specific measure of textbook affordability. Given the dynamic changes in the college textbook landscape, there will most certainly be new approaches to addressing textbook affordability in the future that have not been foreseen in this study. The Workgroup strongly recommends that institutions have the flexibility to adopt other textbook affordability initiatives to serve the best interests of their unique student body demographics. These additional institutionally created measures should be generated in consultation with HECC staff, as appropriate, and shared with other institutions. It is entirely reasonable to expect that given the significant commitment of Oregon's community colleges and universities to address the textbook affordability issue, a new 'solution' may be generated via creation of these institutional specific measures in the near future.

Implementation of the Matrix

After considerable deliberation, the Workgroup agreed that a simplified, easy to implement *one-page* Textbook Affordability Matrix holds significant promise in promoting institutional buy-in. The Workgroup focused on highlighting alternative value-added approaches while comprehensively addressing the textbook affordability concern in Oregon. The matrix employs a categorical approach to measure empirical levels of attainment of the various textbook affordability strategies, with 25%, 50%, 75% and 90% targets. Additionally, there are several Yes/No dichotomous questions contained in the Matrix. Also, the Workgroup has provided the opportunity for institutions to create their own specific textbook affordability measure. In sum, the matrix is offered as a start for Oregon institutions to develop best practices and affordability strategies to measure attainment that best serves our individual student and campus needs.

Incentivizing the implementation of best practices associated with textbook affordability is recommended by the Workgroup. As funding becomes available, the matrix should serve as a tool in determining institutional funding related to textbook affordability. Within the matrix points are allotted to each level of attainment (90% = 4, 75% = 3, 50% = 2, 25% = 1, Yes = 4, No = 1), and the total number of points constitutes an institutional score. This score may serve as the basis for future textbook affordability incentive funding to institutions. Each institution starts by identifying and setting their goals within the Matrix. Institutions then can qualify for funding tied to the overall outcomes and total reductions achieved. Weighing of each of the textbook affordability tools equally will promote a comprehensive approach by institutions to textbook affordability in Oregon, as opposed to an 'all eggs in one basket' strategy that may preclude students' ability to benefit from the full range of textbook affordability tools highlighted in this study.

Throughout the process of working with the HECC on textbook affordability, "seed money" and "incentivizing dollars" have been discussed. The matrix is suggested as a start or movement in the right direction to get everyone involved with the process of taking a hard look at the issues facing students. Creating a matrix for each campus that offers faculty and institutions positive reinforcement for thinking, creating, living into and measuring results will bring Oregon closer to realizing different outcomes for textbook affordability. As such, an initial allocation of 'seed money' should be provided by HECC to each institution to encourage the implementation of textbook affordability efforts. The matrix may then be subsequently employed to determine levels of additional incentive funding to institutions based upon institutional progress in increasing attainment levels.

In closing, the overall success of this textbook affordability initiative is dependent on institutional ownership of the issues, faculty engagement at all levels (creating OERs, early adoption, education around choices, etc.) and a wide-variety of options to meet student needs. Without shared responsibility and awareness of the stressors experienced by students, the fears and concerns for faculty around academic freedom and tenure and promotion, and the state investment in best practices, textbook affordability will continue to be an ongoing conversation. Without adequate investment of resources, textbook affordability efforts for Oregon institutions of higher education remain in peril. This Workgroup strongly recommends implementing solutions discovered through this research process.

APPENDIX A – PROPOSED TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY MATRIX

Faculty Engagement				
Percentage of faculty who adopt textbooks by published institutional deadlines. (1)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Institution annually conducts faculty workshops on professional development opportunities related to textbook affordability	No			Yes
Percentage of faculty who attended workshop (1)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Percentage of newly-hired faculty who annually attend workshop. (2)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Student Education				
Percentage of courses for which institution provides information at the point of sale regarding alternative methods for obtaining textbooks (e.g., Amazon, Craigslist) (3)	25%	50%	75%	90%
On separate page, describe what and how information is provided to students.				
Accessibility				
Institution offers a method for students to obtain textbooks prior to release of financial aid	No			Yes
On separate page, describe methods employed.				
Textbook Rentals				
Percentage of required textbook titles available for rent within the campus bookstore. (4)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Textbook Exchange Programs				
Institution facilitiates a campus-based web portal textbook exchange program.	No			Yes
Library Check-out				
Percentage of required textbooks available on reserve at library. (4)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Open Educational Resources (OERs)				
Percentage of courses utilizing OERs. (4)	25%	50%	75%	90%
Institution provides incentives to faculty to create OERs	No			Yes
Total percentage of faculty participating in the creation of OERs. (1)	25%	50%	75%	90%
On separate page, describe OER creation incentives, selection process and end products				
Institutional Specific Measure				
Institution defined measure to indicate progress in reaching textbook affordability goals.				

NOTES: (1) All Teaching Faculty, including part-time and adjuncts. (2) Newly Hired Teaching Faculty, including part-time and adjuncts. (3) Percentage of total courses with required textbooks. (4)Percentage of total required books, all courses and programs. (4) Percentage of all courses with required textbooks.

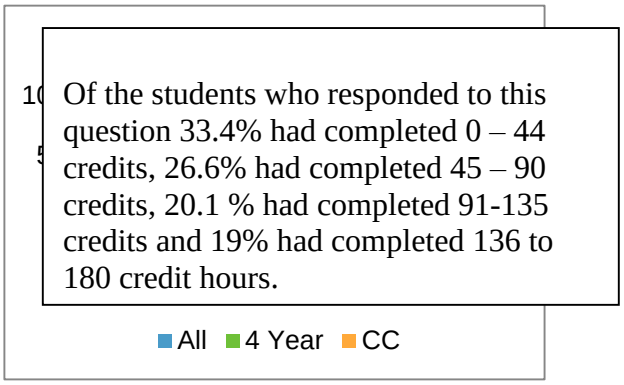
APPENDIX B – TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY STUDENT SURVEY

A total of 9141 student responses were received from the web-based Survey Monkey driven student survey administered from September 29, 2014 - November 25, 2014. Below some of the results in terms of overall responses and 4 year institutions as well as community colleges are highlighted.

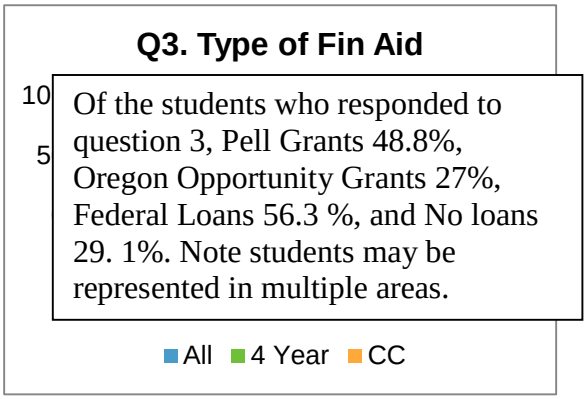
Question #1: I currently attend the following school.
9141 total respondents: 4 year university = 45.7% Community College = 59.6%

Distribution of respondents among the 4 year universities:	Results for students identifying ANY Oregon CC as a school of attendance:
Eastern Oregon University = 0.3% (n=13) Oregon Health & Sciences University = 0.2% (n=8) Oregon Institute of Technology = 0.7% (n=30) Oregon State University = 3.8% (n=158) Portland State University = 84.74% (n=3566) Southern Oregon University = 9.5% (n=398) University of Oregon = 0.1% (n=3) Western Oregon University = 0.8% (n=32)	Blue Mountain Community College responses = 0.1% (n=5) Central Oregon Community College = 0.15% (n=8) Chemeketa Community College = 29.6% (n=1613) Clackamas Community College = 1.6% (n=89) Clatsop Community College = 0.2% (n=12) Columbia Gorge Community College = 1.1% (n=58) Klamath Community College = 0.0% (n=2) Lane Community College = 0.1% (n=5) Linn-Benton Community College = 6.2% (n=339) Mt. Hood Community College = 9.7% (n=530) Oregon Coast Community College = 1.3% (n=72) Portland Community College = 46% (n=2510) Rogue Community College = 3.2% (n=173) Southwestern Oregon Community College = 0.15% (n=8) Tillamook Bay Community College = 0.5% (n=28) Treasure Valley Community College = 0.0% (n=1) Umpqua Community College = 0.0% (n=0)

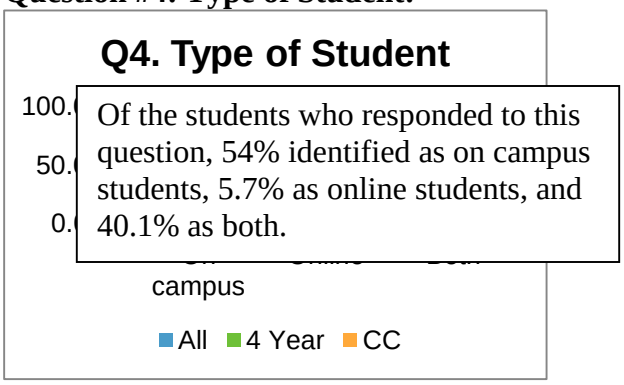
Question #2: The number of credit hours I have completed to date is:



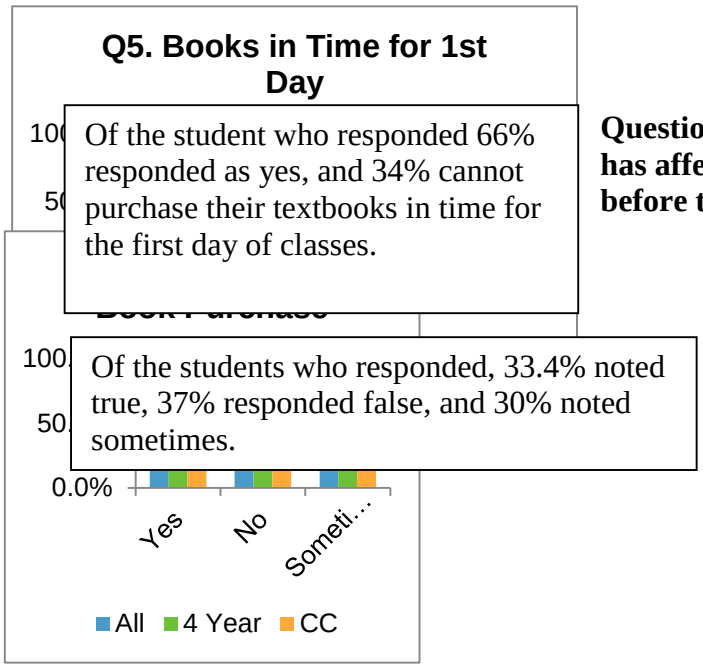
Question #3: Type of financial aid I receive:



Question #4: Type of Student:

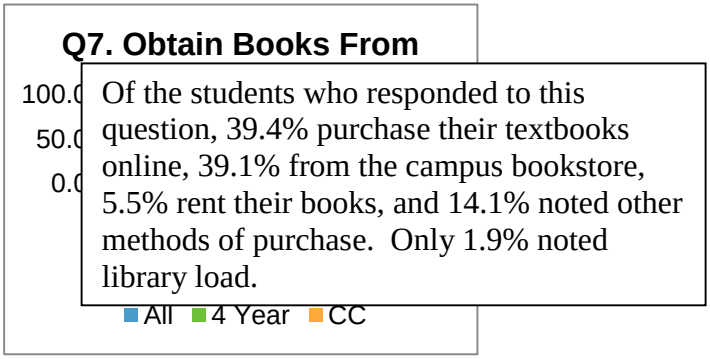


Question #5: I can purchase my textbooks in time for the first day of classes.

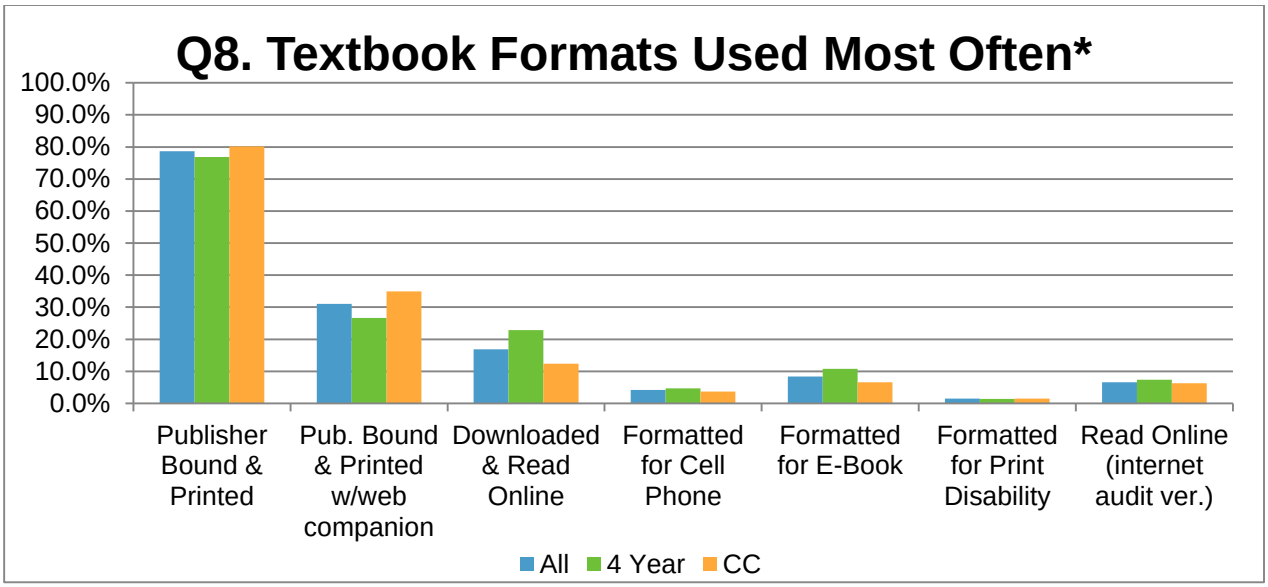


Question #6: The availability of my financial aid has affected my ability to purchase textbooks before the start of classes.

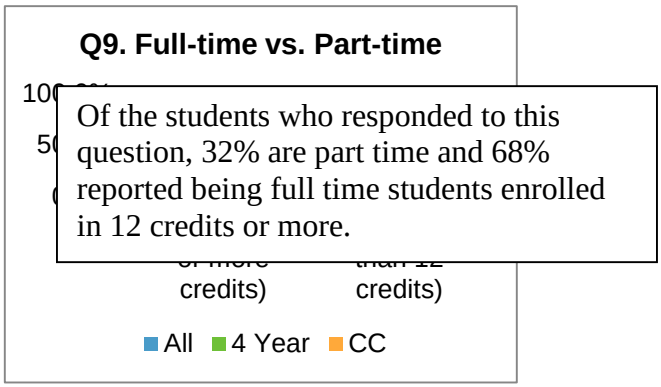
Question #7: I usually obtain my textbooks from:



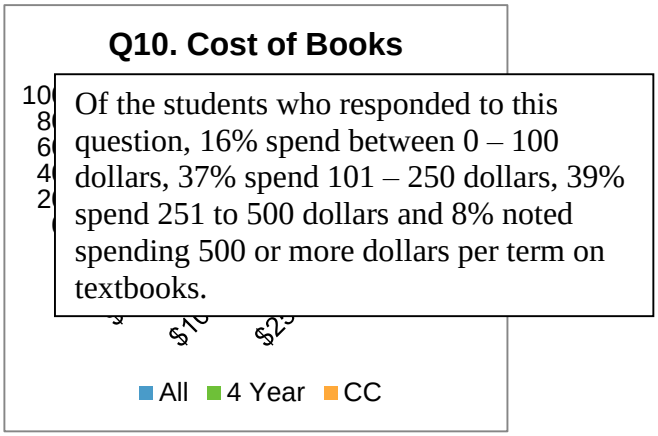
Question 8: Please indicated your use of the below textbook formats:



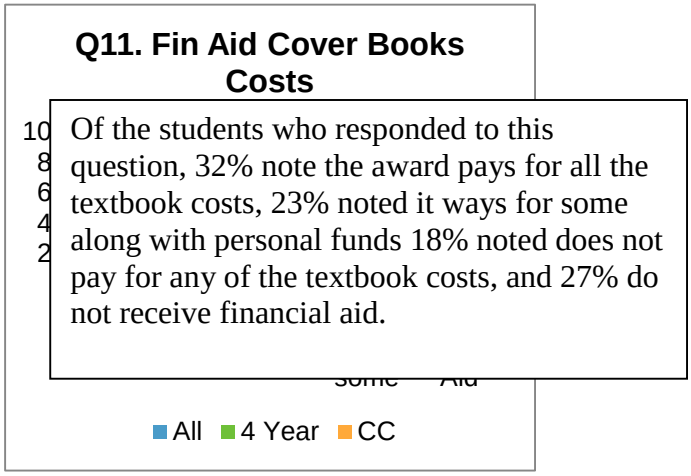
Question #9: Full-time vs. Part-time status:



Question #10: Cost of Textbooks:

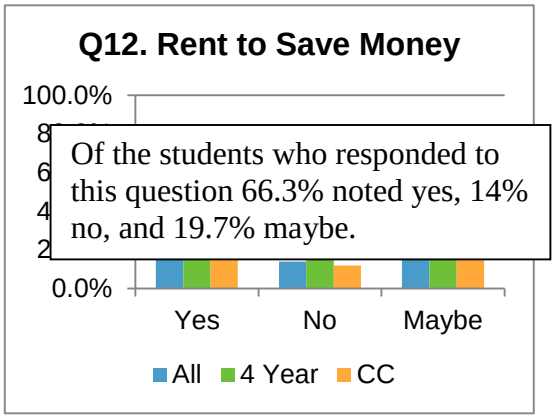


Question #11: Does Financial Aid Covers the Cost of Textbooks



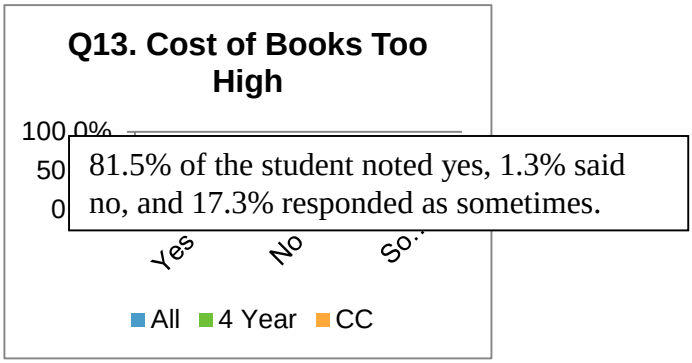
Of the students who responded to this question, 32% note the award pays for all the textbook costs, 23% noted it ways for some along with personal funds 18% noted does not pay for any of the textbook costs, and 27% do not receive financial aid.

Question #12: I would rent one or more textbooks if it saved money.



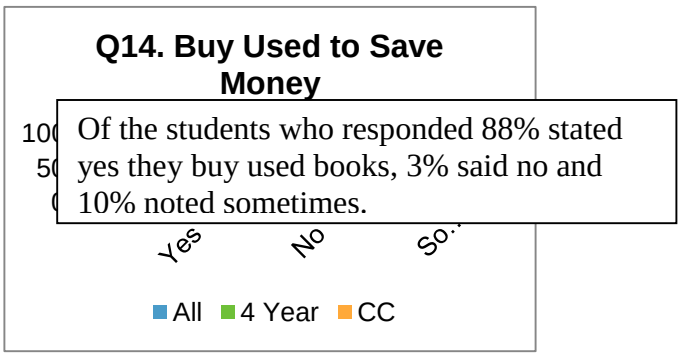
Of the students who responded to this question 66.3% noted yes, 14% no, and 19.7% maybe.

Question #13: The cost of textbooks at my campus bookstore is too high.



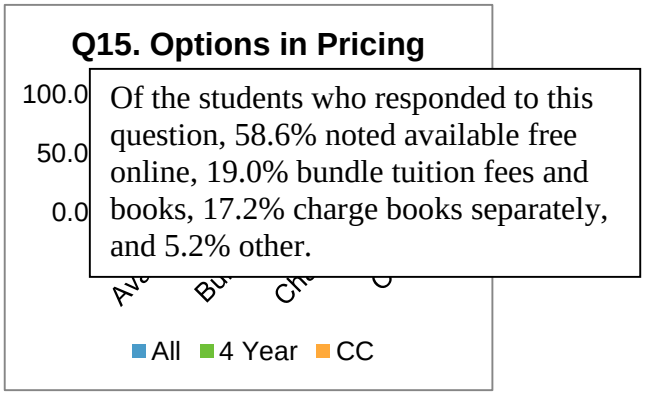
81.5% of the student noted yes, 1.3% said no, and 17.3% responded as sometimes.

Question #14: I prefer to buy used textbooks to save money.



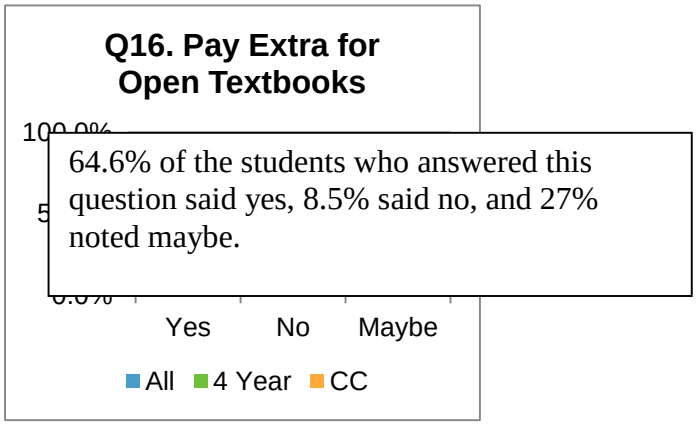
Of the students who responded 88% stated yes they buy used books, 3% said no and 10% noted sometimes.

Question #15: Options for Textbook Pricing:



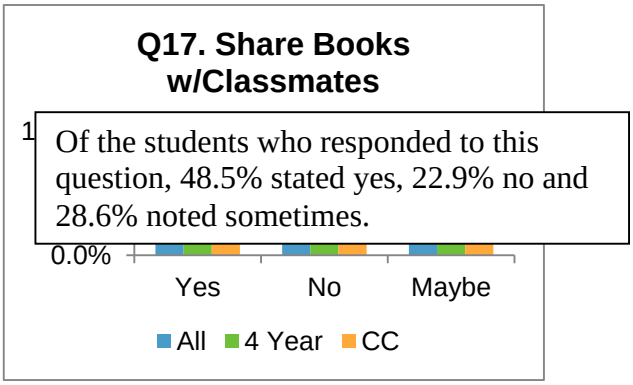
Of the students who responded to this question, 58.6% noted available free online, 19.0% bundle tuition fees and books, 17.2% charge books separately, and 5.2% other.

Question #16: I would pay $10-$20 per term for access to open textbooks.

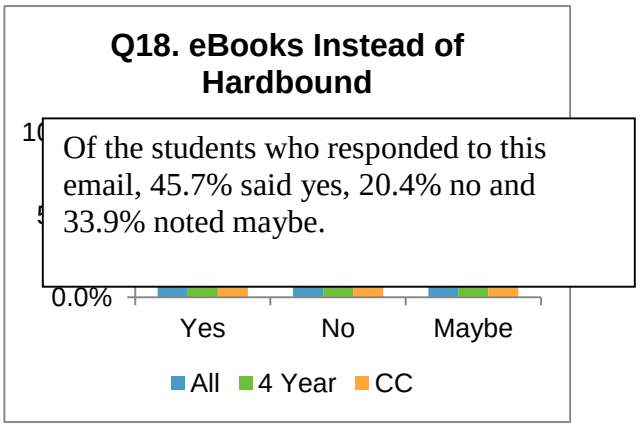


64.6% of the students who answered this question said yes, 8.5% said no, and 27% noted maybe.

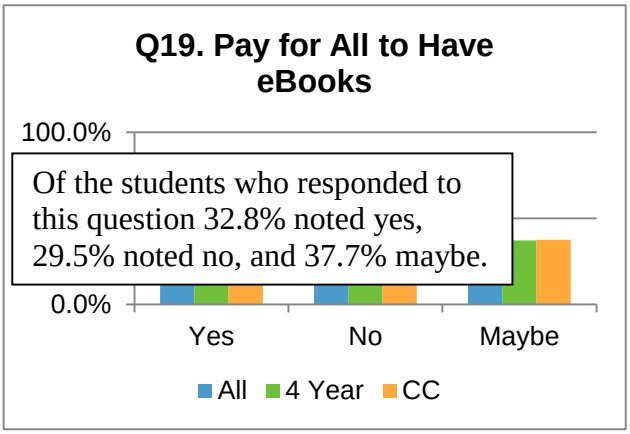
Question #17: I am likely to share required textbooks with classmates in the future.



Question #18: I would be willing to utilize ebooks in the future in lieu of required hard-copy paper textbooks.



Question #19: I am willing to pay a small fee to aid students on my campus to have access to ebooks.



Question #20: Comments or additional information you would like to share about textbook affordability:

Comments from this cohort of respondents' results in over 130 pages of narrative. If needed these comments will be made available upon request.

APPENDIX C – SOU OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH EVALUATION OF HECC TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY SURVEY

HECC Textbook Affordability Survey

Summary and Relativity to Oregon Students

Assuming that the HECC Textbook Affordability survey was representative of all Oregon students attending public insititutions of higher education then the following claims below can be made.

number of Fall 13 enrolled students in all OR CC's and Public Universities -> 246292

Item	Category of Issues Related to Textbooks	Survey Response	Number of Oregon students attending public institutions affected
1	Fin Aid Issues Affecting Textbook Purchases		
1a	Textbook purchase is dependent on FA	67.00%	165,016
1b	FA doesn't completely cover textbook costs	56.00%	137,924
	Financial Aid Types Received		
1c	Received a Pell	49.00%	120,683
1d	Received a Federal Loan	56.00%	137,924
1e	Received an OR Opportunity Grant	27.00%	66,499
1f	Received no FA	29.00%	71,425
2	General High Cost of Textbooks		
2a	Can't purchase textbooks in time for 1st day	34.00%	83,739
2b	Pay up to $250 per quarter for textbooks	53.00%	130,535
2c	Pay up to $500 per quarter for textbooks	47.00%	115,757
2d	Buy used textbooks to save money	88.00%	216,737
3	Alternative Textbook Options		
3a	Consider renting textbooks to save money	86.00%	211,811
3b	Consider sharing textbooks w/classmates	77.00%	189,645
3c	Consider paying small fee to provide for eBooks	70.00%	172,404
3d	Consider paying small fee to access "Open Textbooks"	92.00%	226,589

Over 300,000 students rely on FA to pay for textbooks and nearly half of those still have additional out-of-pocket costs for their books.
Note: Sum of items 1a and 1b.

Over 245,000 students pay up to $500 per quarter for textbooks.
Note: Sum of items 2b and 2c.

On average over 200,000 students will consider ANY alternative option to mitigate the high cost of textbooks.
Note: Average of items 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d.

data: raw response rates from HECC Textbook survey Office of Institutional Research file: HECC Textbook Survey Sumary of Results ver 2.xlsx

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