TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY COMMITTEE

**2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT**

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**I. Executive Summary/Background:**

Proposal to create the Textbook Affordability Committee, a standing external mixed committee, was approved by the Academic Senate in November 2015. Committee structure and functions are provided in the Blue Book supplement to the Bylaws of the Academic Senate. The Committee reports to the Academic Affairs Committee.

The Textbook Affordability Committee held seven meetings from August 2017 to May 2018. Most of its business in this second year revolved around discussing opportunities and obstacles to reducing textbook costs, and deliberating upon strategies for approaching Committee tasks. Primary outcomes included completion of the Committee’s Strategic Plan in accordance with the Blue Book.

**II. Membership**

The Committee is composed of 9 voting members.

* *Three students* (at least one Senator and one non-Senator, nominated and elected by SGA for one-year terms):

Senators Beau Grzanich, and non-Senators Patrick Broderick and Heather Paterson

* *Three faculty* (one Senator and two non-Senators, nominated and elected by Faculty Caucus for staggered two-year terms).

Non-Senators Michaelene Cox, Do Yong-Park\* and James Palmer\*\*

\* Do Yong-Park took Sabbatical during Spring; Faculty Caucus elected

Christopher Gjesfjeld as a temporary replacement for that faculty position.

\*\* A Senator was not available to serve on TAC; Faculty Caucus elected

James Palmer as a third non-Senator to fill that two-year faculty position.

* *Dean of Milner Library or designee*:

Designee Anne Shelley

* *University Registrar or designee*:

Jess Ray

* *Vice President of Student Affairs or designee:*

Designee Danielle Miller-Schuster

**III. Major Activities, Accomplishments, or Significant Changes**

* Reviewed Committee functions as described in the Academic Senate Blue Book:
  1. To research textbook costs at Illinois State University
  2. Examine different textbook issues for each College
  3. Actively seek out more affordable options for students
  4. Educate faculty on resources available to pick the best and most affordable textbook
  5. To analyze the cost benefit of textbook rental programs
  6. Inform faculty on open-source textbook options
  7. Develop a short-term and long-term strategic plan
  8. Recommend solutions to reduce textbook costs

2.

* Elected Co-Chairs and established meeting dates.
* Reconstructed and submitted 2016-17 meeting minutes and annual report to Senate to fill a void in documentation. Committee now has a link on the Academic Senate website under the External Committees tab where documentation will be regularly posted.
* Reviewed findings from two surveys about textbook affordability: (1) student survey conducted by SGA the previous academic year; and (2) survey sent to administrative heads of ISU academic units in Spring 2017.
* Discussed Open Educational Resources (OER) measures presented by Anne Shelley. Also investigated several additional programs/ideas for textbook cost-effective measures
* Developed a Strategic Plan for Committee short- and long-term goals and activities. Plan is attached to this annual report.

**IV. Major Goals, Objectives, and Issues for Academic Year 2018-19**

* Elect a Chair/Co-Chairs and a Secretary; establish meeting dates.
* Meet with Senate Executive Committee as requested to discuss viability and concerns of TAC.
* Formulate and submit recommendations to Academic Senate to amend Blue Book regarding TAC functions and member composition:
  + Recommend Senate reevaluate/amend Blue Book functions for TAC so goals/tasks more closely align with its approved Strategic Plan.
  + Recommend membership be amended to make it easier to fill committee seats should there not be a faculty Senator available to serve. Wording might be amended as follows:

Three (3) Faculty: One Senator *or Senate designee*, and two non-Senators.

* Solicit feedback from the Academic Affairs Committee regarding TAC’s Strategic Plan. With approval, move forward with TAC’s tasks noted in the Strategic Plan:
  + Education: Establish college liaisons to the Textbook Affordability Committee
  + Funding: Explore alternative fiscal models of subsidizing textbooks
  + Research: Collaborate with appropriate researchers to conduct a rigorous study that identifies what the textbook affordability “problem” is at ISU
  + Research: Create a repository of “our” data to inform decision-making and dispel myths or misconceptions.

Approved by Committee 08/31/18

Respectfully submitted,

Michaelene Cox

Illinois State University

**Textbook Affordability**

**Strategic Plan**

May 2018

The Textbook Affordability Committee recommends a four-part framework for ongoing efforts to enhance textbook affordability for Illinois State University students.

**1. Education: Inform faculty and students of options for minimizing textbook costs.**

* Faculty:
  + Include textbook affordability in orientations at the University and College levels
  + Work with campus partners to offer faculty workshops (e.g., Milner Library, CTLT, and Barnes and Noble College Bookstore)
  + Establish college liaisons to the Textbook Affordability Committee\*
* Students:
  + Continue efforts to provide students with timely information for required texts
  + Continue to provide information on textbook affordability at Preview
  + Enhance web-based information on textbook options and affordability

**2. Recognition: Publicize efforts to increase the affordability of textbooks.**

* Submit articles to ISU publications recognizing initiatives

**3. Funding: Allocate resources to textbook affordability initiatives.**

* Expand scholarships that help students defray the costs of textbooks
* Explore alternative fiscal models of subsidizing textbooks\*

**4. Research: Systematically analyze textbook costs and affordability at Illinois State University.**

* Collaborate with appropriate researchers to conduct a rigorous study that identifies what the textbook affordability “problem” is at ISU\*
* Create a repository of “our” data to inform decision-making and dispel myths or misconceptions\*