



April 27, 2010

To: **Sue Opp**, AVP Academic Programs and Graduate Studies

From: **University Libraries** / Aline Soules

cc: Linda Dobb, University Librarian; Robert Gibson, University Bookstore

[Consultation with Robert Gibson, University Bookstore; Jason Chavez, Media Resources & Reserves;
Paula Kapteyn, Circulation; Cynthia Ross, Las Positas College]

[Research into similar programs at Ohio State University and San Mateo College]

Title of Proposal: Textbook Proposal to Improve Graduation Rates

Initiator(s) of Proposal: Aline Soules and University Libraries

Total Funds Requested: \$20,000 to be designated as follows:

- 1) \$10,000 to purchase textbooks in print or electronic form for use during 2010-11 and beyond. The success of the project will be assessed through circulation statistics and a student survey.
- 2) \$5,000 to encourage 5 faculty members to develop open-source textbooks—with a stipend of \$1,000 each. Faculty must agree to the following parameters:
 - The textbooks must be used for more than one year
 - Faculty members must commit to updating content annually after first production
 - The textbooks must be ready for use no later than fall 2011, with earlier availability preferred
 - The textbooks must be ADA compliant
 - Faculty members must establish an assessment plan by students who use the textbook
 - Faculty members must agree to participate in a panel on creating textbooks from freely-available sources

As a side note, it is hoped that this initiative will also encourage faculty to use this opportunity to replace an existing course pack that is sold off-campus (about 50 faculty members still sell course readers off-campus and the goal is to incent faculty to move away from this practice). Assessment will be the completion of the book plus the approved plan faculty members develop to assess the impact of their book on students.

- 3) \$5000 to enable CSUEB to be the first CSU to join the *Open Educational Resources Center for California*, currently based at Foothill College. This will provide faculty with access to consortium workshops and sources. The goal is to create a special initiative connected with the consortium, e.g., the creation of a text in a key area of our campus (STEM, business, nursing), develop a community college/university partnership to take students through their entire undergraduate higher education degree (as CSUEB has so many transfer students)

Description of Project: Students have difficulty gaining access to textbooks for the following reasons:

- high cost of textbooks

- lack of availability of current editions through libraries—CSUEB’s and LINK+ libraries
- shortage or late arrival of copies in the bookstore

At the beginning of each quarter, students request copies of textbooks in the library and either “make do” with whatever they can get (old editions, LINK+ copies, reserve copies provided by instructors, copies purchased by groups and shared) or simply do without. This affects their learning.

The bookstore offers textbooks for sale and Follett is currently planning to begin a rental program in fall 2010. The library offers a few professor copies of textbooks through Reserves and some textbooks show up as part of our electronic book packages, but there is still a large segment of the student population who are still struggling without textbooks or the ability to acquire them.

The library wants to address this through multiple approaches.

- 1) Build a bank of electronic and print textbooks for the short-term. Electronic books would be available to students through links from the library catalog. Print books would be available through the Media Resources and Reserves on short-term loan. The criteria for selection would include:
 - expense; e.g., STEM classes
 - editions that will be current for 2-3 years
 - titles that are used for multiple quarters
 - titles for larger classes, e.g., introductory classes, in order to serve more students
 - titles not generally provided to Reserves by instructors
- 2) Incent faculty to create open source textbooks while moving away from the creation of course readers sold off-campus.
- 3) Create a new partnership with the *Open Educational Resources Center for California* in order to experiment with the future of open source textbooks.

Expected outcomes and target audience of the project:

Short-term:

- 1) More students will be able to access textbooks for their classes.
- 2) It is expected that more students will complete assigned readings.
- 3) As more textbooks will likely be targeted to Lower Division classes, this should have a greater effect on First and Second Year students, particularly in large classes like Chemistry, Psychology, Biology, etc.
- 4) Students will experience less frustration in trying to access textbooks and will spend less time struggling to find them and more time actually reading them.

Long-term:

- 1) Students who spend more time on their readings and studies and less on logistical barriers are more likely to succeed and more likely to move to their degree completion in a timely manner.
- 2) Students will also be more likely to retain what they learn if they spend more time reading and studying and less time trying to scrounge up their textbooks because they can’t afford them, are using old editions, or are doing without.

Strategic:

- 1) Encouraging faculty to create open source textbooks will allow the university to reduce the number of needed costly commercial textbooks and increase the use of both library and open resources.
- 2) Helping faculty to move away from creating course readers sold off campus will serve both the students and also the university through single-source improved access (the campus) and better administration/management of textbooks.
- 3) Experimenting with future options will open new opportunities for faculty and students to engage in innovative learning, as “textbooks” are more likely to include multiple formats (text, video, audio, etc.) making learning more dynamic and less static.

Timeline:

- 1) While this proposal is under consideration, consultation will take place with appropriate campus faculty and staff (spring quarter) to identify titles for the first goal of this proposal and develop a purchase list in priority order. If the proposal is approved and funds assigned, the orders will be placed immediately with the goal of making the textbooks available starting fall 2010.
- 2) While the proposal is under consideration, a “call” will be prepared to be sent to faculty to invite them to participate in the open source textbook initiative. If the proposal is approved and funds assigned, the call will be sent out. The creation of the open source textbooks will be designated for the 2010-2011 academic year, with completion and availability being no later than fall 2011
- 3) While the proposal is under consideration, the library will develop proposals to present to the *Open Educational Resources Center of California*. If the proposal is approved and funds assigned, the library will approach the Center immediately.

Potential barriers to success:

- 1) If the funds are not available in time, the textbooks could potentially not be received in time for the start of fall quarter.
- 2) Providing textbooks is no guarantee that students will read them; however, as the library is pressured quarterly for copies of textbooks, it is assumed that more students will be served and more students will take advantage of this program.
- 3) The library might not receive five applications for the open source textbook initiative. If that is the case, funds will be re-designated to one of the other projects, as appropriate.
- 4) The experiment with the *Open Educational Resources Center of California* might not work out as envisioned (experiment being the operative word). If the \$5,000 designated for this is not fully used for the experiment, the funds will be re-designated to one of the other projects, as appropriate.