

# CRC Academic Senate Resolution: Zero means Zero

Passed April 22, 2022

Whereas, Zero-Textbook-Cost (ZTC) refers to instances in which textbooks are available to students at no cost, and California Education Code §66406.9 requires that California community colleges “Clearly highlight, by means that may include a symbol or logo in a conspicuous place on the online campus course schedule, the courses that exclusively use digital course materials,” providing a mechanism for marking course sections that are zero-textbook-cost;

Whereas, California Education Code §78052, which originally established a zero-textbook-cost degree grant program in the California Community Colleges system, states that “Zero-textbook-cost degrees’ means community college associate degrees or career technical education certificates earned entirely by completing courses that eliminate conventional textbook costs by using alternative instructional materials and methodologies,” and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office has recommended that future ZTC funds should “ensure the ZTC programs and courses are truly zero cost to the students by eliminating hidden costs” ([Zero-Textbook-Cost Degree Grant Program Legislative Report](#), CCCCO 2020, p. 9, p. 13);

Whereas, The 2021 revisions to [California Education Code §78052](#) redefine “zero-textbook-cost degrees” to allow for “low-cost” to be recognized as “zero” in ill-defined instances, stating, “For purposes of this paragraph, ‘zero-textbook-cost degrees’ may include a low-cost degree option if a no-cost equivalent option is not available or cannot be developed”; and

Whereas, While open educational resources (OER) provide a mechanism to reduce or eliminate costs for instructional materials and textbooks, in some instances eliminating costs using OER is not possible because instructional resources require the use of such works as photographs, literature, and other materials that are under copyright;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for Cosumnes River College work to further communicate that zero-textbook-cost has a clear and specific meaning by affirming California Education Code’s original definition of zero-textbook-cost that refers to “courses that eliminate conventional textbook costs by using alternative instructional materials and methodologies,” and recognize that a variety of approaches can be used to bring course costs for students to zero, including college library subscriptions, purchasing access to copyrighted resources, controlled digital lending, and purchasing print resources;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for Cosumnes River College recognize open educational resources as the preferred and most sustainable mechanism for eliminating course costs but

acknowledge that instances will arise in which eliminating textbook costs is not possible through OER;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for Cosumnes River College assert that while open educational resources can reduce or eliminate costs for instructional materials and textbooks, resources should be dedicated to convening discipline faculty to determine the most sustainable mechanisms for reducing the costs of course resources; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for Cosumnes River College encourage the use of approaches that significantly reduce course resource costs such that course sections with a low-cost can obtain zero-textbook-cost status by virtue of the cost being absorbed by the college, district, or the state.

## Attribution

This resolution was modeled after the [Zero Means Zero Textbook Cost resolution 03.05](#) written by ASCCC OERI faculty coordinator, Michelle Pilati, and passed by ASCCC fall 2021.

## Resolution Timeline

- 2022-04-01: The resolution was presented to the Academic Senate for a first read and discussion. Some concerns were raised and a friendly amendment proposed.
- 2022-04-22: The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote by the Academic Senate after more discussion and three small amendments. What is presented here is the final version of the adopted resolution.