

2020-2021 UCSA Support for a Grant-Funded Program for Open Textbooks at the UCs

Primary Sponsors

Aidan Arasasingham, UCSA President, UC Los Angeles External Vice President

Vincent Rasso, UCSA Chair, UC Riverside Vice President of External Affairs

Jose Edgardo Lopez, UC Merced External Vice President

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Alan Calderon, UC Irvine External Vice President

Maria Martinez, UC Davis External Affairs Vice President

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the price of textbooks has risen 88 percent between 2006 and 2016 in the US¹; and,

WHEREAS, setting aside over \$1,300 for textbooks and material fees each year is a financial burden many University of California students cannot afford²; and,

WHEREAS, 65 percent of students report not buying a textbook required for a course because of its price even if they were concerned that their grade would suffer as a result³; and,

WHEREAS, open textbooks, which are free to read and share under an open copyright license, can combat the exponential rise of textbook prices; and,

WHEREAS, 368 UC professors have signed on in support of open textbook use; and,

WHEREAS, UCLA Libraries' Affordable Course Materials Initiative has decreased the cost of course materials at UCLA for thousands of students by providing awards for faculty who transition to low-cost course materials⁴; and,

WHEREAS, many other higher-education systems, including the California Community Colleges, the California State Universities, and the State Universities of New York have launched their own programs to encourage the use of open textbooks, making information readily accessible for all students and providing students and their families with financial relief⁵ and,

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/college-tuition-and-fees-increase-63-percent-since-january-2006.htm>

² <http://www.admission.ucla.edu/prospect/budget.htm>

³ <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2014/01/28/report-high-textbook-prices-have-college-students-struggling>

⁴ <https://www.library.ucla.edu/about/about-collections/open-scholarship-collections-policy/affordable-course-materials-initiative>

⁵ <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Open-Education-Resources>

⁶ <https://sparcopen.org/our-work/list-of-oer-policies-projects/>

WHEREAS, Governor Newsom of California has proposed that 15 million dollars be set aside in the California 2021-2022 state budget for open educational resources in higher education to address textbook affordability for community college students⁷; and,

WHEREAS, the efforts of colleges to invest in open educational resources have saved students millions of dollars, helped improve academic performance of students, and are cost-efficient for the institutions themselves⁸; and,

WHEREAS, the chapters of CALPIRG Students will communicate the support for this initiative, including this resolution and the tangible support of faculty and students, to the University of California Board of Regents;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the 2020-2021 University of California Student Association affirms its support for establishing an open textbook grant program UC-wide and supports CALPIRG Students' efforts to establish support; and,

LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the 2020-2021 University of California Student Association will showcase further support by passing respective resolutions at their home campus in support for a grant-funded program for open Textbooks at the UCs; and,

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED THAT, the 2020-2021 University of California Student Association strongly encourages the UC Regents to implement a UC-wide grant-funded program for open textbooks that would incentivize professors to make the switch to accessible open resources.

⁷ <https://sparcopen.org/our-work/state-policy-tracking/>

⁸ <https://sparcopen.org/our-work/state-policy-tracking/>