**Low Textbook Cost Work Group Report & Recommendations**

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**Guiding Principles for Recommendations:**

* What is best for our students
* Need to align with sister colleges, where there may be more restrictions on where to purchase texts with financial aid
* Whenever possible, bookstore prices should be used to determine cost in order to ensure access for students without credit
* Recommendation should be based upon the cost of new materials, as these are the most reliably accessible
* Rental of print textbooks is not considered due to the heavy penalties associated with late returns

**Recommendations**

* Low Cost Threshold: $40

OR

* LTC<$20
* LTC<$50

**Details of Recommendations**

To be designated as a **low textbook cost** course, the total price for all required text materials must be at or below the identified threshold before tax, with the following clarifications:

* The LTC designation is based on the cost of new materials, not used books or rentals of printed texts.
* The LTC designation may be based upon the cost of an e-book or a printed text, as long as digital access is provided for at least the duration of the course.
* If students would need to access the text materials through the publisher to meet the LTC price threshold, this information should be communicated to the student in advance (e.g., via introductory e-mail or course notes in the SOC).
* The cost of homework sites or software platforms is included in this total.
* The costs are based on pre-tax prices of new course materials purchased from the bookstore or the publisher.
* Review cost threshold every 5 years to determine if adjustments are needed.
* LTC courses may require supplies that are not included in the LTC total, such as calculators, test forms, clay, or safety goggles.

**Example of proposed student-facing language:**

“Students can gain access to all required text materials and supplemental homework in either digital or printed format for less than $40 total, pre-tax, through either the bookstore or the publisher.”

A disclaimer could also be shared with student information: “The college strives to ensure that ZTC and LTC designations in the class schedule are accurate; however, under some circumstances, faculty may have to adjust selection of instructional materials and this can affect course material costs. It may also be necessary to change instructors. Replacement faculty have academic freedom to choose instructional materials regardless of costs and are not obligated to use free course materials selected by an instructor previously assigned to the class.”

**Results of Department Chair Survey (sent by Work Group)**

**Question:** We would like your feedback on potential recommendations for low-cost textbook guidelines. If the low-textbook-cost designation threshold were set at the total price indicated below (pre-tax) for all required texts, approximately how many sections in your department would have qualified for this designation in fall 2020 (not counting ZTC courses)?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Department** | **$20 Total Cost** | **$40 Total Cost** | **$50 Total Cost** | **Comments** |
| COMM, FTMA, JOUR, GAME | 1 | 3 | 12 | We currently have 87 ZTC sections & 19 with associated costs. |
| Nursing, Rad Tech | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Mathematics | 1-2 | 3-5 | 10-20 | We anticipate LTC sections would be around $30. Under $ 70 may cover purchasing an instructional package only |
| Physics Laboratories | 2 | 12 | 0 |  |
| Geology, Geography, Environmental Science, GIS | 5 | 0 | 4 | We have 13 ZTC sections, too! |
| KIN/ICA/HED | 0 | 0 | 11 |  |
| English |  | 31 |  | Information based upon recent faculty survey. |
| **Total**  | 9 - 10 | 49 - 51 | 36 - 46 |  |

**Results of Recent Student Survey Sent by the MC Office of Institutional Research**

(No Demographic Details Provided)

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