

A Resolution To Encourage the Adoption of Affordable Practices Regarding Textbook Selection

Kimmy Sullivan (for herself, Samer Abusway, and Maria Vargo) introduced the following resolution into Steering Committee where it passed.

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Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government represents all undergraduate students at The Ohio State University, and

Whereas 67% of Ohio State undergraduate students agree that they feel stressed about their finances,¹ and

Whereas the core goals of President Drake's 2020 Vision are to achieve and maintain access, affordability, and excellence at Ohio State,² and

Whereas undergraduate students at Ohio State, on average, spend \$1,234.00 per year on textbooks and supplies,³ and

Whereas the high price of textbooks places a significant financial burden on students, and

Whereas many newer textbooks include access to online resources where students can complete homework assignments, review problems, and tests, and

Whereas an online access code costs an average of \$100.24 alone, in addition to the cost of the print textbook,⁴ and

Whereas in many cases paying for an access code is a necessity for good performance in the class, as a student who cannot afford access to online materials will be unable to complete assignments, and

Whereas the difference between recommended and required textbooks is often unclear, and

Whereas students often purchase all listed textbooks in order to adequately prepare for classes, but later realize that only a subset are essential to their success in the course, and

¹ <http://cssl.osu.edu/posts/documents/ohio-state-university.pdf>

² <http://president.osu.edu/presidents/drake/speeches-and-statements/investiture-address-march-31-2015.html>

³ <https://sfa.osu.edu/graduate-students/about-aid/financial-aid-eligibility>

⁴ <http://www.studentpirgs.org/news/sp/report-new-trend-college-textbook-market-presents-danger-students>

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40 **Whereas** the price of required textbooks that are in reality inessential places an extra financial
41 burden on students, and
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43 **Whereas** students are often required to purchase the latest version of a textbook, and
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45 **Whereas** over half of faculty believe that the newer versions of textbooks are rarely justified to
46 never justified,⁵ and
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48 **Whereas** an older version of a textbook frequently provides comparable information at a much
49 lower cost than the new version, and
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51 **Whereas** professors can require students to purchase special edition textbooks produced
52 specifically for Ohio State, and
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54 **Whereas** the content of a specialized textbook is in most cases very similar, or even identical, to
55 the general edition, and
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57 **Whereas** the price of special edition textbooks is often much greater than the general edition
58 with no school name attached,⁶ and
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60 **Whereas** Barnes and Noble requires professors to request their books for autumn semester by
61 the preceding April 13th, and
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63 **Whereas** requesting books at a later date unintentionally drives up the cost for students to
64 purchase a textbook, and
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66 **Whereas** estimates of the overall financial impact on undergraduate students range up to \$2.5
67 million,⁷ and
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69 **Whereas** to address issues of textbook affordability the University currently invests in the
70 Affordable Learning Exchange (ALX), and
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72 **Whereas** ALX is a partnership between USG, University Libraries, the Office of Distance
73 Education and eLearning, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the University Center for the
74 Advancement of Teaching, and
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⁵ <http://www.studentpirgs.org/news/new-report-shows-college-textbooks-are-ripoff-101>

⁶ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB121565135185141235>

⁷ Geoff Chatas, Chief Financial Officer at The Ohio State University

76 **Whereas** one goal of ALX is to save students \$1 million by the end of 2017,⁸ and

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78 **Whereas** the goals of ALX coincide with President Drake's 2020 vision,² and

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80 **Whereas** ALX is a distinguished program with clearly defined goals, but it is not being utilized
81 by enough faculty members;

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83 **Therefore Let it Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government advocates for the
84 replacement of online learning materials that require expensive access codes with Carmen
85 quizzes created by professors, and

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87 **Let it Further Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government supports the adoption
88 and communication of a clear-cut policy recognizing the distinction between recommended and
89 required textbooks, and

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91 **Let it Further Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government recommends that
92 administration encourage professors to accommodate students purchasing the older version of a
93 textbook if the information in both the newer and older version is the same, and

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95 **Let it Further Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government recommends that
96 administration encourage professors to reevaluate the necessity of special edition textbooks if the
97 content is comparable to a more cost-friendly option, and

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99 **Let it Further Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government encourages
100 administration to work with departments and colleges to incentivize professors to submit their
101 Barnes and Noble book orders on time, and

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103 **Let it Further Be Resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government recommends that
104 administration expand the Affordable Learning Exchange to improve faculty interest in applying
105 for grants through the program.

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Floor Vote: Passed

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⁸ <https://affordablelearning.osu.edu/about>

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Gerard C. Basalla

Gerard Basalla
President

Date Adopted: 11/30/2016

Danielle M. DiScala

Danielle DiScala
Vice President

Date Terminated: _____