

## **Senate Bill 146 – Textbook Transparency Bill – Information Sheet**

1. The University of Alaska (UA) System appreciates the conversation that Senator Myers brings forward with SB 146.
2. Fortunately, the UA System is on a similar path with each of our three universities (developing approaches and policies for textbook cost transparency and zero-cost or low-cost textbook alternatives to meet the specialized needs of their academic programs and student bodies). Below are current activities at UAA, UAF and UAS for review:
  - a. UAA
    - i. Textbook transparency/affordability measures:
      1. With increased professional development and workload support during the past three years, UAA has seen a dramatic and impactful increase in the use of Zero Cost Textbooks (ZTC).
      2. ZTC includes both Open Educational Resources (OER) and classes that exclusively use online materials provided through licensing agreements within the UAA Consortium Library where there is a cost to UAA, but not the student.
      3. As of Fall 2021, over 3,700 UAA students were enrolled in courses utilizing ZTC. Assuming each ZTC course saves students on average, a \$100 textbook purchase, over the past decade UAA ZTC efforts have cumulatively saved students over \$1.4 million.
      4. In any given semester, around 250-275 UAA course sections are using ZTC.
      5. UAA's contract bookstore provider, through Akademios, shows the required textbook OR the ZTC or other resource required for each course taught at the University. This information is made available during the registration window.
      6. In order to make it even easier for students to find ZTC sections, UAA will begin a "course marking" system in Summer 2022 that will include a ZTC code on all courses utilizing these materials.
      7. At this time, UAA does not plan to include a "low-cost" marker, since students can easily find the cost of textbooks using the online bookstore function.
  - b. UAF
    - i. Textbook transparency/affordability measures:
      1. At UAF, all required course materials are listed through the UAF Bookstore online interface.
      2. Since Spring 2021, UAF has implemented a combined no/low-cost course markings (NoLo) into the online course schedule.
        - a. NoLo courses are available to view in several locations: via advanced search in UAOnline when students register for courses in the UAOnline Coursefinder; on the

searchable [eCampus online course schedule](#) with an icon indicating NoLo status; and on the [open.uaf.edu](#) website.

- i. Clearly indicated in all locations is that NoLo courses are courses where course materials are under \$40.
  - b. UAF NoLo course materials include books, computer software, magnetic media, DVDs, CD-ROMs, computer courseware, online services, online learning programs, or other media used to convey course information to a student. It does not include lab fees, tuition, special course fees that include supplies.
3. Automatic fees during registration - At UAF, course material fees are listed through the UAF Bookstore. Special course fees, lab fees, and tuition are listed during registration at UAOnline.
  4. Search function for zero cost courses on schedule - The UAOnline schedule includes a search function for NoLo courses.

c. UAS

- i. Textbook transparency/affordability measures:
  1. Egan Library has provided textbook affordability leadership on campus since 2016 through the [Open UAS initiative](#). The initiative provides faculty development in the areas of open educational resources, open licensing, open pedagogy and support in the discovery, creation and adoption of open educational resources or other no and low-cost course materials. The initiative also coordinates student advocacy with student government and through campus events.
    - a. Highlights of Existing Efforts
      - i. UAS Student Gov Resolutions of Support for Textbook Affordability (2017, [2021](#))
      - ii. 2,800 students served, \$280K in estimated student savings (based on \$100 per student served, a [widely utilized methodology](#) for calculating savings).
      - iii. 58 unique faculty teaching +200 unique course sections have adopted No or Low Cost materials.
      - iv. No-Cost course marking attribute in development, even absent of searchable attribute:
        1. Fall 2021: 99 No-Cost Materials Sections (29%)
        2. Spring 2021: 73 No-Cost Materials Sections (27%).
      - v. Tracking of impact metrics (faculty adoptions, No-Cost Sections, students served, estimated student

savings) is time intensive without course marking/attribute.

- vi. Proposal for Marking No-Cost Course Sections in Semester Course Schedule brought to Faculty Senate for discussion in February 2022.
- vii. Fisheries Technology Occupational Endorsement: all courses in pathway use no-cost course materials and can be completed asynchronously online with curriculum on iPads.
- viii. Faculty Excellence Award for Open Educational Practices (est. 2021), First recipient, Dr. X'unei Lance Twitchell, [Beginning Tlingit Workbook](#) and other [Tlingit Language Learning Resources](#).
- ix. First UA Faculty OER Publication (2021), [Mathematical Modeling and Simulation with MATLAB](#) (Dr. Megan Buzby)
- x. 2021-22, UAS Team Participating in [AAC&U Institute on OER](#). Team includes Interim Provost Maren Haavig, Faculty Senate President Andrea Dewees (Spanish), Jonas Lamb (Library), Liz Zacher (Art), Kasia Polanska (Sociology)
- xi. Member at [WICHE OERWest Network](#). Preparing to participate in a WICHE research study on the relationship between the use of no-cost/low-cost course materials and OER and time-to-credential.
- xii. [OER 101](#): Self-paced, unfacilitated introductory course to increase training capacity of initiative.
- xiii. Program coordinator Lamb participated in the inaugural cohort (2019) of the Certificate in OER Librarianship program from Open Education Network and as Visiting Open Education Scholar, Kwantlen Polytechnic University (Spring 2020).

Please let me know if you have any questions. UA has a high interest in student satisfaction and good progress is being made in this area. However, we recognize that multiple approaches are necessary to meet student needs and to ensure quality academic programs. It may be wise to ensure that legislation is not too prescriptive or that it hampers good work already being done.

Sincerely,



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UA Director Chad Hutchison