

Memo

To: Dr. Wise E. Allen, Chancellor
Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees

From: Dr. Deborah Budd, Vice Chancellor Educational Services
Alexis Alexander, Staff Development Coordinator

Date: June 9, 2011

RE: Affordable and Open Textbooks

In an effort to develop ways to discover and encourage the use of and opportunity for more affordable textbooks, there have been a variety of programs offered in the past three years.

In the attached paper we will:

1. Share the Results of a recent survey conducted among staff
2. Highlight some past discussions and trainings
3. Identify future growth and development possibilities.

During our district wide discipline meetings on August 17, 2011, we are suggesting that faculty spend time discussing this topic and beginning to explore the issues of how departments and faculty find and select textbooks, and ways that we can work with the bookstore for more affordable rental, tablet, and on-line options.

Once available for demonstration in academic year 2011-12 we would be happy to do a short presentation with the McGraw-Hill platform.

We all share the interest of increasing access to our students and seeking affordable textbook options is one of those ways. We appreciate your interest and dedication to our students.

Report on Affordable and Open Textbooks

Office of Educational Services

Prepared by:

Dr. Debbie Budd, Vice Chancellor

Alexis Alexander, Staff Development Coordinator

June, 2011

Survey Results

On May 25th, 2011 we conducted a survey to gauge faculty attitudes and knowledge about Open Source Textbooks and other types of open content and affordable textbook options.

Some of the notable results are below:

- Out of the 59 people who took the survey, only 4 were currently using some sort of open textbook in their course, and 16 people stated that they would like to begin to use an open textbook
- A little over half of the respondents stated that they were curious about open textbooks, and interested in learning more about them
- A large majority of respondents stated that textbook affordability was a real problem for their students
- Over half of the respondents were interested in open content because they could customize the content to fit their needs.

When asked if there were issues that would cause them to NOT use open textbooks, faculty had various responses, with the majority stating that they believed that their students would not be able to access content that was electronic.

While all of the responses can be found in Figure 1, faculty had several concerns about open textbooks, the most notable of which were:

- The quality of the content
- The reliability of the author
- The ability to integrate the content of the open textbook with their own materials, such as lecture notes, PowerPoint presentations and quizzes.

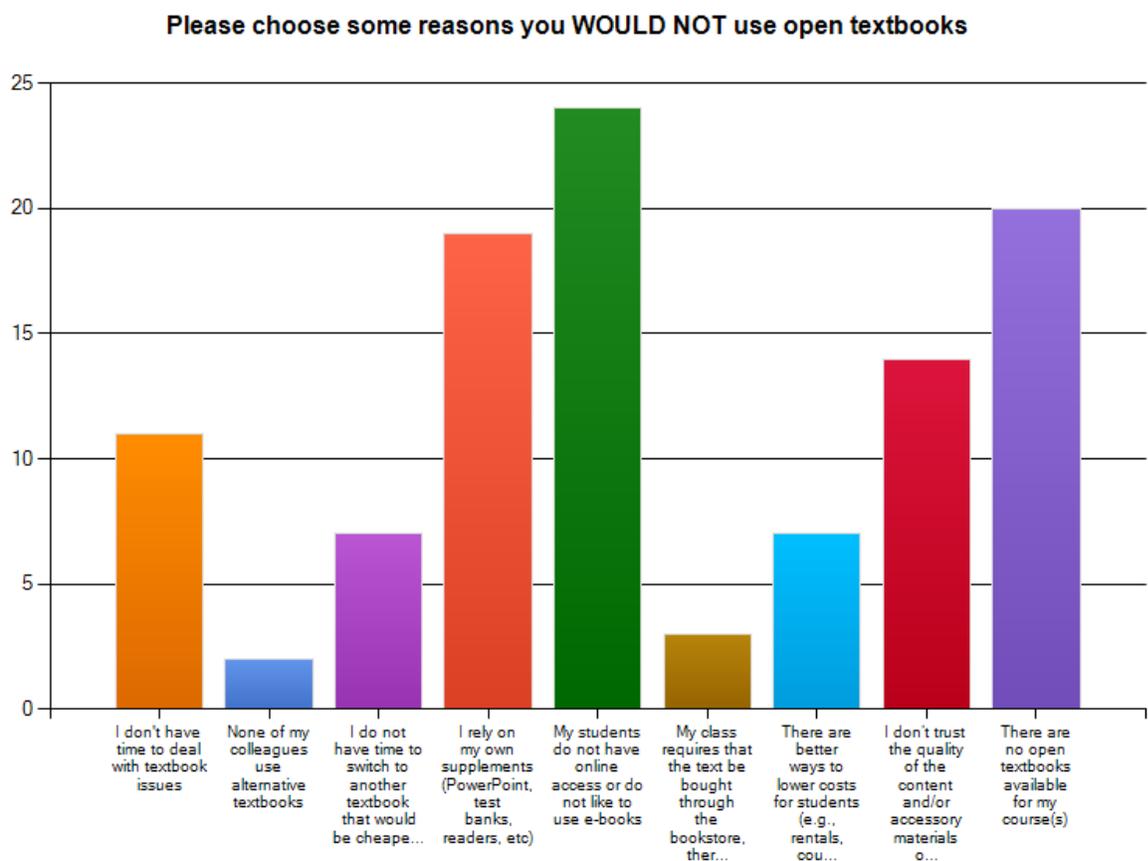


Figure 1: Responses why faculty are not using On-line Textbooks

Textbook Affordability

The results in Figure 2 suggest that faculty are very open to exploring some strategies for making regular textbooks more affordable.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Text Book Rentals		77.8%	42
Use an Online Book Swap Book (swaps allow students to buy and sell their used books directly between each other rather than through a intermediary like the bookstore)		70.4%	38
Get Textbooks In Electronic Form (e books)		75.9%	41
Use Previous Editions		50.0%	27
Consider cost when selecting textbooks for each course and review alternative texts.		51.9%	28
When possible, allow multiple editions to be used for a course (particularly introductory level)		50.0%	27
Consider putting copies of textbooks (particularly recommended titles) on reserve in the campus library		70.4%	38
Explore ways that departmental coordination could reduce costs for students		37.0%	20
Talk with the bookstore about potential textbook changes early in the process so the bookstore can order adequate supplies of books and try to get as many used books as possible		25.9%	14
Work with the bookstore to determine the availability of cheaper editions of the textbook (e.g. printed on less expensive paper or without color)		29.6%	16
When registration is complete, email students the ISBN of the textbooks required for the course, thereby giving students the option to purchase textbooks online		61.1%	33
		answered question	54
		skipped question	5

Figure 2: Methods for reducing textbook costs

The respondents volunteered information about some of the ways that they try to keep textbook prices down:

- I use MathXL/MyMathLab access codes for students, and make the textbook optional. In addition, when choosing textbooks, we always consider cost as our top priority.
- Yes, I use the older edition and have students buy it used online. I give them a link to used copies and have been able to find used texts for them as cheaply as \$4.99 when the new edition is over \$85.
- I require NO PURCHASE OF TEXTBOOKS. I have begun to require readings in a book called "They Say / I Say" for all composition courses, but I put several copies on reserve at the Laney Library, as well as buying several copies and

donating them to the library to be placed in the general collection, so that even students with no IDs can pull them off the shelf and do their readings. I would like to do more to advance this concept among our faculty, and nation/world-wide.

- Yes. I allow students to use older editions that are relevant. I Email them the textbook information (ISBN) several weeks before class starts so that they can procure the book online at a much cheaper price.
- Currently, students can purchase eBooks from the publisher and read them online. Hopefully, we can move forward on this issue. I am very interested in providing my students opportunity to facilitate their education.
- I email all students before the semester starts (and I put in the syllabus) ways to get our textbook cheaper. The textbook I use (5th edition) costs about \$120 new, but I tell my students they have alternatives, such as: buy a used copy online, buy it as an ebook for half-price from the publisher, get a semester's access to all of the book's contents from the publisher for \$37, use the copy that I put on reserve at the library, rent the book from our bookstore or chegg.com, or purchase the previous (4th) edition cheaply online. All of these options are told to all of my students every semester.

Trainings on Open Source textbooks, Open Resources and Textbook Affordability

Since 2009, Staff Development and faculty at the colleges have offered a series of trainings on many different aspects of this issue.

A few examples are:

On district wide flex day in fall of 2009, we had **Eric Frank from Flat World Knowledge** as our keynote speaker. Flat World Knowledge is leading the field in the creation of free and low cost textbooks.

During that same flex day we offered a **Free and Open Textbooks Workshop** for faculty who wanted to learn about making their own online textbook or finding one that would work for them.

In March of 2009, faculty at Laney offered a workshop on **Using the Web to Enhance Instruction**, the workshop was “designed for instructors, especially those working with basic skills students, to engage in dialogue and build community around enhancing their instruction on the web”.

In fall of 2010 we had a “Technology for Teachers Week” with training on Google Docs, Open Textbooks and using Web 2.0 tools in the classroom. There were also several weeks of training for teachers on using Moodle to enhance their face to face classes.

A few of the other trainings related to open resources that were offered to teachers during 2010 were:

- Using multimedia tools to add interest to your course
- Using Wikis in Education
- Using Comics in Education
- Open Textbooks, information and resources
- Finding free e-books and other resources
- Making a 21st Century Syllabus
- Using Wikimedia Commons
- What is Creative Commons?

Staff Development offers a constant stream of information about related resources to teachers, such as:

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2010

Free 33 Page Guide - Google for Teachers

 Google offers some wonderful tools for teachers, but I've learned over the last couple of weeks that while teachers are aware of many of Google's offerings like search, docs, and maps many teachers aren't aware of how to use these tools or what these tools offer beyond the obvious. Therefore, I sat down yesterday and started putting together this guide to using Google search, docs, books, news, and maps in the classroom.

This guide avoids some of the obvious things, like using Google Docs for collaborative writing, and instead focuses on some of the lesser-used Google tools options like publishing an online quiz using Google Docs. In all there are 33 pages containing 21 ideas and how to instructions for creating Google Maps placemarks, directions creating and publishing a quiz with Google Docs forms, directions for embedding books into your blog, and visual aids for accessing other Google tools.

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Staff development has also created a webpage on Peralta.edu with resources for affordable textbooks at [http://peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?\\$1=652](http://peralta.edu/apps/comm.asp?$1=652) , some of the content is listed on the following page.

Resources

[Cheap Textbooks](#). Try this **Super Cheap Textbook Search Engine**™ which will scour the internet for the cheapest price available on any textbook. If you can find a textbook cheaper online - they'll buy it for you.

[Chegg](#). Chegg is a multi-purpose website and that's why I'm listing it first. Students can rent textbooks, buy their books, sell them back to the website *and* they plant a tree for every book you rent. With Chegg, you can save up to 80% on textbooks.

[BookRenter.com](#). Quick delivery, choose between five rental periods and free return shipping. Save up to 75%.

[Textbooks.com](#). Boasts fast and free delivery on orders of \$25+. You can even sell your books back for up to 50%.

[Alibris](#). Offers new and used textbooks. Save up to 90%. Offers a very large selection and many hard-to-find titles.

[CampusBooks](#). Offers students the option of searching by subject, in addition to searching by book. You can also sell your books back to the website when you're finished with them.

[BookSwim](#). "Rent books Netflix-style." Free delivery, free return postage and no due dates or late fees.

[Facebook Marketplace](#). Log in, go to the Marketplace and type in the title of the book you're searching for. Shipping rates may vary, depending on what the seller requests. There are also several textbook applications on Facebook that you might want to check out.

[TextSwap](#). Buy, sell and trade used textbooks. Gives you the option of searching by university.

[Bartleby](#). Free, online books. (Seriously, what's cheaper than a free book?!)

[Cheap College Textbooks](#). Works like a search engine. Type in what book you're looking for and it searches several textbook websites for you, comparing prices and showing you the best deal.

Plans for future training and resource development

At the end of June, 2011 all of the Moodle shells at Peralta will have a link to McGraw Hill Campus. We have already applied for and received permission for access for all four campuses. The blurb below is from McGraw-Hill and explains this resource:

- McGraw-Hill's new digital resource platform: unlimited access to all content by any professor at no cost
- *McGraw-Hill offers its entire digital resource library to any professor at any school*
- McGraw-Hill Campus gives all professors full access to all curricular resources and tools, whether or not they use a McGraw-Hill textbook
- For professors, getting access to relevant and trusted online instructional resources and tools has been an ad-hoc, hit-or-miss process. This web seminar will demonstrate McGraw-Hill Campus, a new service that provides all faculty members across campus with one-click, unlimited access to McGraw-Hill's entire library of academic e-content and associated tools - directly from within the course management system. There is no fee for the platform, and instructors can use it regardless of whether or not they use a McGraw-Hill textbook.

Training for faculty will be offered on how to access and use this resource during August flex days at all four campuses. Additional trainings will be offered during fall and spring semester.

On district wide flex day, scheduled for August 17th, there will be an "Affordable Textbook Alley" set up with vendors from various organizations that offer alternative ways for faculty and students to get textbooks.

During district wide discipline meetings that will be held on August 17th, Educational Services is suggesting that faculty spend time discussing this topic and beginning to explore the issue of how departments and faculty find and select textbooks, and ways that we can work with the bookstore for more affordable rental, tablet, and on-line options.

We look forward to creating additional opportunities to make textbooks more affordable to our students.