



**Resolution No. 1415-08**

**A Joint Resolution Supporting The Investigation Of Open Educational Resources At SEC Universities**

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

**WHEREAS,** the cost of textbooks have increased (87%) between 2003 and 2013, three times that of overall CPI (27%) during the same time frame; and

**WHEREAS,** this phenomenon has made acquisition of textbooks a prohibitive barrier to a substantial number (65%) of students; and

**WHEREAS,** Open Educational Resources are textbooks and other learning materials that are distributed online with permission for everyone to freely use, adapt and share the content; and

**WHEREAS,** one study found that nearly three quarters (73.4%) of faculty consider the quality of Open Educational Resources to be the same as or better than that of traditionally published resources; and

**WHEREAS,** more than 950 universities worldwide have adopted OpenStax College textbooks, a provider of Open Educational Resources; and

**WHEREAS,** OpenStax College textbooks have saved students more than \$30 million; and

**WHEREAS,** utilizing Open Educational Resources have been shown to increase student pass rates, increase grades, and reduce withdrawal rates; and

**WHEREAS,** this resolution represents a joint statement by the student governments of all SEC Universities; and

**RESOLVED,** by majority vote of the General Assembly here gathered, that the benefits of Open Educational Resources merits investigation at Missouri and across the SEC; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** the findings of the Missouri Students Association shall be presented to the Faculty Council; and be it further

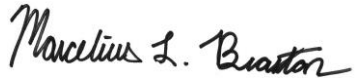
**RESOLVED,** this legislation shall be forwarded to the governing infrastructure of the SEC.

**SUBMITTED,**

Ms. Hallie J. Thompson  
President

Mr. Eric A. Hucker  
Vice-President

Mr. E. Alexander Howe  
Treasurer



Mr. Marcelius L. Braxton, J.D.  
Secretary



Mr. Jesse W. Kremenak  
Director of National Affairs



Ms. Rachel Bauer  
Director of Programming and Publicity



Mr. Matt McCune  
Director of State Affairs

IN JOINT ADOPTION WITH THE MISSOURI STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MISSOURI

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Vega". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Benjamin Vega  
MSA Senate Academic Affairs Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Benjamin Bolin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Ben Bolin  
MSA Senate Speaker

# Accompanying Document 1

A special thank you to Nicole Allen of SPARC for providing this document

## Fast Facts: College Textbook Costs & Open Educational Resources

Open educational resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that have been published online under an open license granting permission for everyone to freely and legally...

- Access, download and redistribute digital files.
- Produce hardcopies of the material.
- Tailor the material to fit local needs.
- Mix multiple OERs together to create new works.
- Keep and use copies of the material forever.

Colleges and universities are increasingly turning to open educational resources as a solution to the rapidly rising cost of college textbooks.

### **College textbook costs compromise student success.**

About 2 out of 3 undergraduate students said they had skipped buying a required textbook because the cost was too high. More than three quarters of those students did so even though they believed it could hurt them academically. (Source: Student PIRGs, 2014)

Less than half of college students now purchase a current version of their assigned textbook – opting for older editions or unauthorized copies – down from 62% in 2010. (Source: Book Industry Study Group, 2013)

A survey of Florida students found nearly 1 in 3 students have taken fewer courses and 1 in 7 had dropped a course because of the cost of textbooks, potentially delaying their progress toward completing a degree. (Source: Florida Virtual Campus, 2012)

### **Textbook publishing is broken and does not operate as a free market.**

The five largest textbook publishing companies controlled nearly 90% of the college textbook market as of 2008. Further, according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Herfindahl Index, the textbook publishing industry is considered a "highly concentrated" market where anti-competitive behavior is likely to occur. (Source: Koch, 2013)

The textbook market bears many similarities with the prescription drug market, where the decision-maker is less price-sensitive than the consumer, and the consumer is strongly motivated to purchase the product regardless of what it costs. This enables the publishing industry to increase prices rapidly and engage in anticompetitive practices. (Source: Koch, 2013)

Students are not consumers, they are captives.

**Because of this market failure, traditional publishers do not take full advantage of technology to reduce costs.**

A study of a 23-campus e-textbook pilot program found that less than one third of students believed that using e-textbooks significantly improved their learning or engagement in a course. (Source: EDUCAUSE, 2013)

Daytona Beach Community College found that e-textbooks resulted in virtually no cost savings and more than half of the students expressed dissatisfaction with using e-textbooks. (Source: Graydon, et al., 2011)

E-textbooks and digital supplements typically offer minimal savings over conventional print-based options. They also use digital rights-management (DRM) techniques to turn off access at the end of an academic term, giving publishers even more control over the market and pricing than they did in the first place. (Source: Student PIRGs, 2010)

**Open educational resources offer substantial cost savings**

In a study of an OER project in Washington State, students saved about 90% over the cost of traditional materials, and the cumulative savings of \$5.5 million have more than tripled the state's investment in the project and will only continue to grow. (Source: Student PIRGs, 2013)

The average savings of students who use OER in place of traditional materials is \$90.61 per course, according to one study. (Source: Hilton, et al., 2014)

Based on the estimate above, replacing one textbook with OER for each of the 17.7 million undergraduate students in the U.S. would save \$1.6 billion dollars per year.

**Open educational resources maintain or improve student learning outcomes, while creating a platform for cost savings and future innovation.**

At Mercy College, a minority-serving institution in New York state, replacing traditional textbooks with OER in mathematics courses resulted in statistically significant learning gains for students and a remarkable 20 percentage point increase in the student pass rate. Faculty cite access to the course materials starting day one of the course as a significant factor. (Source: Pawlyshyn, 2013)

In a case study at Houston Community College, students who used an open textbook instead of traditional textbook scored higher on departmental final exams, had higher GPAs in the class and higher retention rates. (Source: Hilton, 2012)

OpenStax College, a non-profit textbook publisher based out of Rice University, is publishing open textbooks for 20 of the highest enrollment college courses. Their open textbooks alone have been adopted by more than 1,000 courses, and have saved students an estimated \$30 million to date. (Source: OpenStax College, 2014)

In the K-12 arena, a rigorous controlled study of Utah secondary science education found that students who used open textbooks scored as well, if not better, than students who used traditional textbooks. (Source: Robinson, et al., 2014)

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