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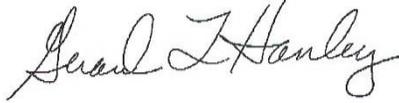OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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MEMORANDUM

To: CSU Presidents

From: Gerry Hanley
         Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Technology Services

> **Attention Provosts**: Actions required and recommendations to comply with state and federal regulations regarding textbook affordability.

RE: Update on existing and new state and federal regulations regarding textbook affordability
         with recommended actions

Date: April 14, 2017

This memo highlights three (3) state and federal regulations that campuses will need to respond to on a regular schedule.

First, the Higher Education Opportunities Act (HEOA) is a federal law requiring higher education institutions to communicate the price of course materials to students at the time of registration. There are a number of HEOA provisions that impact the CSU. **Complying with the HEOA requirements is a condition for the CSU receiving student financial aid from the Federal Government.**

As summer and fall 2017 textbook ordering begins, this bi-annual reminder to campuses about the HEOA-textbook information requirements provides recommendations for supporting your campus' successful implementation of the requirements. The Chancellor's Office organized relevant information and created an FAQ for your campus community to learn more about the HEOA http://als.csuprojects.org/heoa.

The section in the HEOA on textbooks requires campuses to provide students access to textbook and course materials information associated with the individual CSU classes scheduled for each semester/quarter. These requirements are "to ensure that students have access to affordable course materials by decreasing costs to students and enhancing transparency and disclosure with respect to the selection, purchase, sale, and use of course materials."

KEY TEXTBOOK INFORMATION REQUIREMENT in HEOA

"To the maximum extent practicable, each institution of higher education receiving Federal financial assistance shall—Disclose, on the institution's internet course schedule and in a manner of the institution's choosing, the ISBN (International Standard Book Number) and retail price information of required and recommended college textbooks and supplemental materials for each course listed in the institution's course schedule used for preregistration and registration purposes." (USCode, 2017)

Second, California Senate Bill 1359 requires CSU campuses "to clearly highlight, by means that may include a symbol or logo in a conspicuous place on the online campus course schedule, the courses that exclusively use digital course materials that are free of charge to students and may have a low-cost option for print versions." The deadline to implement this designation in your course schedules is January 2018. Guidelines for implementation will be provided to campuses with options and suggestions for satisfying this requirement in the upcoming months.

Third, California Assembly Bill 798 has provided 19 of our campuses about $860,000 to support faculty adopting open educational resources (OER) and low-cost course materials. These campuses will be able to compete for the remaining $1.3M allocation to support their textbook affordability program in the spring of 2018. This state funding is in addition to the Chancellor's Office funding for campuses' Affordable Learning Solutions initiatives.

Recommended Campus Actions To Comply with Regulations:

- **Communicate HEOA requirements to faculty and others** who support the adoption of course materials. Emphasize the importance of providing course material and textbook selections by the campus bookstore due date, enabling your campus to provide the textbook ISBN and price in the course schedule prior to class registrations that begin March and April 2017 in compliance with HEOA.
- **Showcase your Textbook Affordability Plans** with the funding from AB 798 and the Chancellor's Office: In addition to funding, the Chancellor's Office provides tools, templates, guidelines, webinars, and consulting support for your local textbook affordability plans. You can find your campus coordinator(s) and these resources and information at COOL4Ed.org.
- **Recommend Choosing Affordable Course Materials:** The textbook information requirements in the HEOA are driven by the goal of making higher education more affordable for students. Potential resources are available in MERLOT or at COOL4Ed.
- **Discover the new CA Open Online Library** COOL4Ed.org to view free and open etextbooks selected and reviewed by faculty in the CSU, UC, and CCC for 52 high enrollment courses. Case studies showcasing faculty using free and open etextbooks are located at COOL4Ed.org as well.
- **Explore the AffordableLearningSolutions.org website** to learn about the many ways to choose and provide more affordable, quality educational content. Use CSU MERLOT to discover more than **5,000 FREE and OPEN textbooks** and over 78,000 FREE course materials.

Work with your Campus Bookstore to provide lower cost course material alternatives.

- **NEW BOOKSTORE PROGRAM:** Consider adopting an IMMEDIATE ACCESS OPT OUT program on your campus. IMMEDIATE ACCESS programs provide students with digital access to their courses materials during the first two weeks of class at NO CHARGE. Students can then "opt out" of buying the course materials that are heavily discounted – even 70% or

more off the new print price. SDSU has adopted this model for multiple courses, SDSU faculty and students alike agree that having materials at a lower cost and available the first day of class has made a positive difference in the classroom.
- The CSU Rent Digital program provides over 60,000 e-textbook choices offering savings of 60% or more off the cost of new print textbooks.
- Bookstores can consider incentives for faculty and departments communicating their course materials to the campus bookstore in a timely manner.

Recommended Campus Communications: Connect Affordability and Student Success: Students are not buying all the course materials they need to succeed because they cannot afford them.
- A motivating message for early course materials could be to "Help provide students more affordable options by providing course materials requests to your campus bookstore by the campus due date."
- U.S. Department of Education survey conducting in Florida found that 48% of the students sampled stated that they took few course units per semester because of the high cost of textbooks.

Textbooks and Financial Aid: What's the Connection? Faculty may not know that their campus' ability to provide Federal financial aid to their students is dependent upon a wide range of requirements, including the availability of textbook information within the course schedule. Non-compliance could put at risk $1+ billion in Federal student assistance for our CSU students. Raising awareness of this requirement will help faculty understand why they are being asked to submit their book requests in a timely manner.

Accessibility of Instructional Materials: Students with disabilities benefit with sufficient time to locate alternative formatted materials. Having faculty get their book orders on time AND choosing no-cost and low-cost quality courses materials can provide significant support for the academic success of students with disabilities.

We hope you find this information helpful for your planning and implementation of textbook affordability programs and complying with state and federal regulations. If you have questions, please contact me at ghanley@calstate.edu.

c:
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