



Mary Croughan
Telephone: (510) 987-9303
Fax: (510) 763-0309
Email: mary.croughan@ucop.edu

Chair of the Assembly and the Academic Council
Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

August 31, 2009

AN OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY

Dear UC Faculty:

The University of California has come under pressure by students, parents, and the legislature to reduce the costs of textbooks for our students. Our campus bookstores have worked hard to reduce prices and the University has worked with publishers to reduce the cost of textbooks. **As UC faculty, now it's our turn to cut the cost of textbooks for our students.**

Following is a list of some simple practices that you can do to make textbooks more affordable for your students. One of the major ways to do this is to create a used book market by only using a new edition of a book or only switching books when absolutely necessary. Other practical tips are also offered:

What You Can Do on Your Own

- Use books already in the public domain, wherever possible
- Create and make use of low cost readers, using non-copyright materials
- Publish articles in open source journals that can then be assigned as course readings at no cost to students

Working With Your Bookstore

- Use books already in the public domain, wherever possible
- Publish articles in open source journals that can then be assigned as course readings at no cost to students
- You can be particularly helpful by ensuring timely requests to the bookstore for adoption of textbooks that are both affordable and of satisfactory quality. The sooner the bookstore receives textbook requests, the better their chances of obtaining favorable prices from publishers.
- If an older book is acceptable, letting the bookstore know as soon as possible will facilitate timely purchase of such texts especially when only limited quantities may be available

Working With Your Library

- You can place multiple copies of texts on reserve in the library. This includes placing your own complimentary copies of textbooks on library reserve so they are accessible to students free of charge.
- Try to identify open resources textbooks (OER) or other published material that is freely available in digital form. This will require students to buy fewer textbooks.
- You can post information regarding textbooks electronically available for rent, but which are only available for limited use (i.e., six months).

- Please let your students know the value if any, of bundled items that add to the cost of textbooks and that may be marketed as enhancements when the basic textbook content is not significantly changed.

Working With Your Department

- Be involved in discussions of curriculum design, thereby facilitating re-use of certain textbooks commonly used in the same or similar courses taught by different professors.

For further information, including comments on best practices, please see a detailed article on this issue in The Senate Source <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/news/source/textbookbestpractices.pdf>

Sincerely,



Mary Croughan
Chair, Academic Senate



Henry Powell
Vice Chair, Academic Senate