

## Academic Senate Overview Of the Issues Around Materials Fees

In the wake of two years of problematic audit findings on the college's use of materials fees, the district and college administration have decided to terminate materials fees for most divisions.

While the Senate acknowledges that uses of materials fees that do not comply with defined Title 5 Education Code Section 76365 guidelines should not continue, we also must recognize that some instructional divisions, forced to rely solely on division "B" budget allocations that have been reduced on average 50% over the past five to eight years, do not have sufficient "B" budget funds to cover necessary course materials, including printing of tests and exams. For these instructional divisions, the loss of materials fees revenue means that they cannot cover these expenses.

Senate has heard from faculty chairs from twelve departments from Business/Computer Information Systems (BUS/CIS), Language Arts Division (LAD), Physical Sciences, Math & Engineering (PSME), Creative Arts (CA), and Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) divisions. Faculty have concerns about their ability to:

- Accurately assess student learning outcomes if they cannot make paper copies of tests and quizzes for administering in-class assessments where students need to write in order to problem-solve and to demonstrate understanding of concepts, processes, and/or critical thinking abilities.
- Accurately assess student learning outcomes (SLOs) if they cannot administer effective in-class assessments and therefore cannot verify the identity of the person taking the assessment or cannot control what resources the student has access to when taking an out-of-class assessment.
- Meet the pedagogical needs of students who have difficulties with taking tests in class, and/or reading and engaging with materials when such materials are only viewable on screen projections.
- Maintain adequate pedagogical responsiveness and/or meet federal guidelines of accessibility for students with disabilities if faculty wish to share or incorporate course materials that faculty: a) could not anticipate the necessity for prior to meeting his/her students and therefore could not put into a reader ahead of time; b) does not have material available in an electronic format to upload or send to students; c) was given a course assignment with such short notice that it was not possible to have a course reader available through the bookstore by the first week of class
- Meet the pedagogical needs of financially struggling and academically underprepared students who may not have adequate access to course materials posted online, and/or do not have adequate access to a printer. In our own college's student success data, the equity gaps for Latino, African American, Latino, Filipino, and Pacific Islander students persist and have even widened in the past year. A Pew study showing a persistent digital divide for African American and Latino students nationwide is also a source of concern:

<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Digital-differences/Overview.aspx>

<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Digital-differences/Main-Report/Internet-adoption-over-time.aspx>

- Maintain class enrollments if students feel burdened by extra responsibilities and costs to secure course materials that they may seek other colleges/alternatives to take the course

The Senate is not opposed to the alternatives that have been proposed for printing course materials, and joins efforts to encourage faculty to learn more about and use technology-enhanced means of delivering course content, such as Open Educational Resources. The Senate is co-sponsoring an OER faculty workshop on May 31, and President Karen Chow is co-facilitating that workshop with ICCE Director Cynthia Kaufman. It is also jointly organized with students from the Student Advocacy Group and Distance Learning staff.

However, recommending that faculty utilize alternatives such as Course Studio, Catalyst, and course readers sold through the Bookstore is not in itself an adequate solution to these problems, particularly the printing of tests and exams. It is not feasible to include tests and exams in readers, or provide them in electronic formats for in-class assessments, since the campus is not equipped with adequate numbers of computer classrooms for instruction

Thus, the Senate is compelled to act in the following ways:

- 1) Urge administrators to find, even in these extraordinarily difficult budget times, funds to enable instructional divisions to provide absolutely necessary course materials, including printed tests and exams, that cannot be charged to students.
- 2) Urge administrators to work with instructional areas to maintain materials fees for courses that have course materials which CAN be provided through materials fees
- 3) Urge ETS to expedite wi-fi access in ALL instructional classrooms (ideally, campuswide)
- 4) Encourage and assist where possible efforts to: increase the number of printing options for students; provide more affordable portable computers and tablets for sale in the Bookstore; purchase “class sets” of tablets that can be checked out to students for use in classes.
- 5) Request Campus Budget Committee to regularly review campuswide B Budget allocations and make recommendations to meet current needs
- 6) Senate will conduct a review or survey of faculty during 2013-14 academic year to assess the extent to which faculty are able to use alternatives to making class photocopies and what impacts switching to these alternatives have on overall student learning and success

## **Senate Resolution Urgently Requesting Adequate Funding of Necessary Course Materials, Including Printing of Tests and Exams**

Whereas, state audits of the college's use of materials fees is leading to college senior administration's decision to terminate materials fees for most divisions and departments by Fall 2013;

Whereas, an immediate impact of this termination is that some divisions, forced to rely solely on division "B" budget allocations that have been reduced on average 50% over the past five to eight years, will not have sufficient funds to cover costs of necessary materials for courses that cannot be charged to students, including printed tests and exams materials needed for lecture and teaching demonstrations;

Whereas, it is not equitable for instructional divisions at one college in the district to have adequate B Budget to cover printing of tests, exams, and other necessary course materials while the counterpart instructional divisions at the other college do not have adequate B Budget to cover such materials;

Resolved, the Academic Senate urgently requests President Murphy, on behalf of the faculty, administration, and students of the college, to secure funds from the District for adequate B Budget to instructional divisions to cover necessary materials, including printing costs of tests and exams, which cannot be charged to students for courses for 2013-2014.

Resolved, the Academic Senate requests that the administration ensure that funds secured for these purposes be earmarked exclusively for these purposes.

Resolved, the Academic Senate urgently requests our district and college administration to work with instructional areas to maintain materials fees and meet state accounting requirements for courses that have course materials which CAN be provided through materials fees.

## **Senate Resolution On Survey of Faculty's Use of Alternatives to Printing and Paper Assessments**

Whereas, the Academic Senate has heard concerns from faculty about their ability to meet student learning style needs, maintain student engagement in course material, measure students' learning outcomes, and close equity gaps for needy/underserved students in the wake of termination of materials fees;

Resolved, the Academic Senate will conduct a review or survey of faculty during 2013-14 to assess the extent to which faculty are able to use alternatives to printing course materials and what impacts switching to these alternatives have on overall student learning and success.

Resolved, the Academic Senate will work to assist faculty to transition to alternate methods of delivery where appropriate by promoting workshops or other help.

