

Student Senate XXXIV Resolution 02 – Unnecessary Costs Pertaining to Required Course Materials

Introduced by: *Student Body President*, Bryan Merrill

Date: 6/30/13

Whereas, the University of New Hampshire (hereafter, UNH) is an educational institution established to provide a quality, affordable college education to students, and

Whereas, UNH currently utilizes a “need-blind” admission strategy to ensure that students that are admitted to the University are chosen on the basis of their academic and personal merits rather than their financial situation, and

Whereas, as a result of this strategy, UNH is comprised of a student population whose financial situations are diverse, including many who are economically disadvantaged to the extent that each additional expense is a significant barrier to their attainment of a post-secondary education, and

Whereas, there are members within this cross-section of the student body who are adversely affected by even slight fluctuations in the economy and requisite educational costs, and

Whereas, exacerbating this fact is UNH’s unique financial position, in which our in-state tuition is the 4th highest in the nation,ⁱ our per capita state appropriations are last in the nation,¹ and our graduates graduate with the highest mean student debt in the nation (\$32,440),ⁱⁱ and

Whereas, the culmination of said factors means that that at every opportunity that does not adversely affect the quality of education provided, care should be taken to help control the costs that students incur unnecessarily preclude economically disadvantaged students from reaching their full academic potential, and

Whereas textbooks are increasingly seen as a challenge to affordability, as they constitute a considerable expense (the national average for textbook spending in 2012 was \$655),ⁱⁱⁱ and

Whereas, the use of these textbooks is often very limited, with only a small percentage of the textbook’s material actually assigned; limiting the actual academic value and usefulness (in the context of the class) of the textbook to the extent that naming it “required” would be counterintuitive, and

Whereas, in addition, there are often supplemental materials for classes that can only be purchased using a credit/debit card, an item which some students—economically disadvantaged and otherwise—do not have, and

Whereas, the use of “clickers”, computers, and other supplements are often required in classes which, although easily accessed through various student resources at UNH, are often not effectively communicated to student, and

¹ See Supplements: State Appropriations for Higher Education for Fiscal Year 2013

Whereas, as employees of an educational institution, UNH faculty have an obligation to ensure that they are not impeding students' ability to reach their full academic potential because of said students' financial situation or access to financial vehicles often taken for granted, therefore

Be it resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire to request that UNH faculty continue taking into consideration the price and usefulness of their required textbooks when selecting them, and

Be it further resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire to request that should the UNH faculty assign textbooks as required reading, that they ensure to have a reasonable number of said textbooks on hold in the library relative to course enrollment , and

Be it further resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire to request that UNH faculty who are not already doing so should include or clarify language in their syllabi to ensure students are aware of all the free resources that can be capitalized on (i.e., computer clusters, software available during their time at UNH through the Universities subscriptions, etc.), and also to ensure that other supplements that are not readily available— such as clickers— are made available to loan to needy students, and

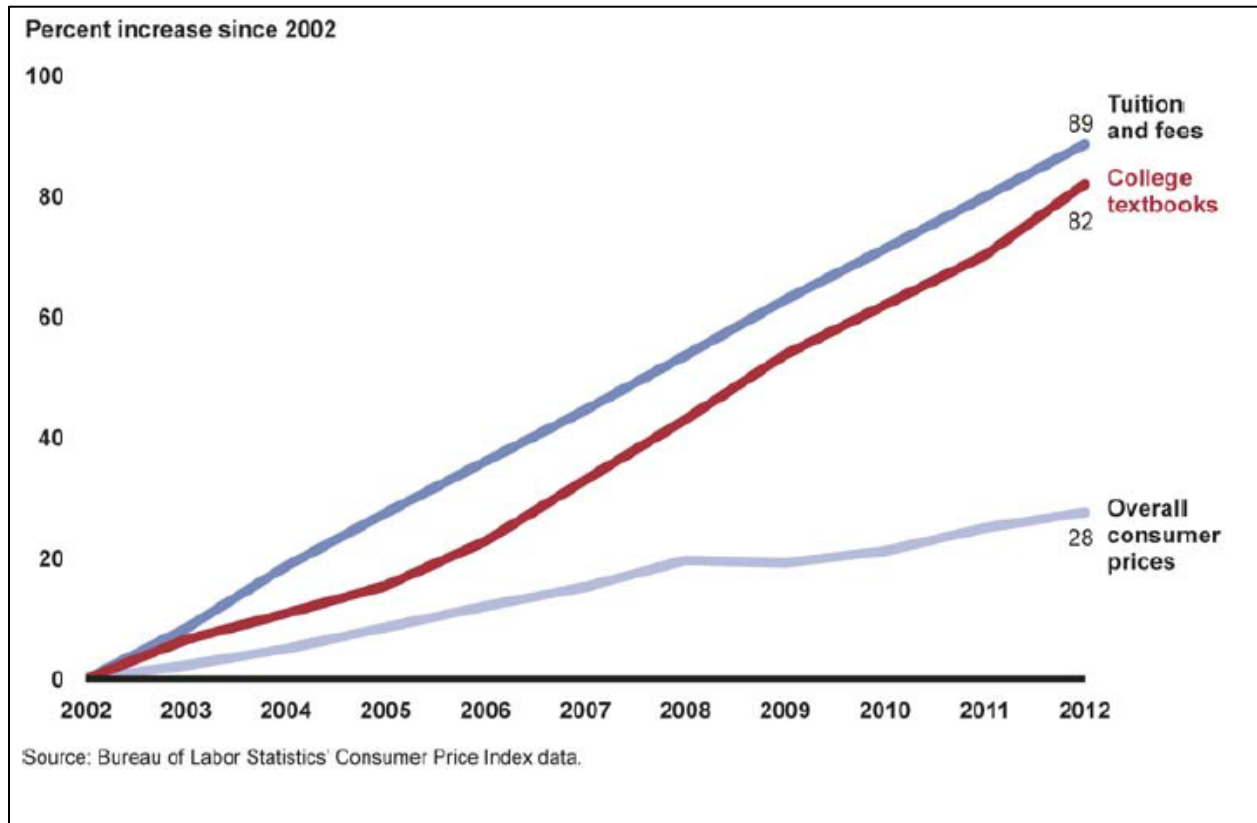
Be it further resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire to request that all UNH Faculty include language in their syllabi to ensure there are means for a student who is unable to afford textbooks or access a credit/debit card to discuss their situation privately with the professor so that they may make accommodations to the best of their ability, and

Be it further resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire to request that the UNH faculty encourage students (via their syllabi) who feel uncomfortable with discussing their financial situation with their professors to discuss their issues with a third-party individual, preferably a member of the Financial Aid Office or the office of Student & Academic Services.

Senate Action: passes unanimously

Speaker Verification:

Supplements:



Information to consider regarding the historical and current trends regarding textbook affordability:

- The above graph demonstrates a 6% annualized increase for textbooks and a 7% annualized increase in tuition over a ten year period, compared with a 2% increase in Consumer Price Index (CPI) over that same period.
- Old books typically sell at 75% of the new price, according to the US Government accountability office, so buying books used— although helpful— does not solve the problem in its entirety.
- “The cost of textbooks as well as supplies as a percentage of tuition and fees varies for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students by the type of institution attended—72 percent at 2-year public institutions, 26 percent at 4-year public institutions, and 8 percent for 4-year private institutions.” –US Government Accountability Office

State Support for Higher Education (arranged by per capita column, descending) in Fiscal Year 2013, by State, Per \$1,000 in Personal Income^a and Per Capita^b

STATES	State Monies Only ^c (\$)		
	FY13 Total	per \$1,000 in Personal Income	per Capita
New Hampshire	\$ 85,622,352.00	1.38	64.83
Colorado	\$ 640,628,978.00	2.74	123.49
Arizona	\$ 840,320,500.00	3.57	128.23
Pennsylvania	\$ 1,792,655,000.00	3.24	140.45
Vermont	\$ 87,996,319.00	3.26	140.57
Oregon	\$ 582,208,397.00	3.86	149.31
Missouri	\$ 931,239,665.00	3.99	154.64
Rhode Island	\$ 164,147,170.00	3.49	156.29
Massachusetts	\$ 1,049,106,956.00	2.91	157.85
Michigan	\$ 1,596,324,500.00	4.33	161.52
Nevada	\$ 472,368,017.00	4.60	171.21
Florida	\$ 3,341,628,971.00	4.32	172.98
Ohio	\$ 2,039,964,448.00	4.50	176.71
Maine	\$ 264,064,554.00	5.03	198.67
Washington	\$ 1,372,858,000.00	4.40	199.05
South Carolina	\$ 942,770,165.00	5.86	199.58
Montana	\$ 202,187,817.00	5.40	201.15
Wisconsin	\$ 1,182,780,084.00	5.09	206.55
Virginia	\$ 1,703,083,307.00	4.45	208.05
New Jersey	\$ 1,888,439,000.00	3.99	213.03
Tennessee	\$ 1,455,168,883.00	6.00	225.39
Idaho	\$ 360,070,800.00	6.73	225.65
South Dakota	\$ 190,251,431.00	5.12	228.30
California	\$ 8,843,276,000.00	5.21	232.46
Delaware	\$ 216,492,700.00	5.60	236.06
Indiana	\$ 1,555,282,625.00	6.44	237.91
Minnesota	\$ 1,285,247,000.00	5.22	238.93
Texas	\$ 6,425,707,479.00	6.01	246.58
New York	\$ 4,989,658,488.00	4.93	254.96
Louisiana	\$ 1,175,660,258.00	6.48	255.47
Iowa	\$ 787,419,692.00	6.06	256.14
Oklahoma	\$ 981,069,415.00	6.64	257.17
Utah	\$ 748,759,000.00	7.62	262.24
Kansas	\$ 759,215,686.00	6.37	263.08
Connecticut	\$ 957,256,412.00	4.54	266.62
Kentucky	\$ 1,178,977,000.00	7.68	269.15
Maryland	\$ 1,612,475,870.00	5.31	274.02
Illinois	\$ 3,566,692,200.00	6.18	277.02
Georgia	\$ 2,757,055,556.00	7.59	277.93
Alabama	\$ 1,405,063,916.00	8.19	291.38
West Virginia	\$ 545,760,686.00	8.51	294.15
Arkansas	\$ 906,500,781.00	8.88	307.38
Mississippi	\$ 924,952,654.00	9.41	309.87
Nebraska	\$ 659,571,367.00	8.20	355.46
Hawaii	\$ 513,516,613.00	8.39	368.82
New Mexico	\$ 799,405,505.00	10.93	383.31
North Carolina	\$ 4,092,304,288.00	11.44	419.63
North Dakota	\$ 343,805,783.00	9.87	491.41
Alaska	\$ 365,195,297.00	10.77	499.28
Wyoming	\$ 384,199,290.00	13.68	666.54

^aBased on personal income data for the 3rd quarter of 2012, retrieved from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, http://www.bea.gov/itable/index_regional.cfm. ^bBased on July 2012 population estimates retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/state/totals/2012/index.html>. ^cIncludes both tax and nontax monies.

ⁱ Public 4-Year Colleges With The Highest Tuition: Dept Of Education 2012 List". Huffingtonpost.com.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/12/most-expensive-public-colleges_n_1591976.html?utm_hp_ref=education&ir=Education#s=1088822

NOTE: 2012 Data is used for the tuition ranking because it is the most recent data available

ⁱⁱ "Project on Student Loan Debt" [Debt data as reported by campuses to Peterson's Undergraduate Financial Aid and Undergraduate Databases.] http://projectonstudentdebt.org/state_by_state-view2012.php?area=NH

ⁱⁱⁱ National Association of College Stores Press Release, 2012

Additional Sources:

"Report to Congressional Committees: College Textbooks" United States Government Accountability Office. June 6th, 2013. [GAO-13-368](#)

"College Textbooks: Enhanced Offerings Appear to Drive Recent Price Increases" United States Government Accountability Office. July 29th, 2005. [GAO-05-806](#)