

Passed 35-0-0  
11/26/2007  
51-R-19

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE  
STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION

IN SUPPORT OF REASONABLY PRICED TEXTBOOKS

1           WHEREAS, high textbook prices decrease the accessibility of  
2 higher education: In 21<sup>st</sup> Century America, a college education is  
3 critical for individual success and for the strength of our  
4 nation; and

5           WHEREAS, The Government Accountability Office and The  
6 Student PIRGs have found that textbooks cost students  
7 approximately \$900 per year, on average, which is nearly one-  
8 fifth of tuition at a state university and nearly half of  
9 tuition at a community college; and

10           WHEREAS, with tuition already at all-time highs, the added  
11 cost of textbooks can be a "tipping point" expense for middle  
12 and low-income students; and

13           WHEREAS, commercial textbook publishers engage in tactics  
14 to drive up prices: Textbook prices have increased four times  
15 the rate of inflation over the past decade, due in part to  
16 business practices that artificially inflate the price of  
17 textbooks, mainly:

- 18           • "Bundling" supplementary materials with textbooks that  
19           do not add significant educational value;
- 20           • Undermining availability of cheaper used books through  
21           excessive new editions and single-use editions;
- 22           • Withholding pricing information from faculty so they  
23           cannot easily determine the lowest cost materials; and

24           WHEREAS, states such as Connecticut and Washington have  
25 enacted statewide measures to control some of the most common  
26 practices that result in increased costs; and

27           WHEREAS, these measures help control the costs of textbooks  
28 by increasing the power that textbook purchasers have without  
29 limiting the academic freedom of faculty or the free speech  
30 rights of publishers;

31           BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the UW-Eau Claire Student  
32 Senate supports state legislation that:

- 33           • Increases choice in textbook selection by requiring  
34           that unbundled options be made available to both  
35           faculty and students;
- 36           • Increases information provided to faculty by requiring  
37           that they be informed about significant changes in  
38           content in new additions of textbooks;
- 39           • Increases information provided to faculty by requiring  
40           full price disclosure on the part of the publisher  
41           before a textbook selection is made; and

42  
43           BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that upon passage President Raymond  
44 French transmit copies of this resolution to Dr. Kimberly  
45 Barrett, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Development &  
46 Diversity; Dr. Marty Wood, Chair, University Senate; Daniella  
47 Lopez, Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group; and Jesse  
48 Dixon, Acting Associate Dean of Student Development, Student  
49 Development & Diversity.

Submitted by:  
Raymond French, Student Body President  
Meghan Charlier, Student Body Vice President  
November 26, 2007