



Resolution Number:	W-14-03	Sponsored By:	Senator Adam Hukkala and V.P. Scott St. Louis
Introduced On:	2/27/14		
Voted On:	3/14/14		
Result:	Passed		
Vote Count:	Unanimous Support		

A RESOLUTION TO: Strongly encourage Grand Valley State University faculty to review Open Textbooks and consider them for their courses, and to encourage University Libraries to expand its collection of Open Education Materials on the GVSU ScholarWorks database.

- Recognizing,** College students in the United States spend an average of \$1,168 per year on textbooks and course materials,¹
- Recognizing,** That in a 2011 survey of 1,905 undergraduates on 13 campuses in the United States, including both large public universities and community colleges, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group found that 70% of students polled have decided not to buy a textbook due to its cost;²
- Recognizing,** That in the same survey, “78% of those students who reported not buying a textbook said they expected to perform worse in that class, even though some borrowed or shared the textbook”;³
- Recognizing,** That “separate analyses from the U.S. Public Interest Research Group have found that textbook costs are typically comparable to 26 percent of tuition at state universities and 72 percent of tuition at community colleges”;⁴
- Recognizing,** That in the 2011 GVSU Climate Study, 57% of students surveyed said they experienced financial hardship at Grand Valley;⁵
- Recognizing,** Of the aforementioned 57% of students who have experienced financial hardship at Grand Valley, 69% have had difficulty affording books;⁶
- Recognizing,** That while many major universities hold digital collections of Open Textbooks, the largest database in the world of this sort is hosted by the University of Minnesota, which includes texts from a variety of disciplines⁷ that can be accessed for free in a PDF format or printed at a price of just \$20 to \$40;⁸
- Recognizing,** That the Open Education Materials collection hosted on GVSU’s ScholarWorks database currently includes only eight texts;
- Whereas,** While both databases provide professors with readily accessible textbooks that can be reviewed for their potential usefulness in courses offered at GVSU, the former is currently much larger than the latter;



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Recognizing, That over 3000 professors in the United States have used Open Textbooks in at least one of their courses, leading to over \$50 million in student savings in the past year;⁹

Recognizing, That if 10% of the current market share for textbooks from all disciplines were converted to Open Textbooks, over \$500 million could be saved by students in a single academic year;¹⁰

Whereas, The aforementioned evidence indicates that student dollars could be saved – and the accessibility of academic resources enhanced – if more professors would consider adopting Open Textbooks for those courses in which they could be effectively used;

Let it be resolved: The Student Senate hereby encourages the faculty of Grand Valley State University to review – and consider adopting for their own courses – the materials housed in the aforementioned Open Education databases, and also encourages Grand Valley State University Libraries to expand the Open Education Materials collection featured on the ScholarWorks database.

¹ Nicole Allen, “Make Textbooks Affordable: Faculty Outreach Toolkit,” document prepared on behalf of Student Public Interest Research Groups, www.studentpirgs.org.

² Molly Redden, “7 in 10 Students Have Skipped Buying a Textbook Because of Its Cost, Survey Finds,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, accessed February 25, 2014, www.chronicle.com/article/7-in-10-Students-Have-Skipped/128785.

³ Redden, “Textbook,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

⁴ Redden, “Textbook,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

⁵ Rankin & Associates Consulting, *Grand Valley Climate Assessment Project: Final Report* (2011), vi.

⁶ Rankin & Associates, *Climate Assessment Project*, vi.

⁷ <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>. Currently, the subjects are listed as “Accounting & Finance,” “Business, Management & Marketing,” “Computer Science & Information Systems,” “Economics,” “General Education,” “Humanities & Language,” “Law,” “Mathematics and Statistics,” “Natural & Physical Sciences,” and “Social Sciences.”

⁸ “The State of Open Educational Resources,” presentation by Nicole Allen (Open Educational Resources Program Director for the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) at the General Assembly of the Right to Research Coalition, Budapest, Hungary, August 3, 2013.

⁹ “The State of Open Educational Resources.”

¹⁰ “The State of Open Educational Resources.”