RESOLUTION ON “POLY ACCESS” TEXTBOOK PROGRAM

Impact on Existing Policy: None.

WHEREAS, Follett’s Immediate Access (“Poly Access”) program was adopted without consultation with the Academic Senate, nor significant consultation with faculty nor students; and

WHEREAS, The “Poly Access” program profoundly shifts the nature of the relationship between student and bookstore; and

WHEREAS, Many students will be able to purchase books at lower cost because of the volume purchasing which Poly Access enables; and

WHEREAS, The Poly Access program raises serious concerns about increasing out-of-pocket costs for students by hundreds of dollars per quarter by automatically debiting their accounts for the cost of textbooks without sufficient notice and opportunity to opt-out; and

WHEREAS, Automatically opting students into such a system obviates their consent and threatens to undermine their autonomy by requiring them to opt-out of each textbook separately, each quarter; and

WHEREAS, Many Cal Poly students are of lower income or experience food insecurity, exacerbating these burdens; and

WHEREAS, These costs accrue to students’ state accounts, which can result in registration holds or failure to graduate; and

WHEREAS, Students are well-equipped to make informed decisions when shopping for textbooks to reduce their out-of-pocket costs; and

WHEREAS, An opt-in system, whereby students must take the deliberate action of choosing to receive their textbooks through the Poly Access program, would avoid the most serious concerns with the current system; and
RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate urges the Cal Poly Bookstore to change its "Poly Access" program to an opt-in program rather than an opt-out program, without requiring students to pay for textbooks by default, and be it further

RESOLVED: That Cal Poly engage in more mindful and diligent consultation with faculty and student representatives when the Cal Poly bookstore implements changes to its interaction between itself and students or faculty, and be it further

RESOLVED: That Cal Poly be mindful of the ethically salient impacts of decisions that have the potential to negatively impact student finances without students’ knowledge or sufficient notice.

Proposed by: Ryan Jenkins (Associate Professor, PHIL)
Date: October 25, 2020
MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez

From: Jeffery D. Armstrong

Date: May 13, 2021

Copies: Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore
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Subject: Response to AS-912-21 Resolution on Poly Access Textbook Program

By way of this memo, I acknowledge the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.

Please extend my thanks to the members of the Academic Senate for their attention to this important matter.