

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fort Wayne Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Cigdem Z. Gurgur, Chair  
Educational Policy Committee

DATE: December 10, 2014

SUBJ: EPC Findings and Recommendations on *includedED* Digital Textbook/Course Material Project at IPFW

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In October 2014, Executive Committee asked EPC to investigate the rationale for the *includedED* Digital Textbook program including the cost-advantages and the link to student success.

EPC investigated this matter by taking input from Samantha Birk, Associate Director for Instructional Technologies at CELT; George McClellan, Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; as well as Carol Sternberger, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Faculty Affairs and Director of Graduate Studies. The investigation yielded the following results.

The *includedED* program is adopted due to:

- Increasing numbers of students decide not to purchase texts or decide to purchase texts after the first week of class. *IncludedED* insures that students have the opportunity to access their materials on the first day of classes.
- Some students respond to high textbook costs by delaying semester of enrollment or not taking certain courses. The campus bookstore is able to negotiate deep discounts for *includedED* e textbook materials, thereby reducing this stress.
- There is a general publishing and reading trend from printed to electronic media.

- E textbook format allows for delivery of enhanced Adaptive learning/interactive/multi-media materials that improve the learning experience for students.

Beyond the usual problems initiating the program, some issues with the *includedED* program are a little more persistent:

- There is a federal regulation that prohibits us from requiring students to purchase course materials from a single source, unless that is the only outlet for those particular materials.
- Students complain that professors who adopt these e textbooks do not use the Adaptive learning/interactive/multi-media components, which makes it essentially the same as a print textbook which invalidates the rationale for requiring a fee for purchasing all of the texts from a single source.
- Students are accustomed to acquiring cheaper texts from sources other than the campus bookstore.
- Some professors have barred students from picking up the print version (included in the fee or available for an additional fee of ~\$25), while others have neglected to inform students that the book is available. This practice does not facilitate the learning needs of students.
- Students are concerned about the fact that e textbook licenses are limited, and that making them available through blackboard (which makes the task of accessing multiple publisher's materials more uniform for the student) has the effect of shortening this access period even further. This presents difficulties to students who wish to keep the book as a reference for subsequent courses or after graduation.

With the above findings, EPC makes the following recommendations:

- The *IncludED* program has been an opt-in program—it should remain optional for the instructor or department.

- Whether the cost of a printed version of the text is rolled into the *includED* fee or the printed version is available at a nominal fee, the option of acquiring a printed version should be made available to students whenever possible, and students should be informed that this option exists.
- If an instructor or department opts to participate in the included program, they should be particularly sensitive to expectation that the book, including the enhanced Adaptive learning/interactive/multi-media materials will be used in the course. If not used for graded assignments, quizzes, or exams, at least the students should be strongly reminded that it is available for their own use as aids to learning.