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To: Chairs of the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS)

From: Gerry Hanley, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Technology Services

 Principal Investigation, Hewlett/Gates grants

California State University-MERLOT

RE: Update on Textbook Affordability Programs

Date: December 8, 2016

The goal of this memo is provide ICAS with an update on a number of activities related to textbook affordability and related California legislation activities. Consultation with ICAS concerning these activities continues to be an important priority for the CSU’s leadership and collaboration with the CCC and UC.

1. AB 798: All Campus Proposals for Textbook Affordability Programs Fully Funded

Forty-five (45) proposals were submitted by the June 30, 2016 deadline for funding to support campus textbook affordability programs. Twenty-six (26) proposals were submitted by the CCC and nineteen (19) proposals were submitted by the CSU. All proposal requests were fully funded, in accordance with AB 798. The CCC campuses were award a total of $847,110 and the CSU campuses were awarded $847,955. The CSU is managing the distribution of funds with each campus completing an MOU with the CSU Office of the Chancellor for their project. The CSU Chancellors Office and the CCC Chancellor’s Office will continue to be in communication about this program.

1. California OER Council Ending December 31, 2016

The grant funding awarded to the CSU from the Hewlett and Gates Foundation to support the activities of the CA OER Council has been expended over 3 years (which included a no-cost extension) and the CA OER Council members were paid for their evaluation of the AB 798 proposals ($3,000 each). As detailed in my March 2016 memo, the CA OER Council has successfully completed the grant-funded activities of SB 1052 and the round 1 activities of AB 798. As acknowledged by ICAS in July 2016, the CA OER Council will be terminated December 31, 2016.

1. CA OER Council’s Work Posted to the COOL4Ed Website

The CA OER Council produced a number of resources and reports concerning OER that can continue to provide value to CA’s higher education communities. The CSU-COOL4Ed team has posted these resources and reports on the COOL4Ed website for additional and easy access on the home page <http://www.cool4ed.org/oer_resources.html>. COOL4Ed will update this information as needed. Of course, ICAS is welcome to maintain the CA OER Council’s webpages on your website but if ICAS wishes to remove the webpages about the CA OER Council from the ICAS website, you can do this with the assurance that these resources will be sustained by the COOL4Ed project.

1. AB 798: Textbook Affordability Campus Coordinators as Advisory Group

# The RFP for the California College Textbook Affordability Act of 2015 (AB 798) required that each campus have a designated Textbook Affordability Campus Coordinator (TACC) responsible for: 1) the proper allocation of funds awarded, 2) supporting campus implementation of their campus’ academic senate approved plan for textbook affordability, and 3) reporting on their program’s implementation and outcomes. The TACC’s are in excellent positions to advise the COOL4Ed project on the services that would best support their local programs. COOL4Ed has established a monthly webinar as part of professional learning community services and a listserv for the TACC’s to ask questions, share strategies (successes and failures), and identify needs that COOL4Ed could help address. We had our first webinar in November and had 37 participants. The webinars are recorded and will be posted on a public website – COOL Voices. We are anticipating that a “steering committee will emerge from the 45 campus coordinators that will help guide the activities of the TACC community.

# Open Online Community Website for COOL4Ed – COOL Voices

# The CSU is leveraging its MERLOT services to create an open online community website where faculty and staff from any CCC, CSU, and UC campus can have free and open access to information and participate in the online community services. The website, <http://voices.merlot.org/group/cool-voices> , provides discussion forums, email list to all members of the community, easy ways to post/share documents, ability to create webpages, and more. The COOL Voices website can help grow the community of faculty and staff interested in textbook affordability beyond those campuses that received Round 1 funding from AB 798.

# Additional Hewlett Funding for COOL4Ed library

# Beginning February or March 2017, the CSU will initiate “Phase 2” of a new three-year grant from the Hewlett Foundation to support the growth of the COOL4Ed library and scale the CSU-MERLOT services to additional institutions. AB 798 requires any OER used by campuses and faculty to transform their courses but not currently in the COOL4Ed library to be cataloged in COOL4Ed. We expect that the number of courses using OER will increase beyond the current 52 in COOL4Ed and the grant funding will be used on identify the courses, catalog the materials, and build teaching and course eportfolios to enable faculty to easily find, adapt, and adopt OER that their colleagues are choosing to use in their own courses. The funding will also be used to support periodic meetings of the TACC community and an annual conference for the CCC, CSU, and UC to share the exemplary practices for textbook affordability. The Hewlett Foundation is providing $500,000 over 3 years and the state of California will provide matching funds. There is no funding for the CA OER Council in Phase 2.

1. Summer 2018: Round 2 of AB 798 Funding

Only $1.7M of the $3M allocated for AB 798 was awarded in the first round of proposals. AB 798 includes provisions for those campuses that achieve (or exceed) their targets in Round 1 of the program, can apply for additional funds in Round 2 (June 2018). There would be approximately $1.3M available for Round 2 AB 798 awards. ICAS can choose to renew the CA OER Council for this short-term assignment of evaluating Round 2 proposals in July/August 2018. ICAS can also choose to establish an alternative group (this option is provided in the SB 1052/1053 legislation) to make the funding awards.

I hope this executive summary provides a useful update concerning textbook affordability activities for ICAS. The CSU COOL4Ed team would request the opportunity to provide an annual report to ICAS on the program’s progress and issues, and provide ICAS an opportunity to provide advice and recommendations to the CSU COOL4Ed team.

Thank you for your past and on-going collaboration on supporting faculty innovations with OER that in turn support student success.