

# STUDENTS AND OER

FALL 2015

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Ethan Senack  
Higher Education Advocate



@HigherEdPIRG

**The Student PIRGs**  
Make Change Happen.

# What is PIRG?

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- Nationwide student and consumer advocacy organization
- Employ organizers to work full-time on college campuses to train and develop students
- Tackle major social issues (in this case, higher education affordability)



# About me



- UConn graduate
- 4 years as a student organizer
- 3 years in DC working on higher ed policy






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# Background

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- Average student debt 
- Number of students with debt 
- Number of students defaulting 





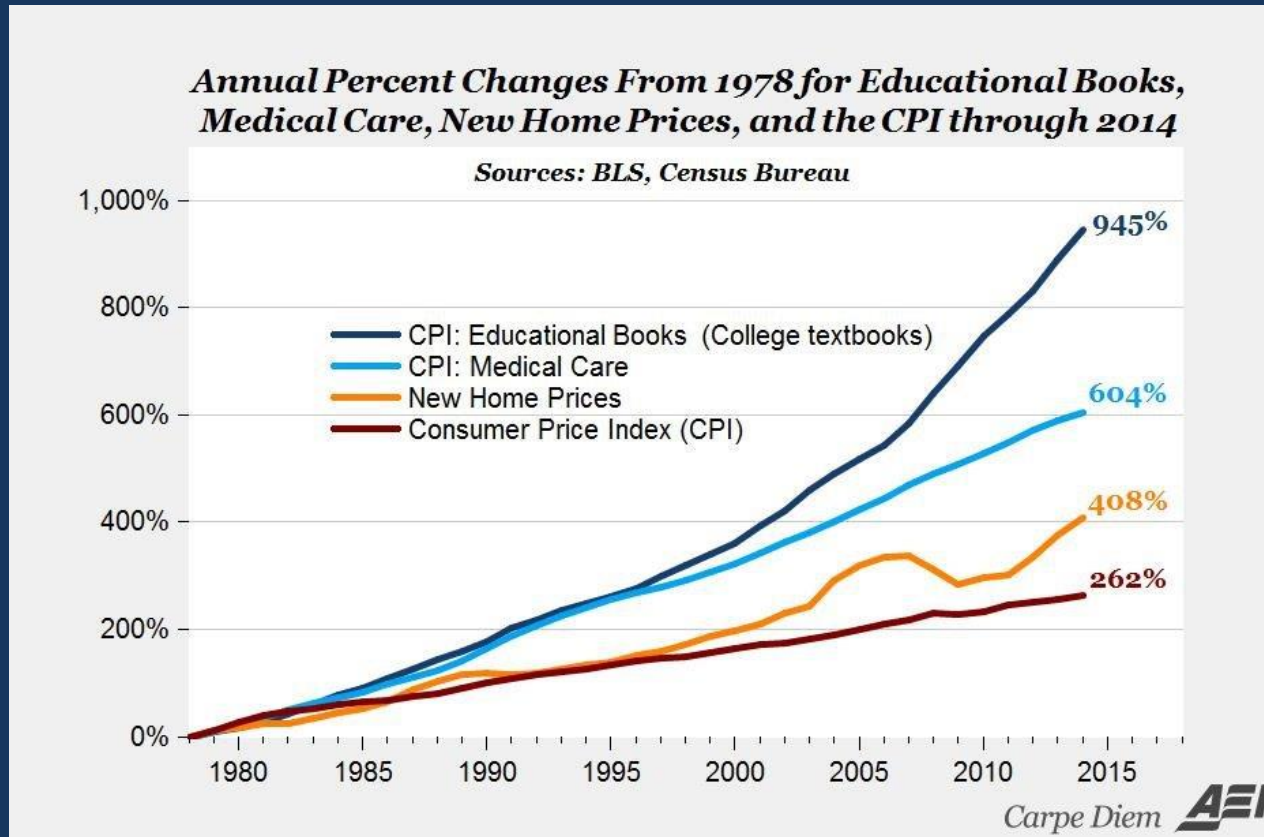
“In the ongoing nationwide debate about the rising cost of college, one of the most basic and direct costs to students is often overlooked: textbooks.”

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# How expensive?

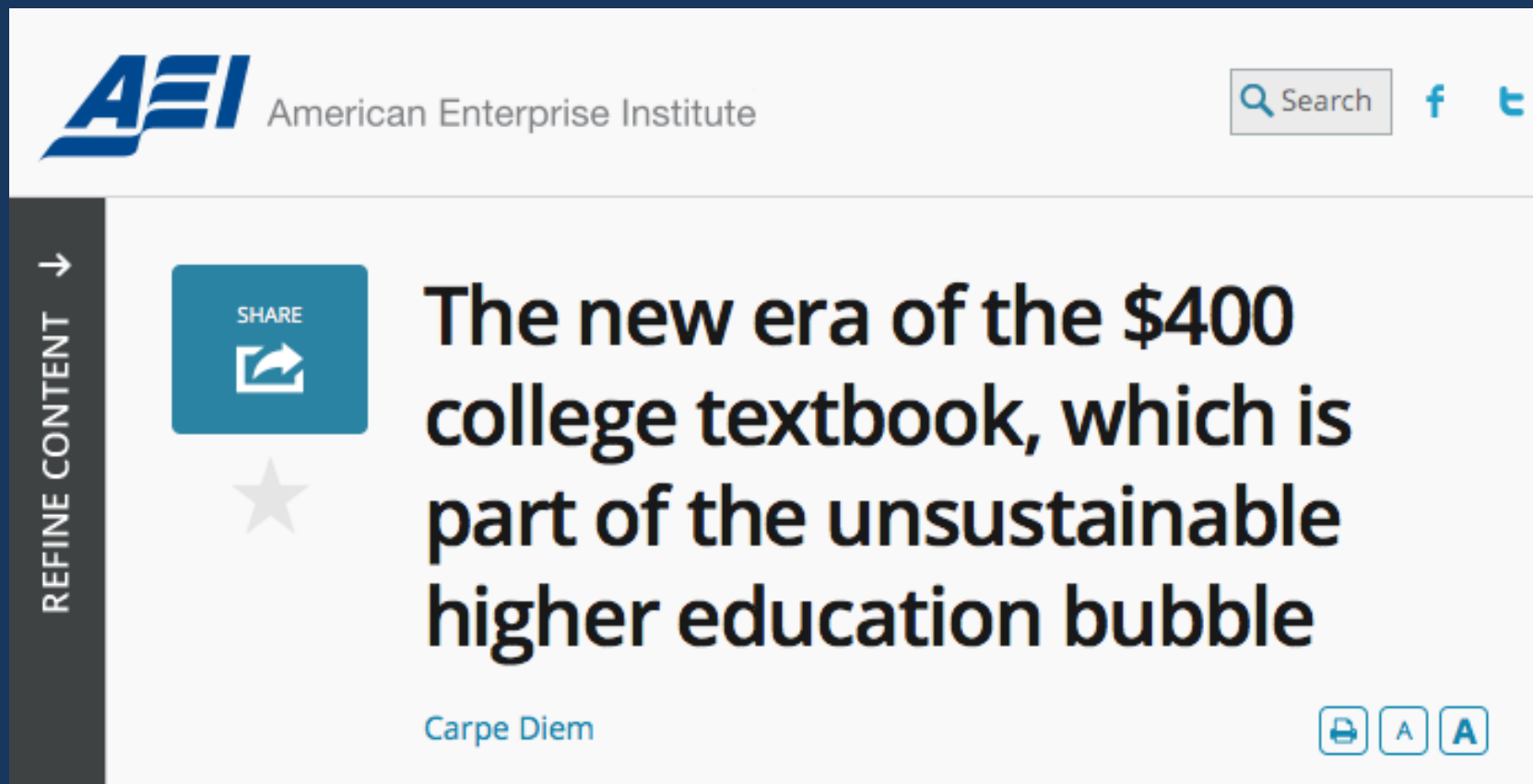


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# How expensive?



The screenshot shows the top of a web page from the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). The header includes the AEI logo and name, a search bar, and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. On the left, a vertical sidebar contains the text 'REFINE CONTENT' with a downward arrow. The main content area features a blue 'SHARE' button with a share icon, a grey star icon, and the article title 'The new era of the \$400 college textbook, which is part of the unsustainable higher education bubble' in large, bold, black text. Below the title is the author's name 'Carpe Diem'. At the bottom right of the article preview are three small icons: a printer icon, a text size icon, and a language icon.

**AEI** American Enterprise Institute

Search

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REFINE CONTENT ↓

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## The new era of the \$400 college textbook, which is part of the unsustainable higher education bubble

Carpe Diem

Print A A



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# How expensive?

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A side note on cost vs spending.

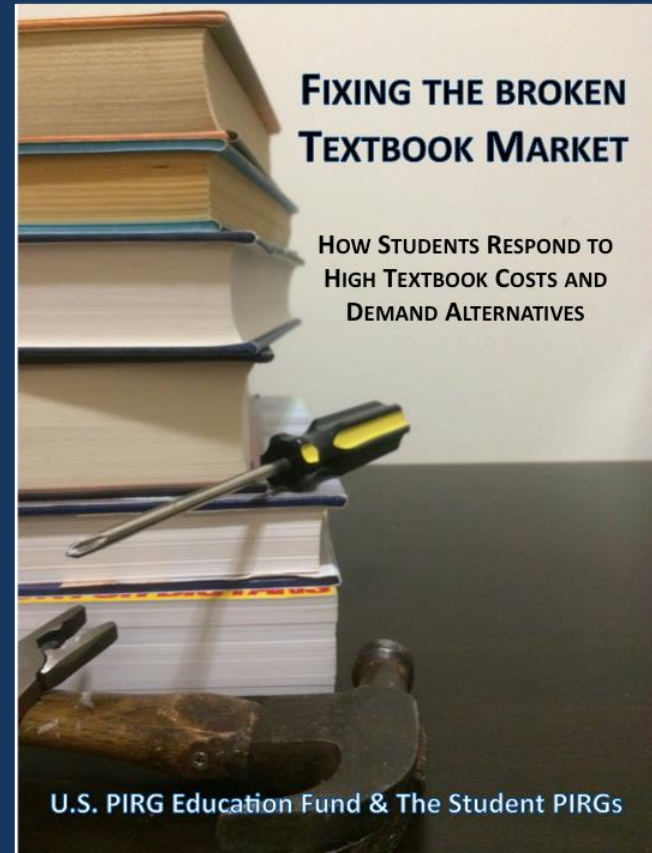


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# Impact on students

- 65% of students report deciding against buying a renting a textbook because it was too expensive.
- 94% felt that doing so would impact their grade in a course

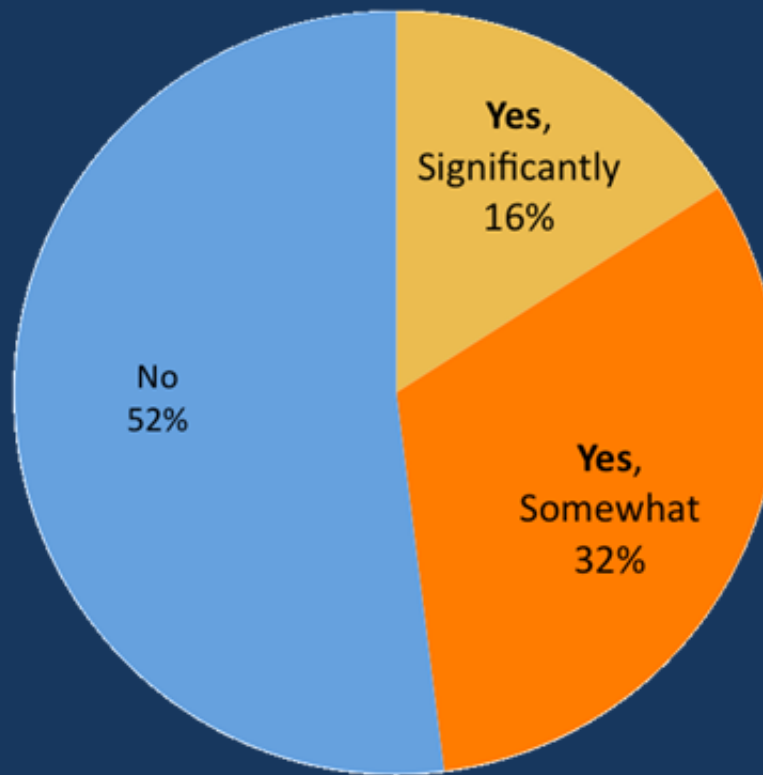


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# Students reporting that textbook prices impacted how many/which classes they were able to take:

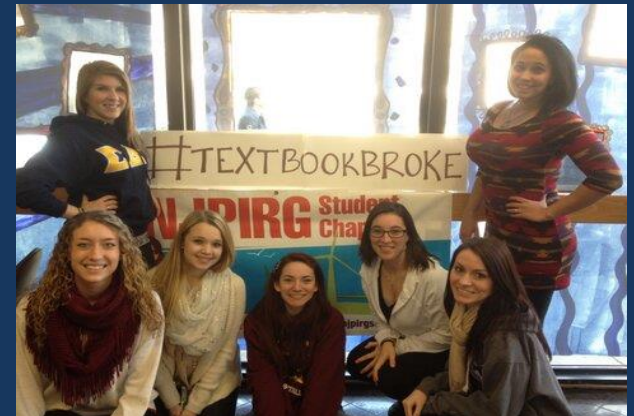


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# Student Stories



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# Alternatives and their limits

Used textbooks



Rental textbooks



- Some cost savings for students
- Improve access
- Price is ultimately determined by price of new, print edition



# Digital & E-Textbooks

(and online content suites, etc)

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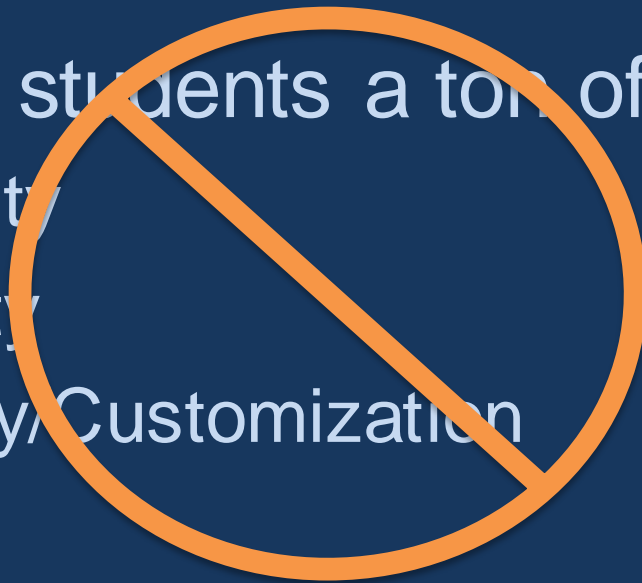
- Could offer students a ton of benefits!
  - Accessibility
  - Affordability
  - Interactivity/Customization



# Digital & E-Textbooks

(and online content suites, etc)

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# Digital & E-Textbooks

(and online content suites, etc)

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- What they usually end up offering students:
  - Page printing restrictions
  - Device use restrictions
  - Expiring licenses
  - Not that cheap!



# or, OER

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- OER actually delivers on those things:
  - Accessibility
  - Affordability
  - Interactivity/Customization



# or, OER

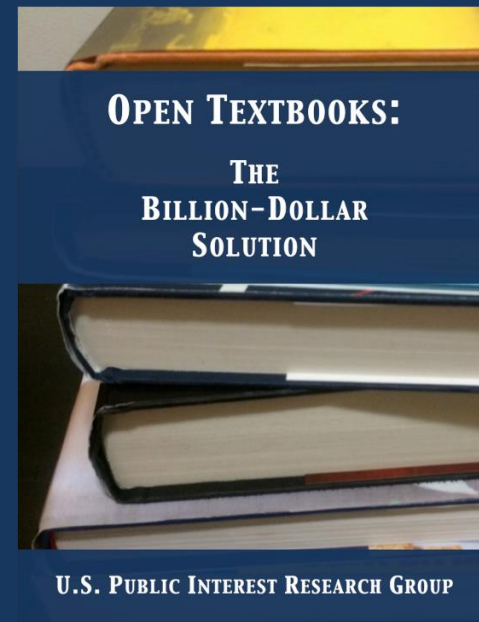
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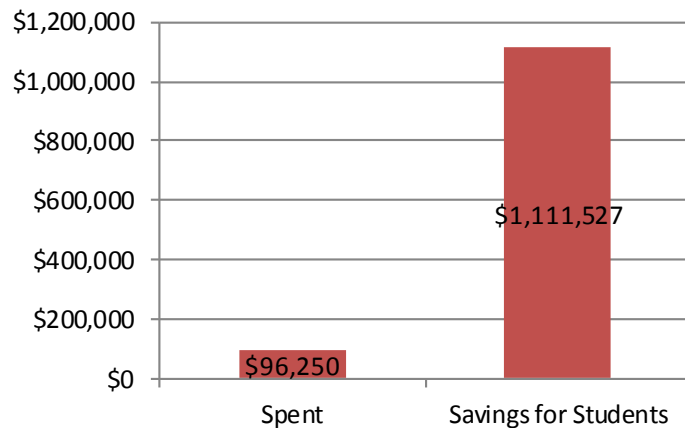
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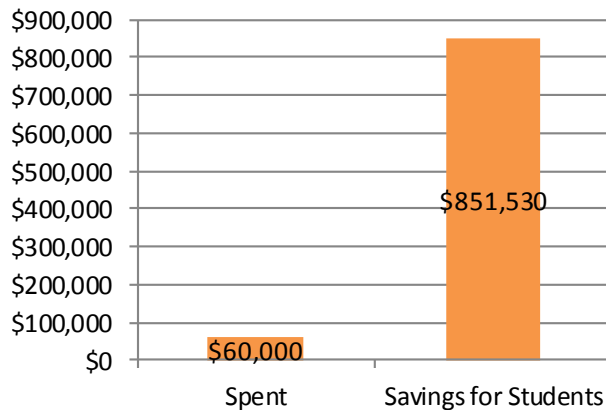


# or, OER

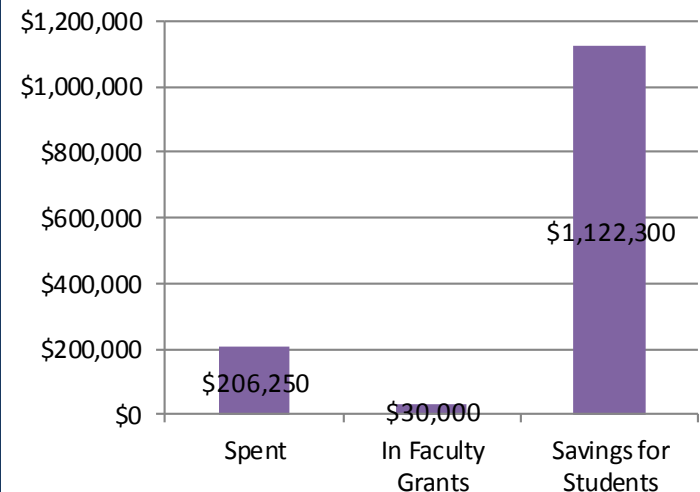
## Kansas State



## UMass Amherst



## Tacoma Community College



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# or, OER

- OER actually delivers on those things:
  - Accessibility
  - Affordability
  - Interactivity/Customization



# Impact on Students



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a Springer Link article. The address bar shows the URL: link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs12528-015-9101-x. The page features the Springer Link logo, a search bar, and navigation links like 'Sign up / Log in', 'English', and 'Academic edition'. Below the header, there are buttons for 'Download PDF (397 KB)' and 'View Article'. The article title is 'A multi-institutional study of the impact of open textbook adoption on the learning outcomes of post-secondary students', published in the 'Journal of Computing in Higher Education' (December 2015, Volume 27, Issue 3, pp 159-172). The authors listed are Lane Fischer, John Hilton III, T. Jared Robinson, and David A. Wiley. A 'Look Inside' button is visible next to the journal cover image. At the bottom, there are links for 'Export citation' and 'Register for Journal Updates'.

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Journal of Computing in Higher Education  
December 2015, Volume 27, Issue 3, pp 159-172  
First online: 22 September 2015  
**Open Access**

**A multi-institutional study of the impact of open textbook adoption on the learning outcomes of post-secondary students**

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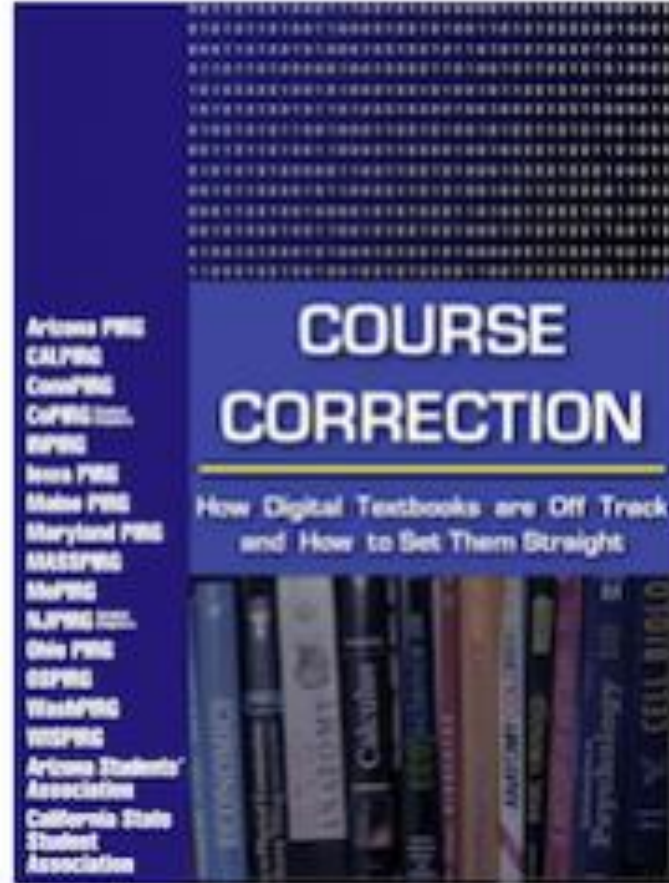
# Our work

**Student PIRGs** BCC MASSPIRG  
@MASSPIRGBCC



Following

BCC President Ellen Kennedy supports open textbooks! @dlemonq @HigherEdPIRG #textbookbroke



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# In the Media

## THE DAILY ILLINOIS

The independent student newspaper at the University of Illinois since 1900

Home News Campus

News

Sports

Opinion

Life & Culture

Technology

Home News Campus

## USA TODAY

NEWS SPORTS LIFE MONEY TECH TRAVEL OPINION 35° SUBSCRIBE

### Cost of college textbooks out of control

Herb Weisbaum, CNBC 6:01 a.m. EST February 2, 2014



(Photo: Kolett/ Getty Images/ Flickr)

#### STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2002-2013, the price of college textbooks rose 82%, study found
- To cope, most students aren't buying all the books

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College textbooks cost too much — and something needs to be done about it, according to a report from the advocacy group U.S. PIRG.

The College Board estimates that the average student in this country spends around \$1,200 a year on books and supplies. A single book can cost as much as \$200.

Between 2002 and 2013, the price of college textbooks rose 82% — nearly three times the rate of inflation, according to a recent study by the Government Accountability Office.

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'Groundhog Day' home for sale

Cost-of-college

### College textbook costs more outrageous than ever

Herb Weisbaum  
NBC News contributor

Jan. 28, 2014 at 8:47 AM ET



Learn More >

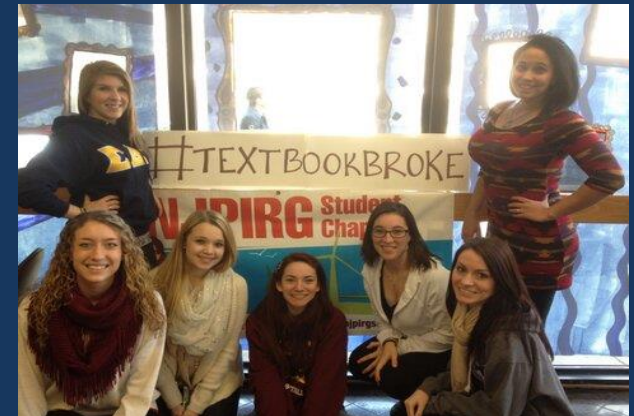
LOOKING FOR A JOB?

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# Grassroots Organizing



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# Moving Forward

(a sampling)



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# Moving Forward

## The Student PIRGs MAKE TEXTBOOKS AFFORDABLE

### Faculty Statement of Support

*As faculty members, we affirm that it is our prerogative and responsibility to select course materials that are pedagogically most appropriate for our classes. We also affirm that it is consistent with this principle to seek affordable and accessible course materials for our classes whenever possible. This includes "open textbooks," which are offered online to students at no cost.*

**Therefore, we, the undersigned, join more than 3,000 faculty to declare our intent to:**

- 1. Seek and consider open textbooks and other open educational resources when choosing course materials.**
- 2. Give preference to a low or no cost educational resource such as an open textbook over an expensive, traditional textbook if it best fits the needs of a class.**
- 3. Encourage institutions to develop support for the use of open textbooks and other open educational resources.**

Name

Prefix

First Name

Last Name

Email

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# Moving Forward

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- Up to you!



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# Questions?

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