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Zero Textbook Cost Program Advances Equity and Academic Success for VCCCD Students

Camarillo, Calif. (July 16, 2021)—Textbooks and supplies are often among the largest educational expenses college students face. As a result, 65% of college students have avoided purchasing textbooks due to prohibitive prices, according to a recent survey by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund.

To make textbooks more accessible, the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) has implemented the Zero Textbook Cost ([ZTC](#)) program at Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura colleges. The program enables students to use textbooks and online materials for their coursework at no charge. VCCCD students may average savings between \$1,400 and \$1,700 per year by taking classes that participate in the ZTC program.

“For many college students, the cost of textbooks can be a financial barrier to completing required coursework and that negatively impacts their grades,” said Chancellor Greg Gillespie. “The Zero Textbook Cost program empowers students attending the District’s colleges to save both time and money by connecting them with no-cost educational resources.”

“The program helped me save hundreds of dollars in books and allowed me to keep pursuing my higher education during these difficult times,” added Moorpark College student Adailton Nali Junior. “For a student with a family and child (which is my case), the program has allowed me to save money so I could pay for my bills and food. I could not have done it without the program, and I am really thankful for it.”

Resources vary by college, yet all of them depend on this program and Open Educational Resources (OER) to promote equity and successful academic outcomes for students, particularly those from disproportionately impacted communities. OER refers to free, openly licensed educational materials used for research, teaching and learning. They can exist in the public domain, or their licenses permit use or redistribution with few or no restrictions.

Courses achieve the ZTC designation in different ways. In some, a classroom set of books has been purchased that are loaned to students. In others, OER materials are provided to students digitally. If students want a print copy of a digital resource, they may have to pay a nominal fee to cover printing.

Districtwide, there is a wide selection of ZTC classes for students to choose from. A sampling includes courses in the areas of science, English, math, ethnic studies, languages and social sciences. VCCCD colleges are also adding a low textbook cost (LTC) designation, with books at \$40 or less per class.