

Proposal from OER/ZTC Task Force to Academic Senate to clarify the Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) designation and expand the options to include a Low Textbook Cost (LTC) designation

Background:

To comply with the requirement of SB 1359 to notify students about Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) classes in the online class schedule by 1/1/2018, MiraCosta College recently enabled faculty to self-designate class sections as ZTC via SURF. The response has been robust, with 115 spring classes as of 11/27/17 designated as ZTC [update as of 2/1/18: 145 spring ZTC classes]. Additionally, faculty have asked good questions seeking to clarify what is and is not ZTC, and have also expressed interest in a schedule designation for classes which have low textbook cost (LTC). Also this fall, the [ASCCC passed a resolution](#) encouraging local Academic Senates to support an LTC designation.

The OER/ZTC Task Force proposes the following to clarify what is considered a ZTC class:

ZTC course sections exclusively use digital or other instructional materials that are free of charge to students, with the following clarifications:

- A for-cost (print) option is ok as long as a no-cost option is available to all students. Classes where materials are digital and free but students are required to print materials are not ZTC.
- Instructional materials may be Open Educational Resources (OER); materials licensed and paid for by the college, such as library resources; and other properly licensed and adopted materials.
- If library resources are used for a class, all students in the class must be able to simultaneously access the resources to have the ZTC designation.
- If there are for-cost textbooks in use, but students don't require access to succeed and they are designated as optional for the class, the class may be considered ZTC.
- Fees to access a software platform to do coursework or homework are considered a textbook cost, and the course section would NOT qualify as ZTC, even if the actual textbook is free.
- Lab materials and other required supplies (e.g. scantrons, scientific calculators, etc.) are not considered a textbook cost, so if a course section meets the parameters noted above, but has a materials fee, the section may still be considered ZTC.

(Note, portions of the above adapted from material from SB 1359, San Bernardino Valley College, and Pasadena City College.)

The OER/ZTC Task Force proposes the following to add a designation for a Low Textbook Cost class:

In the same way that faculty are currently able to designate a class as ZTC and that designation appears in the online class schedule, MiraCosta College will add a designation for LTC (Low Textbook Cost) classes.

LTC course sections use texts and/or materials that cost a total of \$40 or less, with the following

clarifications:

- The LTC designation is based on the cost of new materials, not used books or rentals.
- The costs are based on pre-tax prices of new course materials in the MiraCosta bookstore.
- If students are directed to purchase materials in a place other than the MiraCosta bookstore, this must be clearly indicated in the class syllabus and the costs are based on pre-tax prices.
- The ZTC clarifications related to optional print versions, costs for homework platforms, optional textbooks, and materials fees also apply to LTC. A class that uses free digital materials but requires students to print some of the course materials may be designated as LTC if the print costs can be reasonably expected to be under \$40.

(Note, portions of the above adapted from material from Palomar College.)

The OER/ZTC Task Force proposes the following student-facing language wherever ZTC and LTC class section information is presented (i.e. in SURF and on <http://www.miracosta.edu/instruction/oer/classes.aspx> ) :

The college strives to ensure that ZTC and LTC designations in the class schedule are accurate; however, under some circumstances, faculty may have to adjust selection of instructional materials and this can affect course material costs. It may also be necessary to change instructors. Replacement faculty have academic freedom to choose instructional materials regardless of costs and are not obligated to use free course materials selected by an instructor previously assigned to the class.

The LTC designation will use this logo, which is similar to the ZTC logo, in the online class schedule:



(Note, portions of the above adapted from material from San Bernardino Valley College; the logo is from Palomar College.)