

1 January 19, 2012

2 **S.R. 1111**

3
4 **Title: **Calling for University Policy to Assist in Reducing Course Material Costs****

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6 **WHEREAS,** According to the Government Accountability Office, between 1986 and 2004,
7 course materials costs have risen 186%; and ¹

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9 **WHEREAS,** During 2011 Texas Legislative session, lawmakers attempted to address the rising
10 cost of course materials by passing HB 33, which requires that professors turn in
11 course material requirements 30 days before class begins; and

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13 **WHEREAS,** HB33 attempted to address the fact that without course material requirements in a
14 timely manner, students and bookstores are unable to plan their course material
15 purchases and end up being unable to purchase used, bulk or buyback textbooks
16 which increases students costs; and ²

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18 **WHEREAS,** The University COOP compiles all course material requirements on behalf of the
19 University of Texas; and ³

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21 **WHEREAS,** The Commission of 125 states “The University Master Plan should: encourage
22 consolidation of duplicate academic or administrative functions, facilitate
23 cooperation and planning among colleges, the central university administration”;
24 and ⁴

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26 **WHEREAS,** The Association of State Colleges and Universities recommends to reduce course
27 material cost, Universities provide information about required materials and
28 enrollment numbers, develop rental, buyback and alternative course material
29 options; and ⁵

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31 **WHEREAS,** Numerous professors change course material requirements weeks prior to or on
32 the first day of class, which in the case of electronically based materials (e.g.
33 supplemental, access codes, CD’s, etc), results in substantial costs to students; and

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¹ <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/kochreport.pdf>

² <https://www.wvhepc.org/commission/Textbooks%20Study/Minnesota%20Office%20of%20Higher%20Education%20Report.pdf>

³ <http://www.universitycoop.com/ePOS/form=cat.html&cat=838&store=108>

⁴ <http://www.utexas.edu/com125/UTComm125Report.pdf>

⁵ <http://congressweb.com/aascu/docfiles/TextbooksPM-3-09.pdf>

36 **WHEREAS,** In many cases, equivalent courses (the same course, taught by different professors)
37 have different course materials for instance: BIO 301L during Fall 2011 had 4
38 different textbooks for different professors, GOV 310L had 9 different textbooks,
39 5 of which were turned in only one week before the semester started which
40 resulted in no buybacks or used books being available; and⁶
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42 **WHEREAS,** Turning in 30 days before registration, streamlining course materials among same
43 courses to ensure equality, and adopting course materials (when applicable) for a
44 minimum of 3 years would:

- 45 1) drastically reduce costs to students,
46 2) ease compliance with HB33 and
47 3) ensure course quality, costs, and material coverage are consistent; and⁷
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49 **WHEREAS,** The Rhetoric department has achieved these goals for RHE 306 and standardized
50 and adopted course materials for 3 year periods, since then, the cost of materials
51 have fallen from \$45.80 New to \$34.35 Used to \$11.35 after buybacks, bringing
52 the cost of course materials below that of rentals; and⁸
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54 **WHEREAS,** According to a 2011 survey by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group of 13
55 college campuses around the nation, “Seven out of 10 undergraduates... had not
56 purchased one or more textbooks because the cost was too high”; and⁹
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58 **WHEREAS,** Effective course material planning and information, provides a tangible and
59 measurable impact in the effort to reduce costs to students, while not increasing
60 costs to the University; and ; therefore, be it,
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62 **RESOLVED,** That the University make every effort to exceed the Federal and State compliance
63 standards by enacting a University Policy that strongly encourages course
64 material requirements be turned 30 days before registration; be it further,
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66 **RESOLVED,** Course Instructor Surveys shall include two additional questions including: the
67 Course Materials (e.g. Textbook) was effective, Information about required
68 Course Materials was available in a timely manner; be it further,
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70 **RESOLVED,** Department heads determine course materials if an instructor has not been
71 designated 30 days before registration; be it further,
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73 **RESOLVED,** Courses with the same course number, topic, and specific course content shall
74 make every effort to adopt the same course materials; be it further,
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76 **RESOLVED,** Departments and Colleges shall make every effort to adopt course materials for 3
77 year periods, especially for large introductory undergraduate courses; be it further,

⁶ Medlock, Charles. "Buyback Adoption Information for Student Senate." Memorandum. 14 Nov. 2011. MS.

⁷ Medlock, Charles.

⁸ Medlock, Charles.

⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/11/student-advocates-sound-alarm-on-textbooks_n_924536.html

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RESOLVED, Professors must demonstrate that amending the required course materials after 30 days before registration will result in a substantial improvement in the quality of the course and education to receive the Provost’s approval to change the required course materials; be it further,

RESOLVED, The Provost shall work to provide course material requirements and enrollment numbers as a means to reduce costs; be it further,

RESOLVED, That this resolution be sent to Provost Steven Leslie, President Bill Powers, Board of Regents, Dean of Students Soncia Lilly, College Deans, Office of Student Financial Services, Representative Dan Branch, Senator Judith Zaffirini, President of the University COOP George Mitchell, and Office of the Registrar.

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