

RCW 28B.10.590 Course materials—Cost savings—Online course descriptions. (1) The boards of regents of the state universities, the boards of trustees of the regional universities and The Evergreen State College, and the boards of trustees of each community and technical college district, in collaboration with affiliated bookstores and student and faculty representatives, shall adopt rules requiring that:

(a) Affiliated bookstores:

(i) Provide students the option of purchasing materials that are unbundled when possible, disclose to faculty and staff the costs to students of purchasing materials, and disclose publicly how new editions vary from previous editions;

(ii) Actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs;

(iii) Disclose retail costs for course materials on a per course basis to faculty and staff and make this information publicly available; and

(iv) Disclose information to students on required course materials including but not limited to title, authors, edition, price, and International Standard Book Number (ISBN) at least four weeks before the start of the class for which the materials are required. The chief academic officer may waive the disclosure requirement provided in this subsection (1)(a)(iv), on a case-by-case basis, if students may reasonably expect that nearly all information regarding course materials is available four weeks before the start of the class for which the materials are required. The requirement provided in this subsection (1)(a)(iv) does not apply if the faculty member using the course materials is hired four weeks or less before the start of class; and

(b) Faculty and staff members consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials, such as adopting the least expensive edition available, adopting free, open textbooks when available, and working with college librarians to put together collections of free online web and library resources, when educational content is comparable as determined by the faculty.

(2) The state universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State College shall each designate in their online course descriptions used by students for registration purposes whether a course uses open educational resources or low-cost required instructional materials. If a course's required textbooks and course materials are not determined prior to registration due to an unassigned faculty member, the textbooks' and course materials' low-cost or open educational resource designation must be provided as soon as feasible after a faculty member is assigned.

(3) As used in this section:

(a) "Materials" means any supplies or texts required or recommended by faculty or staff for a given course.

(b) "Bundled" means a group of objects joined together by packaging or required to be purchased as an indivisible unit.

(c) "Low-cost" means the entire course's required instructional materials equal \$50 or less in 2021 dollars. The institutions of higher education shall adjust the dollar value of low-cost course materials at least once every five years to reflect the percentage change in the consumer price index over the preceding five years. [2021 c 152 § 1; 2009 c 241 § 1; 2007 c 457 § 1; 2006 c 81 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2006 c 81: "The legislature finds that:

(1) Often the bundling of texts, workbooks, CD-ROMs, and other course related materials is unnecessary since many students do not use all of the materials included and may realize cost savings if materials are also offered independently one from the other; and

(2) Many faculty and staff select materials uninformed of the retail costs and differences between versions.

It is the intent of the legislature to give students more choices for purchasing educational materials and to encourage faculty and staff to work closely with bookstores and publishers to implement the least costly option without sacrificing educational content and to provide maximum cost savings to students." [2006 c 81 § 1.]