

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
Instructional Materials

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

Existing Board policy provides for the selection of textbooks and other instructional material and specifies that this selection is the responsibility of faculty (*Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 29*). The policy includes guidelines for the selection of textbooks and instructional material by faculty, including a statement that cost should be considered. NSHE institutions must also encourage faculty to select or develop electronic and free or low-cost options for instructional materials.

Nationally and in Nevada, the cost of instructional materials remains a concern for students and faculty. In some cases, institutions may be able to negotiate with publishers and bookstores to acquire instructional materials at a lower cost, but Board policy does not currently include specific authorization for these types of contracts. System staff recommends amending Board policy to include this authorization.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Amend *Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 29* to include authorization for institutions to negotiate and enter into contracts with publishers, bookstores, and/or similar providers and vendors that allow instructional materials to be offered to students at a reduced cost.

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

Through representatives on the Academic Affairs Council, institutions have expressed an interest in entering into such contracts that may result in lowering the cost of instructional materials for students.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- Amending Board policy to authorize institutions to negotiate and enter into contracts with publishers, bookstores, and/or similar providers and vendors to allow instructional materials to be offered to students at a reduced cost is consistent with existing Board policy governing the selection of instructional materials and serves to benefit students if such costs can be lowered.
- Existing Board policy specifically provides that, “The selection of textbooks and other instructional materials is the responsibility of faculty.” The additional language proposed is in no way intended to infringe upon this responsibility or change existing policy. It is intended only to give institutions the express authorization to contract for lower prices on instructional materials and textbooks selected by faculty pursuant to existing policy.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been presented

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Retain existing policy.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- X Amends Current Board Policy: Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 29
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Other: _____
- X Fiscal Impact: Yes _____ No X _____
- Explain: _____

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 14, SECTION 29
Instructional Materials – Authorization for Contracts to Reduce Costs

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 29. NSHE Policy on *Printed and Electronic* Instructional Materials

The selection of textbooks and other instructional materials is the responsibility of faculty. All instructional materials should contain current, relevant information for the course, as well as appropriate assignments and supplementary material when applicable. These materials should help faculty and students accomplish the educational objectives of a course and should only be required when necessary and highly utilized. Cost should be considered when selecting instructional materials. Faculty should exercise their expertise and professional judgment when selecting instructional materials, and carefully consider the academic, professional, and ethical implications of criteria used in selections.

To that end, each NSHE institution shall develop an approved statement of professional and ethical guidelines relative to the selection of textbooks or other instructional materials. Such guidelines shall address relationships with publishers or other providers, selection of *instructional materials* [~~one's authored text and electronic materials for instructional use~~], and [~~shall address~~] the desirability of minimizing costs to students when this can be accomplished without compromising academic standards and academic freedom. Where appropriate, each institution shall encourage faculty to select or develop electronic and free or low-cost options for instructional materials. *Institutions may negotiate and enter into contracts with publishers, bookstores, and/or similar providers and vendors that allow instructional materials to be offered to students at a reduced cost without infringing on the faculty's authority to select textbook and instructional material as set forth herein.*