Estimating Student Savings From Textbook Affordability Initiatives

Illinois Community Colleges OER Summit
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Link to slides

https://tinyurl.com/iloerdata
Practices vs Best Practices
Keep in mind:

● Data is squishy, so be transparent and consistent when reporting savings.

● Build relationships with the people that manage existing data sources.

● Saving money has a big impact on students, regardless of the method used to calculate the amount.
Collecting Data

[# of students] x [\$ saved] = [savings estimate]
Basic: Use $100 savings estimate

Use no-cost/low-cost schedule designation data to track savings

Maintain a separate list of courses with known savings

Maximum potential: Find out retail cost of last used commercial textbook
Basic: Use $100 savings estimate
(http://openoregon.org/is-the-average-cost-of-a-textbook-100/)

Maximum potential:
Find out retail cost of last used commercial textbook
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Maximum Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes that #s are an estimate, not exact</td>
<td>Highlights dollar amounts of retail prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate accounts for affordability efforts at bookstores (used, rentals, etc), as well as student behavior (sharing, selling back, etc)</td>
<td>Focus on face value of what the syllabus asks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to gather textbook cost data</td>
<td>Extra effort needed to collect this data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Schedule designation vs separate list of courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule designation</th>
<th>Separate list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain one list of no-cost/low-cost courses</td>
<td>Track all student savings, even where costs don’t meet no-cost/low-cost criteria OR track only OER savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of outreach to faculty in reporting adoptions</td>
<td>Accounts for lack of confidence in designated course data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single data source</td>
<td>Multiple data sources - eg bookstore data, OER grant program data, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Data cleanup for $0 courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Suggested fix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No-credit courses often don’t require a textbook</td>
<td>Limit data collection to for-credit courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some courses labeled $0 never require a textbook so don’t represent savings</td>
<td>Exclude known course numbers or prefixes (e.g. PE classes) OR assume we are under-reporting savings anyway so it’s ok to include these courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some courses that don’t have a purchase required in the bookstore aren’t labeled $0</td>
<td>Check the $0 course list against bookstore data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defining Low-Cost

tinyurl.com/designationfaq
Basic: Use $100 savings estimate

Use no-cost/low-cost schedule designation data to track savings

Maintain a separate list of courses with known savings

Maximum potential: Find out retail cost of last used commercial textbook
Templates

- Basic savings estimate for $0 courses: [https://tinyurl.com/basic-0](https://tinyurl.com/basic-0)
- Maximum potential savings estimate for $0 courses: [https://tinyurl.com/max-potential-0](https://tinyurl.com/max-potential-0)
- Basic savings estimate for $0 and low-cost courses: [https://tinyurl.com/basic-no-low](https://tinyurl.com/basic-no-low)
- Maximum potential savings estimate for $0 and low-cost courses: [https://tinyurl.com/max-potential-no-low](https://tinyurl.com/max-potential-no-low)
- Basic savings estimate, separate from schedule designation: [https://tinyurl.com/basic-savings-all](https://tinyurl.com/basic-savings-all)
- Maximum savings estimate, separate from schedule designation: [https://tinyurl.com/max-savings-all](https://tinyurl.com/max-savings-all)
WHY
The Research Process
What additional questions might come up?

- How many hours at minimum wage does your savings number represent?
- Cost of textbooks per credit?
- Is there general awareness about on-time adoption reporting?
- Does the bookstore contribute to the general fund?
- Are faculty saving students money under the radar of your program?
- Which disciplines are seeing success in reducing costs for students?
- Which successes might be replicated somewhere else?
- What do students consider to be low-cost?
- At what point is savings data less useful than outcomes data? (What will you do after you hit your savings goal?)
- Etc...

Twitter: @open_oregon

hofera@linnbenton.edu