

## ***FGCU Faculty Review of the Textbook Affordability Proposed Legislation***

The faculty of Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) strongly support accountability in higher education to include instructional materials and advanced notice of course requirements. Additionally, FGCU Faculty supports cost savings initiatives of required textbooks and instructional materials for students, including the proposed textbook tax-exemption. Attached is a summary of the on-going and faculty supported cost saving measures. However, there are certain components of the proposed legislation that are of concern.

***Analysis:*** Senate bill, SB 938, Section 4 (4) addresses proposed Textbook Affordability. The proposed requirement in this section of the bill to move notification for students regarding the cost of their course specific textbooks and instructional materials from 14 days before classes begin to 14 days before ***registration*** occurs will have potential negative effects upon a number of processes:

### **University Process Negatively Affected:**

- Faculty assignments is a basic problem when considering this proposed change in legislation. The change proposed would require FGCU to determine all courses assignments much earlier than is reasonably feasible. For example, the change being proposed would require FGCU to know all courses assignments for the summer and fall in the preceding winter, which is by mid-February. The problem is that these assignments are not formalized usually until much later and sometimes not until June or July (for fall).
- Course Assignments would need to be made months earlier than present; a very imprecise process since enrollment needs to be known in order to determine what courses need to be offered.
- Requiring the use of textbooks and instructional materials for a minimum of three years in undergraduate courses can be problematic since it inhibits teaching up-to-date curriculum. Fast paced changes in technology, and the world economic and political environment require materials used by instructional faculty be current. This is necessary to provide a relevant and valid education for students.
- The proposal regarding coordination with school districts is problematic since dual enrolled students may choose from a very broad spectrum of courses and their enrollment timing would make this very difficult.

***Suggestions for Improvement:*** Textbook selection should not be tied to registration. It should be tied to the first day of classes. We agree it would benefit families and students to know of instructional materials selection earlier in the process.

***Conclusion:*** The FGCU faculty looks forward to working with the Executive and Legislative branches, the BOG and university presidents to develop a textbook affordability policy which considers the complex needs of all qualifying students and produces a productive workforce and engaged citizenry.