2-2015

Fundraising for Affordability: Well, Somebody's Got to Pay for It. Panel Presentation with Lauren Fancher, Jeff Galant, Gerry Hanley, and Marilyn Moody

Marilyn K. Moody
Portland State University, mkmwords@gmail.com
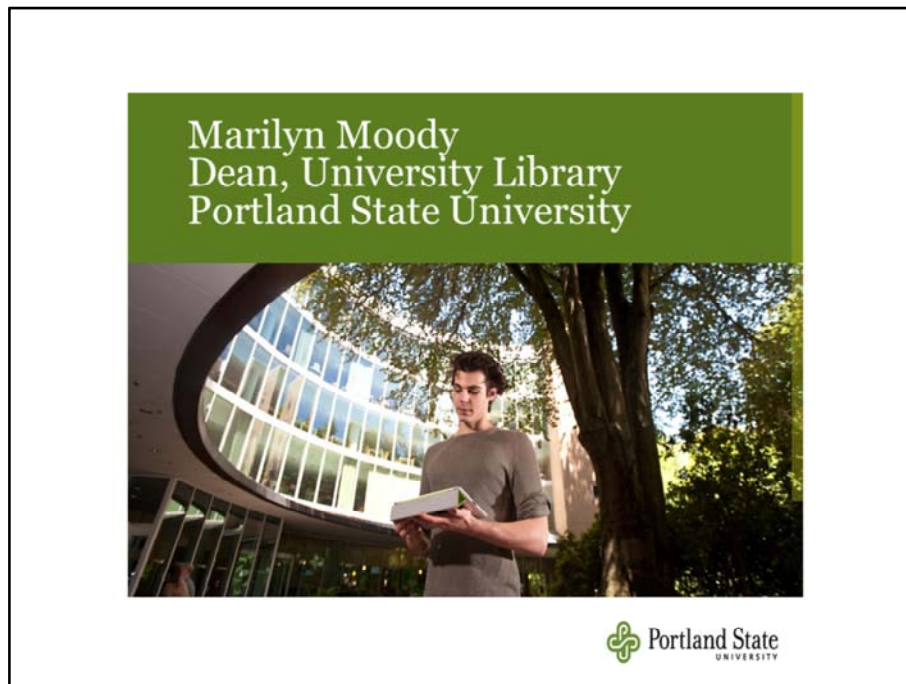
Who are the key stakeholders that you need to engage and get buy in for your textbook affordability efforts within the college or university? How do you set the stage for gaining funding and support? At Portland State University, we have formed a university-wide Task Force with the charge to look for ways to reduce students costs for textbooks and course materials.

> *Task Force on Textbooks and Course Materials: Reducing Student Costs*
>
> "What makes the task force at PSU a powerful one is that the Library and the Provost's Office did not try to tackle this alone. We invited our Faculty Senate and our Student Senate to be partners in developing the charge, selecting the task force members, and doing the work. As a result of this collaborative effort we have confidence that the task force will produce impactful and long lasting results."
>
> Sona Karentz Andrews, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Portland State University

Task Force Charge:
Textbooks and Course Materials: Reducing Student Costs

Questions to be addressed by the Task Force include but are not limited to:

What role can open and low-cost textbooks play in reducing student costs?
What textbook adoption strategies and policies can be used to reduce student costs?
How can access to more open and low-cost textbooks and course materials for PSU students be facilitated? What are the technical and policy barriers?
How can pilot projects or projects already in place at PSU, (such as the PDX Open project) contribute to this initiative?
In what ways might PSU collaborate with external partners including other Oregon universities?

The Provost, Deans and others in academic leadership are also key supporters, as well as faculty, students, alumni, and donors.

The PSU open textbooks initiative, PDX Open, is part of a larger campus initiative named reTHINK PSU.

Involving student government is part of the initiative. Reaching out and listening to students and tapping the passion of students are all crucial elements. It is important to involve student government and student leaders in building support.

Image : Two faculty with textbooks?, 3/31/1988 , University Archives, Portland State University Library

It's absolutely essential to involve Faculty Senate, formal and informal faculty leaders, and textbook affordability champions on campus.

Libraries are key players, with many connections on campus and with faculty members. Libraries have expertise in areas such as copyright, institutional repositories, open access, and open educational resources. Libraries also provide infrastructure and other types of related support for affordability initiatives.

Portland State University donors Robin and Robert Holmes initially supported library textbook reserve funding—now they are interested in helping to support open textbook initiatives at Portland State.

The issue of textbook affordability resonates with Alumni, donors, and advancement and development offices on campus. Donor events provide a good place to advocate for the importance of textbook affordability in the lives of students.

On an urban campus like Portland State, it is important to involve units all over the university, as well as the surrounding community. Examples include the campus bookstore, Disability Resource Center, IT, Learning Center, and instructional design units. Media sources, both on campus and in the community, can also be used to build support for textbook affordability initiatives.

> *Testimony to the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)*
>
> "Access and affordability are the linchpins of the state's ambitious 40/40/20 goals. As previous discussions and testimony have highlighted, textbook affordability is one of the primary roadblocks students must confront as they pursue their educational dreams."
>
> Jeff Dense, President of the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate, August 14, 2014

State Legislatures, Higher Education Governing Boards, and Boards of Trustees are also important players and potential sources of funding.
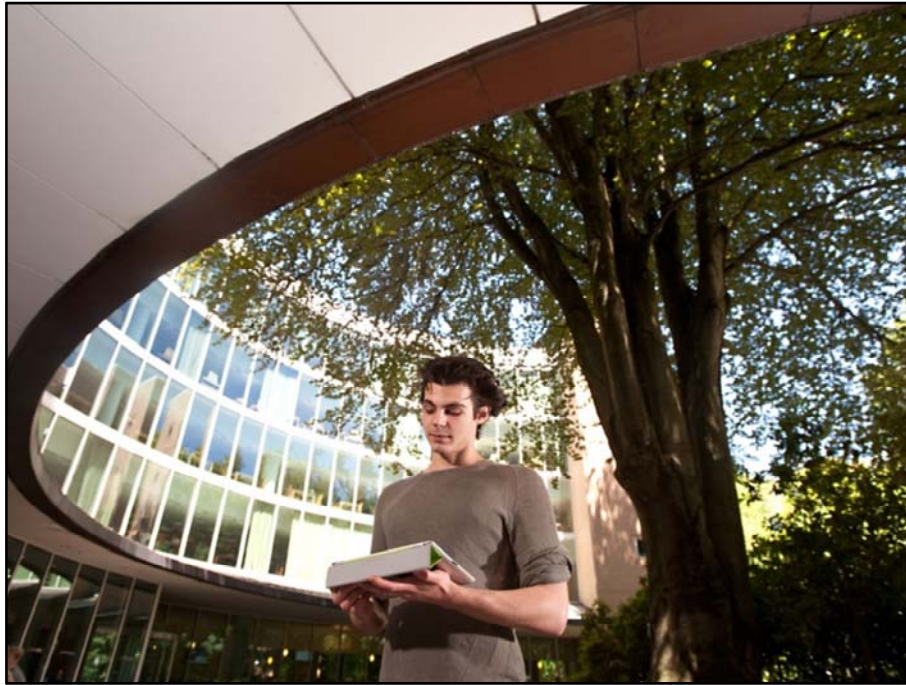
While we never want to lose sight of our goal of creating affordability for our students, we are hoping involvement by many different stake holders will give us the support and funding we need to reduce student costs and improve affordability for our student at Portland State.

Sample areas of recommendations coming out of the PSU Task Force:

OER creation and use in courses
Policies around early adoption of textbooks
Library initiatives—using library resources for courses; library course reserves
Targeting large enrollment courses for initiatives
Continuing open textbook initiatives