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# Open Textbook Publishing: Accelerating Scholarly Research and the Impact on Students

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# Open Textbook Publishing: Accelerating Scholarly Research and the Impact on Students

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KAREN BJORK, HEAD OF DIGITAL INITIATIVES PORTLAND  
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“Cost of textbooks have skyrocketed in recent years.”



BUSINESS  
FEB 10 2016, 4:16 PM ET

## Students Are Still Saddled With Soaring Textbook Costs, Report Says

by HERB WEISBAUM

In this Sept. 14, 2014 photo, Priya Shivraj, 21, a student at New York University majoring in biology, Spanish and pre-med, poses with "at least" \$1200.00 in text books from seven semesters of school in Queens, New York. © John Brecher / NBC News File

<http://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/students-are-still-saddled-soaring-textbook-costs-report-says-n516011>

The average student should budget

\$1,249 - \$1,364

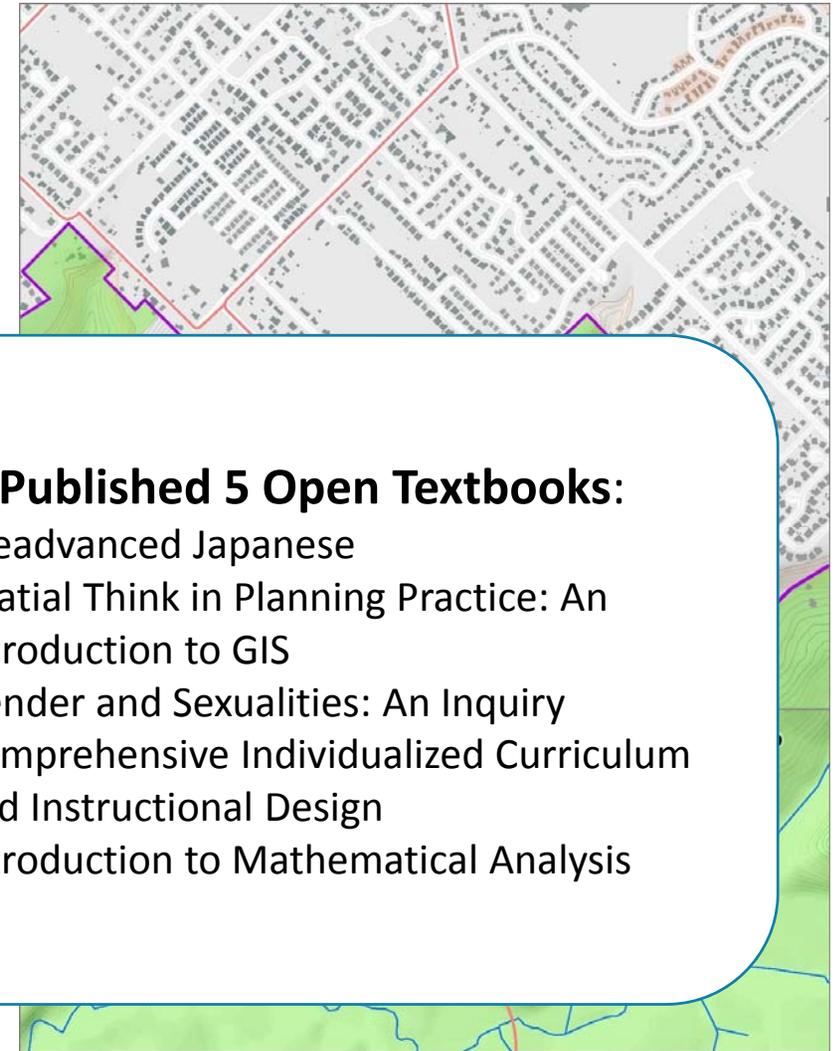
for textbooks and course materials in 2016-17.

Portland State University = \$1,263

<http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-estimated-undergraduate-budgets-2015-16>  
<https://www.pdx.edu/student-financial/cost-of-attendance>

## How? Pilot

1. **Fall 2012:** Awarded \$15,000 through the University Provost's Challenge
2. **May 2013** Campus-Wide Request for Proposal: five proposals selected
3. **December 2014** Projects published



# Overview

## What have we done since the pilot:

Completed 3 rounds of funding

- Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Winter 2016/2017

10 additional books published

6 books in production

2 second additions published

Reached over 1,500 students and saved students \$150,000 on the cost of their textbooks

37,266 downloads

Currently have a new call for proposals

## Published Titles:

- Communication Beginnings: An Introductory Listening and Speaking Text for English Language Learners
- Arabic and English Sentence Patterns: A Comparative Guide
- Histoires d'Avenirs: Science-fiction pour le cours de français niveaux intermédiaire et avancé
- Beginning Japanese for Professionals: Book 2
- Beginning Japanese for Professionals: Book 1
- How to be a Successful Organic Chemist
- Korean Through Folktales
- PDX Journeys: Studying and Living in the US, Low-Intermediate Novel and Textbook for University ESL Students
- Introduction to Mathematical Analysis I - Second Edition
- Leyendas y arquetipos del Romanticismo español, Segunda edición
- From MSA to CA: A Beginner's Guide for Transitioning into Colloquial Arabic

## Overview: What Services Do We Offer

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### **Not Press**

- Stipend of \$2,500
  - Assistance with copyright clearance
  - Assign DOIs
  - Creative Commons licensing support
  - Print on demand services
  - Assistance with hiring and budget spending
  - Workshops on self-publishing and copyright
  - Project Manager
- 

## Why Write an Open Textbook?

"This project allowed me to help in tailoring a book for the very specific needs of my PSU students of Arabic..... I can now refer my students to the book which allows me to have more facilitating role and gives the students a lead in their learning process without the hurdles of cost or lack of resources availability. The impact of the book after being published went beyond my planning; a turning point in my career."

-- Lina Gomaa

"PSU Library's Open Textbook Initiative allowed me to develop a peer-edited textbook that reflects the latest curricular developments in my discipline without the excesses of traditional textbook publishing: excessive scope, size, and cost." -- Dr. Robert Sanders

.... "I am therefore grateful and proud to be part of its mission, knowing that my materials can be shared with any teachers and students who would find [Korean] folktale stories an engaging venue for learning the Korean language and culture" -- K. Yoon

## Accelerates Research and Collaboration

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### Faculty

- Impact on the pedagogy in their discipline
  - Impact on curriculum design
  - Increase collaboration
  - Importance of peer-reviewers
  - Ability to share and disseminate knowledge worldwide
- 

“I plan to use this textbook in a Civil Engineering GIS Applications course. The first four chapters are perfect for the student with no previous GIS knowledge. These chapters will help the student understand different data models, proper use of projections, topology, and the different types of thematic maps.”

Review of *Spatial Thinking in Planning Practice: An Introduction to GIS* by Gianna Cothren, Associate Professor Civil Engineering, University of New Orleans



“This book will be an appropriate textbook to assign in small chapters for my students to read in an online Understanding Autism course at The University of Toledo.”

Review of *Comprehensive Individualized Curriculum and Instructional Design: Curriculum and Instruction for Students with Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorders* by Brittany Joseph, Adjunct Instructor, The University of Toledo

“As a teacher of English to international language learners in an academic context, this text is relevant and helpful. I really appreciate the way learning strategies and skills for reading comprehension and vocabulary development are integrated with relevant texts for this specific group of students and their experiences....”

Review of *PDX Journeys: Studying and Living in the US, Low-Intermediate Novel and Textbook for University ESL Students* by Dave Schenderlein, ESL Faculty, Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon,



**Open Textbook  
Library**

“Overall, this book is useful for students learning Arabic. It is needed as a transitioning aid from Arabic MSA to Egyptian CA.”

Review of *From MSA to CA: A Beginner's Guide to Transitioning to Colloquial Arabic* by Ragheda Nassereddine, Instructor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

## Improves Academic Success

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### Students

- Participated in the creation of the text
- Textbooks are piloted in the classroom providing students opportunity to give feedback
- Financially benefits the students

*2016 Student Textbook and Course Materials Survey – Florida Virtual Campus: Open Textbooks can improve college success. Students are likely to not purchase a required textbook, earn a poor grade, or fail a course due to textbook costs*

# Students Perspective of Using an Open Textbook

“I appreciate the professors taking their time to make these. I definitely think they tend to be better than the actual text, or at the very least, complimentary.”

“It's free! Financial aid doesn't cover most of my tuition and fees and my parents don't help with anything besides a place to stay and sometimes food. So having a free textbook takes a lot of stress of financial burden off my chest which helps be focus better in class than worrying about financial stability”

“The material is completely free and helpful in the subject matter.”

“It's easy to use and understand.”

“It's easy and convenient, which makes doing homework and studying for quizzes easier. I feel like I always have the ability to look back and review the content, no matter where I am, so long as I have my laptop with me.”

“It is free and it is everything I need in a textbook”

“It is free, I can download it on to a computer, smart phone or any other electric device anywhere at anytime.”

# Questions?

Thank you!  
kbjork@pdx.edu

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