

## Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Proposal

*Creating Equity and Access with a Zero Textbook Cost Degree in Sociology*

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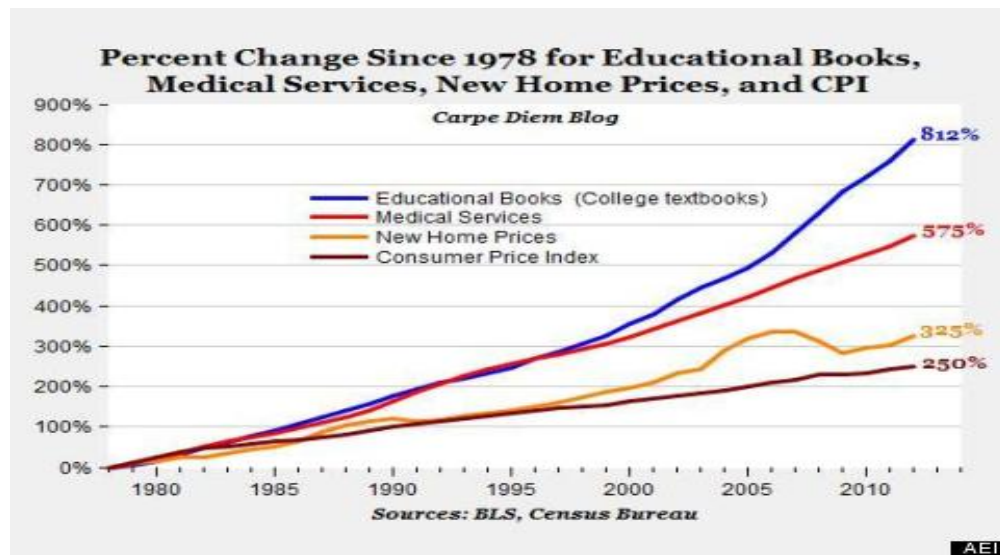
### Instructor's Sabbatical Leave Status

**Full-time hire date:** August 2011

**Part-time district hire date:** August 2005

**Previous Sabbaticals:** 0

### Background of Sabbatical Project



Badkar, M. (2014) College Textbook Inflation Is Out Of Control. Business Insider.  
Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/textbook-price-inflation-2014-4>

Open Educational Resources (OER) is a way to combat the high cost of textbooks that impact our students. [Section 67423 of California Education Code](#) defines Open Educational Resources (OER) as:

"high-quality teaching, learning, and research resources that:

1. Reside in the public domain or
2. Have been released under an intellectual property license, such as a Creative Commons license, that permits their free use and repurposing by others, and
3. May include other resources that are legally available and free of cost to students.

Open educational resources include, but are not limited to, full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, faculty-created content, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge."

The California Community College Chancellor's office has recently returned its focus to the concept of a Zero Cost Textbook Degree Initiative (ZTC). Its purpose is to encourage colleges to develop no (or low) cost pathways for students to complete their degrees. It recognizes that students, particularly community college students, are negatively impacted by the rising cost of textbooks.

I became aware of OER early last spring. As an instructor (and parent of college aged kids) I know that many students don't buy the text because of cost. I decided to 'pilot' an OER text for a late start spring 2016 Introduction to Sociology online class. I had an overwhelming positive response from the students. I would also say that it made me a better teacher. I had to intentionally review and select what I wanted to incorporate into my course instead of just going chapter by chapter in an overpriced, mainstream publisher text. I haven't looked back since. I fine-tuned my ZTC course for a summer section and this fall committed to using ZTC for Social Problems both face to face and online. I am also a campus advocate and part of a district OER taskforce.

Open Educational Resources provides equity and access. These are the pillars of Ventura College's Mission Statement.

With the time allotment of a sabbatical I can incorporate Open Educational Resources for a Zero Textbook Cost Degree in Sociology. I can also champion the ZTC cause and mentor departments considering OER resources for their courses.

### **Purpose of Sabbatical Project**

The purpose of my proposed sabbatical is to create a Zero Textbook Cost Degree for Sociology.

The outcome of this sabbatical will be three-fold:

1. Zero Textbook Cost Degree in Sociology.
2. Professional Development opportunities for faculty considering OER material.
3. 100% online AA-T Sociology Degree.

*I am requesting a fall sabbatical so that these courses can be offered in the spring of 2019.*

### **Component 1 - Zero Textbook Cost Degree in Sociology**

Currently we have three courses with Zero Textbook Costs (SOC 1, SOC 2 and SOC%). I will develop Zero Textbook Cost Canvas course shells for SOC3, SOC 4, and SOC 7, the primary courses for a AA-T in Sociology. Each OER course shell developed will be a *complete course* using modules that follow the course outline of record. The 'master' course shell can then be modified by individual faculty that chose to use OER. If time permits I will include SOC13, an elective sociology course.

### **Component 2 – Professional Development**

As a member of the OER taskforce I will implement Professional Development for Spring and Fall 2019 Flex to demonstrate the process of using OER as well as making resources available for faculty.

### **Component 3 – Bringing Sociological Analysis online; A Sociology Degree will finally be accessible online.**

Sociological Analysis is our mastery course in statistical social research. This course has only been offered face to face during the day in recent years, which creates a barrier for working students. I will

create this course for online format using Zero Textbook Cost material. Beginning spring 2019, Sociology students will have access to complete their degree 100% online.

### **Value of Sabbatical Project to VCCCD and Ventura College**

Offering students an optional Zero Textbook Cost section may improve student success and retention. Students that do not have access to the required course material are less likely to be successful. Students are also less likely to drop a course they are successful in. Having a free textbook available before class begins is a win for both the college and the student.

The college will also benefit from more online course offerings which a goal in the College Master Plan.

### **Value of Sabbatical Project to Ventura College Students**

The cost savings to the students is easily measured. I estimate that in the classes I have used a Zero Cost Text, students have collectively saved over \$8,000. (My estimates are conservative. Five sections with an average of 40 students and an average text cost of \$40.00. The new text costs \$120, used and rentals cost \$25 - \$50.)

Additionally, an added benefit is that students will have immediate access to the text. No more waiting for payday or financial aid. See attached student comments from spring and summer 2016.

Finally, students will benefit from having access to all core Sociology course in an online format. This is particularly important as the profile of community college students has changed.

### **Value of Sabbatical Project to the Instructor**

In addition to taking a refreshing break from the day to day aspects of the college, creating a Zero Textbook Cost Degree will improve my teaching. Being able to take the necessary time to really build these courses will foster my love for sociology. This is about equity and access and that's what a sociologist stands for!

I appreciate your consideration.

Andrea Horigan