Title: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF OPEN SOURCE TEXTBOOKS AND
RECOGNIZING FACULTY FOR EXISTING EFFORTS

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WHEREAS the average student spends $1200 per year on textbooks [1]; and

WHEREAS the price of textbooks has risen at three times the rate of inflation in the past four decades [2]; and

WHEREAS the cost of university textbooks poses financial hardship for students, who may take on additional loan debt to pay for textbooks, or even compromise their own education by forgoing the purchase of textbooks; and

WHEREAS graduate and professional students have consistently cited textbook price as an issue that affects them; and

WHEREAS an “open textbook” is defined as an online, free to access, easy to share, and affordable to print textbook written by education professionals under an open license; and

WHEREAS open textbooks offer an affordable, comparable, and flexible alternative to expensive commercial textbooks; and

WHEREAS open textbooks maximize the power of the Internet to improve teaching and learning, and increase access to education; and

WHEREAS it is the prerogative of faculty to select the course materials that are most appropriate for a class; and

WHEREAS it is appropriate to seek and consider low- and no-cost options, including open textbooks, as long as there is no reduction in quality of instruction; and

WHEREAS many members of the faculty go out of their way to provide more affordable reading materials; and

WHEREAS faculty looking out for students in this regard have not been recognized for these efforts; and

WHEREAS there is a desire to create a culture that recognizes such efforts;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:
THAT the GPSS supports the use of open textbooks, provided that quality of instruction is not compromised; and

THAT the GPSS encourages faculty to consider open textbooks and other low- or no-cost course materials when selecting textbooks; and

THAT the GPSS encourages the University of Washington to offer support to faculty to consider and adopt open textbooks; and

THAT the GPSS shall create an award to recognize faculty that go above and beyond in their efforts to save students money; and

THAT the award shall be given annually by the GPSS; and

THAT the GPSS Secretary shall be responsible for coordinating the nominating process and naming of such award; and

THAT the GPSS calls on the Washington State legislature and Washington State representatives in Congress to support open textbooks as a solution to high textbook costs; and

THAT this resolution shall be expeditiously forwarded to GPSS President Alice Popejoy, ASUW President Christina Xiao, UW President, Faculty Senate Chair Kate O’Neill, Dean and Vice Provost of the Graduate School David Eaton, and Chair of the Faculty Council on Teaching & Learning Jeffrey Wilkes.


Presented to GPSS for approval on February 25, 2015
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