




Z-DEGREE

What, Who, Why, and How?

---with **Tanya Spilovoy & Sybil Priebe**

bit.ly/ZDegreeMarch21



WHAT IS A Z-DEGREE?

Who is using them?

01

Z-DEGREE IMPORTANCE

Why should campuses look into them?

02

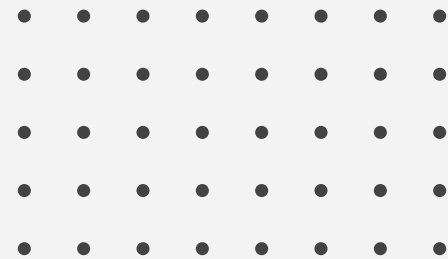
PROCESS

How can faculty/librarians/admin
implement a Z-Degree on their campus?

03

CONCLUSION

04



WHAT IS A Z-DEGREE?

A path to a degree that includes no textbook costs. This means instructors use OER and/or library materials.

bit.ly/ZDegreeMarch21

THE HISTORY

bit.ly/ZDegreeMarch21

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

- 2002: Began funding Open Educational Resources
- \$8 Million/year
- 2014 - 2015: Funded the first Z Degree Initiatives at Tidewater Community College/Achieving the Dream/Lumen Learning
- TCC saw a significant increase in the percentage of students completing courses with a C or better, while simultaneously cutting the cost to graduate by 20-30%. TCC also saw a significant decrease in withdrawal rates among students enrolled in the Z-Degree.



List of Z Degrees (Richard Sebastian)

- Tidewater Community College in Virginia (one of the first!)
- M-State Community Colleges
- BC Campuses
- Austin Community College & Houston Community College
- Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) & the Virginia Community College System
- the Washington State Community College System
- Thomas Edison State College
- the University System of Maryland...

WHO IS USING
Z-DEGREES?

Institution	City	State	Credential
Alamo Community Colleges (4 colleges)	San Antonio	TX	General Studies (AA and AS)
Alexandria Technical & Community College	Alexandria	MN	Associates in Arts (AA) and Health Science (AS)
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	Coon Rapids	MN	Liberal Arts (AA)
Austin Community College	Austin	TX	General Studies (AA and AS)
Bay College	Escanaba	MI	Associates in Arts (AA), Business Administration (AS), and Mechatronics & Robotics (AAS)
Borough of Manhattan Community College	New York	NY	Criminal Justice (AA)
Bronx Community College	Bronx	NY	Liberal Arts & Science with History Option (AA)
Broward College	Davie	FL	Business Administration (AS), and Marketing Management (AS)
Bunker Hill Community College	Charlestown	MA	General Concentration (AA)
Central Virginia Community College	Lynchburg	VA	General Studies AA&S, Science AA&S, General Education (Certificate),
Clinton Community College	Plattsburgh	NY	Health Administration (AS)
El Paso Community College	El Paso	TX	General Studies (AA and AS)
Florida State College at Jacksonville	Jacksonville	FL	General Studies (AA)
Forsyth Technical Community College	Winston-Salem	NC	Associates in Arts (AA)
Germanna Community College	Fredericksburg	VA	Business Administration (AA&S) and Science (AA&S)
Grace College	Winona Lake	IN	BS Management, BS Business Administration, BS Human Services, BS Quality Mgt
Herkimer Community College	Herkimer	NY	General Studies (AA) and Social Studies (AA)
Hostos Community College	Bronx	NY	Early Childhood (AAS)
Housatonic Community College	Bridgeport	CT	General Studies (AS)
Institution	City	State	Credential
Lake Superior College	Duluth	MN	Liberal Arts (AA)
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	Kirkland	WA	Biology (AA-T) and Mechanical Engineering (AA-T)



FROM
GRASSROOTS TO
POLICY



Governor Polis' ZTC Challenge

- Equity as a foundation
- Part of Colorado Department of Higher Ed Master Plan
- Self-paced ZTC Course
- OE Week Decree from Gov. Polis
- OE Week Youtube Video from Gov. Polis
- Statewide OER Conference
- OER Ambassadors on Campuses
- ZTC Challenge Awards
 - Outstanding ZTC Advocate
 - Outstanding ZTC Department
 - Outstanding ZTC Program
 - Outstanding ZTC Professor



WHEREAS, containing costs for students in higher education is paramount to the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, open educational resources (OER), practices and philosophy have inspired educators to innovate by reinvigorating curricula, starting free textbook campaigns and more; and

WHEREAS, OER and open education practices help educators redesign approaches to teaching through innovative methods, supporting the transformation of education for equity and student success; and

WHEREAS, Governor Polis has issued the zero textbook cost challenge, aiming to save students money on course materials while recognizing outstanding work from Colorado educators; and

WHEREAS, expert educators from all disciplines demonstrate a willingness to continue to innovate their educational practices for the learning and financial benefit of the students, saving Coloradans \$4 million to date; and

WHEREAS, the education community celebrates Open Education Week to raise awareness and showcase the impact of open education on teaching and learning worldwide;

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim, the period of time between March 1 and March 6, 2021, as

OPEN EDUCATION WEEK

in the State of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of March, 2021



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor



Z-DEGREE IMPORTANCE?

Students are more likely to do well and be retained if they can afford the materials necessary for their various courses. Students typically have access immediately - on Day 1 - with Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) courses because they are digital and not tied to financial aid.

NON-ZTC

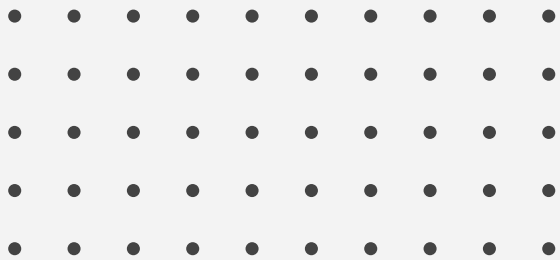
- Tied to publishing company.
- Less work on faculty member.
- Less retention of students.
- Lower accessibility; Ss may not have access on Day 1.
- Access tied to financial aid.

\$-\$\$\$

ZTC

- Academic Freedom & total faculty flexibility with content.
- More prep work on faculty member and librarians.
- More retention of students.
- Highest accessibility.
- Student choice in buying physical copy.

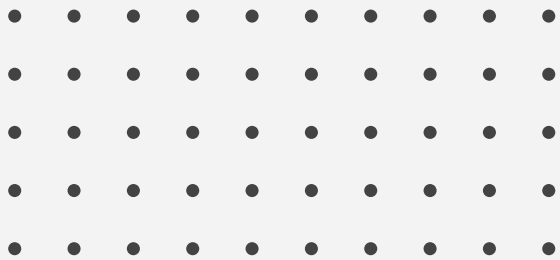
FREE TO STUDENTS



STATISTICS

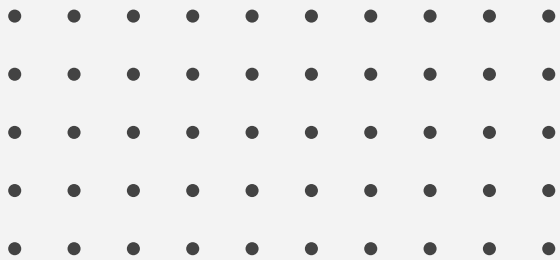
Here are just a few reasons to urge campuses to consider Z-Degrees. Zero textbook cost (ZTC) courses counter these statistics:

- Students typically spend \$1200/year on textbooks.
- 65% of students will skip buying a textbook if it is too expensive.
- 68% of students want to be able to access the textbook anywhere.



STATISTICS

In 2014, faculty at Tidewater Community College (TCC) in Virginia “designed a curriculum that allows students to skip nearly \$3700 in textbook costs and achieve a two-year degree in Business Administration. [...] In the first year of Z-Degree implementation, TCC saw a significant increase in the percentage of students completing courses with a C or better, while simultaneously cutting the cost to graduate by 20-30%. TCC also saw a significant decrease in withdrawal rates among students enrolled in the Z-Degree.”



STATISTICS

“Minnesota State colleges are working on saving even more money for students by implementing Z-Degrees, which are AA degrees with no textbook costs. Directed by the Minnesota legislature, in 2019 the Z-Degree saved students \$1.28 million on textbooks statewide. SCTCC is set to start offering it fall 2021.”

POSSIBLE PROCESS

1. Creation of a campus-based OER taskforce, if one doesn't exist.
2. Identify who does not have textbook costs in their courses.
 - Survey? Email? General knowledge?
3. Record this, maybe with a editable Google Doc?
4. Where are the "holes"? Can these faculty be persuaded & reimbursed?
5. Send specific faculty emails with information regarding OER substitutions.
6. Follow-up with faculty and continue to fill in record of those with ZTC.

NDSCS PROCESS

1. Research.
 - Who: Faculty in the General Liberal Arts Transfer
 - How: Email
 - What: An editable Google Doc with chart to be filled in with who had a ZTC course
2. August 27, 2020 - Email #1 - Intro sent to all identified faculty.
3. Faculty listed narrowed as faculty filled in chart, etc.
4. September 19, 2020 - Email #2 - Revised intro sent to a smaller group; this time I asked for low-cost courses to be identified.
5. Two charts created (Textbook List for Non-ZTC/OER & a Complete List of all courses and what textbooks are used).



NDSCS PROCESS, CON'T

6. Use CCCOER Listserv to seek out OER I can't/couldn't find.
7. September 24, 2020 - Email #3 - Specific faculty targeted with OER substitutions.
8. October 1, 2020 - Email #4 - Specific faculty who use OER asked to help fill in Complete List document.
9. October 8, 2020 - Email #5 - Wrap up.
10. Present preliminary research during NDUS' October Webinar.
11. Follow-up with faculty and continue to fill in Textbook Lists.
12. Wrap up research and submit report.
13. Present during Open Education Week in March.



- •
- •
- •
- •
- •
- •

In order for NDSCS to implement and market a Z-Degree, the following categories or courses would need to shift to OER (or embed their course materials inside the LMS, etc.):

- FYE 101 uses fee?
- One Math Course.
- One Computer Course.
- A few more Free/General credits...
 - Ideas (due to available OER): HIST 101-4, PSYC 100, SOC 110, PHIL 210...

NDSCS

FINDINGS

OPEN OREGON TOOL





CONCLUSIONS



**“If your campus can’t do a Z-Degree,
do something.”**

-Tanya

**“I can’t control housing or tuition,
but I can control textbook costs.”**

-Sybil

MAKE LEARNING
ACCESSIBLE TO ALL
STUDENTS



“Pathway to Associate of Science Degree.”



ZTC Blog from Hawaii




 Pearson Tackles Racism

California Case Studies



 bit.ly/NDSCS-Open-Folder

 Skills Commons (OER for
Technical Courses)

RESOURCES





THANK YOU.

Do you have any questions?

Contact us at: tspilovoy@wiche.edu

and

sybil.priebe@ndscs.edu

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by **Slidesgo**, including icons by **Flaticon**, and infographics & images by **Freepik**

Please keep this slide for attribution