



# STUDENTS APPLAUD OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCE FUNDING

VIA THE BCFS PRESS RELEASE:

Students are applauding the BC government's announced funding infusion for the development of open education resources (OERs). The \$3.26 million in additional funding for BCcampus will enable the agency to create and enhance open resources such as textbooks, online assignments, and practice exams that will be available free for students and instructors at BC post-secondary institutions.

*"These days it's common to pay \$200 to \$300 per textbook – but it doesn't have to be that way. This infusion of funding will lead directly to an increase in the availability of high quality and free course materials for students of all backgrounds – creating a level playing field for everyone to succeed."*

– Aran Armutlu, BCFS Chairperson

The cost of textbooks and course materials has long been a financial challenge for students: between 2002 and 2012 textbook prices rose by 82%. These costs have a real impact on student success: 65% of students report opting to not purchase an assigned textbook; 49% report taking fewer courses to reduce the cost; and 27% report that they have dropped a course because of the cost of the textbook.

In 2012 the BC government tasked its agency BCcampus with creating the Open Textbook Project with \$2 million in funding for the initiative. Since then, OERs have saved students more than \$9 million by creating free and openly accessible textbook options.

The BC Federation of Students has advocated for the creation and use of OERs for three years with its Open Textbooks Now! campaign. Most of the advocacy work has focused on students raising awareness on campus and working with faculty to adopt OERs in their classes; provincially the BCFS has called for an infusion of funding to further expand availability, particularly in under-resourced areas such as trades.

*"Students are excited that this government has listened to their concerns about textbook prices and is taking action. This investment of \$3.26 million will launch the open education initiative forward leaps and bounds and will save students millions of dollars over just a few years."*

– Phoebe Lo Patigdas, BCFS Secretary-Treasurer