

## College Course Materials Affordability and Equitable Access (CCM) Task Force

To whom it may concern:

A number of the Accounting, Business, and Supply Chain courses at Elgin Community College have been using Inclusive Access for several years, one of the options studied in the Illinois College Course Materials Affordability and Equitable Access Collaborative Study. These courses use materials provided by McGraw Hill and their Connect software.

Our path to Inclusive Access has taken many steps and years, trying to minimize the students' costs while providing the most benefit from the materials. Balancing these dual goals, we explored OER materials and Inclusive Access. OER materials did not provide the digital assignments needed with real world applications. We made the choice for Inclusive Access.

Because Inclusive Access is part of the course fees, financial aid and college payment plans absorb the cost of the books. Students see the entire amount of their tuition at the time of course enrollment. No more surprise costs in the book store.

Students were: (1) waiting for their next paycheck from work, balancing life costs (rent, insurance) with purchasing the course materials; (2) putting the book cost on a credit card, hoping the first tuition payment and book weren't on the same statement; (3) choosing to just attend class and not submit any work for a few weeks, hoping to catch up later when they could afford the book; and (4) trying to purchase textbooks online, not knowing that the access code would not work.

No more taking a chance with a 14 day free trial.

Students were (1) waiting as long as possible to use the 'free 2 week trial' provided with the book, hoping the loan got processed in time and dollars remain; (2) asking if they could have access to an entire course in the first 2 weeks of an 8 week summer course so they could complete the course without purchasing a book.

Inclusive Access has allowed us to provide students with an e-book and course assignment software at a much reduced cost. Just as importantly, Inclusive Access levels the textbook field for all students and removes a barrier to equity. When a student makes a financial arrangement for their tuition, the Inclusive Access fee is included. Scholarships, loans, grants, tuition payment plans, whatever method the student has chosen for their tuition, they no longer have a secondary financial decision to make, How do they pay for the required textbook? Because the textbook is required for course success. Every student regardless of their financial situation can begin the course work on day one. Removing one more barrier to success was an easy choice.

With the impact of the pandemic coinciding with Inclusive Access, data has been difficult to disaggregate. But as an instructor with courses across modalities, the absence of materials access issues has spoken loudly.

Regards

Prof. Ranae Ziwicki

Ms. Ranae Ziwicki Professor I & Co-Director Alliance for College Readiness  
Elgin Community College

1700 Spartan Drive, Office F207.06  
Elgin, IL 60123