

Estimated Savings from ZTC Courses

January 20, 2022

Prepared for UASU Executive Committee



Overview

In Fall 2021 and Winter 2022, after years of student advocacy and cooperation, UAlberta undertook a pilot project to recognize and promote usage of Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) courses. This briefing attempts to assess the amount of money saved by students who took participating courses.

As a large caveat, some unknown proportion of these courses were already effectively ZTC (e.g. using free materials instead of textbooks). This briefing's calculations do not assume that the pilot project caused all the savings (i.e. that all participating courses made a shift from average-cost textbooks to ZTC because of the pilot program).

These numbers should be considered *students' savings in 2021-22 because of participating instructors' choices to run zero-textbook-cost classes or students' savings from participating ZTC courses.*

Participating Instructors and Course Sections

As of January 20, 2022, the Registrar's Office has provided the UASU with the following information:

Term	Group	Unique courses	Class sections	Approx. instructors
Fall 2021	All UAlberta	632	758	507
Fall 2021	Augustana	65	71	28
Fall 2021	CSJ	13	16	6
Winter 2022	All UAlberta	1047	1364	766
Winter 2022	Augustana	78	89	34
Winter 2022	CSJ	56	71	26
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>All UAlberta</i>	<i>1679</i>	<i>2122</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>Augustana</i>	<i>143</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>CSJ</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>N/A</i>

Average Class Section Size

The University [publishes](#) average class sizes as a matter of recruitment, and these numbers align with assessment of internal class data. For our purposes we are considering them authoritative.

- North Campus: 38
- Augustana: 18
- Campus Saint-Jean: 25

We estimate an 'all campus' figure of 37 based on conversations with staff in the Office of the Registrar.

Average Textbook Cost

We relied on similar pilot programs' estimated mean cost savings per student per class section. As at UAlberta, student unions have played a key role in advocating for these programs.

- University of Toronto: [\\$122](#)
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University: [\\$112](#)
- American colleges [profiled](#) by SPARC Open: \$90-\$110 USD (\$110-\$140 CAD)
- UCalgary: [roughly \\$110-140](#)

Recognizing that textbook costs vary widely across faculties and years of study, we are proceeding with an estimated per-student per-course impact of \$115.

Estimates

Term	Group	Class sections	Textbook cost per class	Average class section size	Estimated savings
Fall 2021	All UAlberta	758	\$115	37	\$3,225,000
Fall 2021	Augustana	71	\$115	18	\$147,000
Fall 2021	CSJ	16	\$115	25	\$46,000
Winter 2022	All UAlberta	1364	\$115	37	\$5,804,000
Winter 2022	Augustana	89	\$115	18	\$184,000
Winter 2022	CSJ	71	\$115	25	\$204,000
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>All UAlberta</i>	<i>2122</i>	<i>\$115</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>\$9,029,000</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>Augustana</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>\$115</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>\$331,000</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>CSJ</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>\$115</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>