The University System of Ohio is constantly striving to make higher education in Ohio more affordable. As part of this effort, we are tackling an important issue to many students — the high costs of textbooks. Our comprehensive approach to making textbooks more affordable includes an innovative business model for selling textbooks and encouraging faculty to hold down textbook costs for their courses. The specific initiatives are outlined below.

**Discounted Textbooks for Students**

The University System of Ohio has entered into an agreement with the nation’s six largest commercial publishers to offer Ohio college students significant discounts on electronic textbook purchases.

Effective immediately, students purchasing eTextbooks through the Ohio Textbook Portal at [http://textbooks.uso.edu](http://textbooks.uso.edu) will receive a University System of Ohio discount on the purchase of electronic textbooks. Students will also be able to purchase discounted digital material, which supplements textbooks, such as articles, cases, stand-alone textbook chapters, and other copyrighted materials.

**Faculty Innovator Individual and Team Awards**

The Chancellor also announced the introduction of two new programs that will reward University System of Ohio faculty who find innovative ways to reduce the price of textbooks for students across the System.

**University System of Ohio Textbook Affordability Grants**

The new University System of Ohio Textbook Affordability Grants program makes $250,000 available to faculty teams across the System who develop, build, and package collections of course materials offered free to students. The University System of Ohio will fund as many as five projects up to $50,000 per course offering.

**University System of Ohio Faculty Innovator Awards**

Ten outstanding faculty members at University System of Ohio institutions who find innovative ways to develop course materials that pass savings along to students will receive the first set of University System of Ohio’s Faculty Innovator Awards. Ten winners will be chosen from nominations by students, administrators, and other faculty members to receive cash awards of $1,000 each.

**Background**

The University System of Ohio held a Textbook Affordability Symposium in April 2008 that brought together students, faculty, bookstore managers, publishers, and key civic and community leaders to share best practices and develop strategies for helping reduce student out-of-pocket costs for college textbooks and related materials. Part of what came out of this meeting was that discounts on electronic books and monetary rewards to faculty members will lead to a new business model, which will provide consumer-driven savings for students. The University System of Ohio will continue to solicit input from those closest to the issue of making textbooks more affordable to ensure that students continue to see savings in this area.
Our Promise

Benefits effective IMMEDIATELY for veterans eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill
Veterans who are currently eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill benefits can take advantage of the Ohio GI Promise immediately.

In-state tuition for all qualified veterans from across the country
By participating in a community service or internship program and upon moving to Ohio, GI Bill eligible veterans and their families will be treated as in-state residents for tuition and state educational subsidies purposes.

Ohio GI Promise Council
The Council will be charged with promoting educational opportunities in Ohio for veterans and with ensuring that Ohio's colleges and universities have the best educational opportunities and student support services available for veterans. An arm of the Council will also help raise funds to market opportunities in Ohio throughout the country.

University System of Ohio conference on veterans' services
The conference will be co-sponsored by the Ohio Department of Veterans’ Services and the Board of Regents, and will bring together every Ohio higher education institution’s office of veterans’ services to examine best practices and what should be implemented at every institution. There will be representatives at this conference from the U.S. Military, the National Guard, the American Council on Education, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other local and regional veterans’ services organizations. Working with the Ohio GI Promise Council, the goal of the conference will be to prepare and coordinate services on campuses to be fully prepared for the Post 9.11 GI Bill becoming effective on August 1, 2009.

Expanded use of Ohio National Guard Scholarships
We will propose and support legislation to allow Ohio National Guard Scholarships to be used for graduate study; housing; books and supplies; and transportation. Currently the scholarships may only be used for tuition and fees.

Making Ohio colleges and universities “Servicemember Opportunity Colleges”
We will work with the American Council on Education (ACE) to certify all Ohio colleges and universities as Servicemember Opportunity Colleges. This will allow all college credit received during military service approved by ACE to transfer to every University System of Ohio institution.
Early Credit for High School Seniors

In the 2008 State of the State address, Governor Ted Strickland announced a new initiative called Seniors to Sophomores. The goal, he said, is “to raise the aspirations of all students, to challenge students who might feel disengaged from their high school studies, and to help students who want to accelerate their college education.”

Seniors to Sophomores is designed to help fulfill higher education’s responsibility to prepare and “pull up” students in high school to help them aspire and be successful in college, while also making a college education significantly more affordable for those who participate.

Seniors to Sophomores is a dual enrollment program, which enables academically qualified high school seniors to earn both high school and college credit at the same time. Students who participate in Seniors to Sophomores will be enrolled in college classes on a University System of Ohio campus and will have the opportunity to earn a year’s worth of both high school and college credit at no cost to the student. Participating students can avail themselves to online college coursework, provided that option is available to regular college students.

The goal of Seniors to Sophomores is “to raise the aspirations of all students, to challenge students who might feel disengaged from their high school studies, and to help students who want to accelerate their college education.”

- Governor Ted Strickland
Governor Ted Strickland’s 30-Mile Promise ensures high-quality, low-cost associate and bachelor’s degrees within 30 miles of every Ohioan. Community colleges and universities will team up to offer joint packages of associate and bachelor’s degrees. The savings offered by attending a community college for two years will make this one of the lowest cost paths in the nation to receive a bachelor’s degree.

As Ohio builds this network, students currently have choices and opportunities within the University System of Ohio at select campuses where community colleges have adopted a “University Center” model for students. These community colleges invite universities to offer the third and fourth year of a bachelor’s degree program on their campuses, with the stipulation that all student credits earned at the associate degree level are fully transferrable. This flexible and affordable path to a bachelor’s degree is a convenient option for many of Ohio’s adult learners—as well as recent high school graduates—looking for ways to save money on their college education.
Ohio’s employers need to remain globally competitive in both the long and short term. In order to do so, they need a skilled talent pool to perform the work that will keep our communities strong throughout the 21st Century. The Ohio Skills Bank will strategically position the state’s collection of adult education, training and workforce assets to build pipelines of talented graduates and certificate holders to meet targeted regional economic needs.

Educators and workforce professionals will work closely with regional employers through the Ohio Skills Bank to align education programs, short-term training opportunities and workforce services that meet both the quantitative and qualitative occupation and skill needs of their employer communities. In the process, the Ohio Skills Bank will promote the principles of demand-driven, sector strategy workforce planning across the state.

Go to the University System of Ohio for more information about this exciting workforce initiative. Coming soon, the University System of Ohio will also offer more information regarding the programming in some of Ohio’s most critical industry clusters:

- Advanced Energy and Environmental Technology
- Aerospace, Propulsion & Power
- Food Manufacturing and Agriculture
- Bio-science
- Motor Vehicle and Parts Manufacturing
- Polymer and Advanced Materials
- Logistics, Distribution and Transportation
- Professional Services

“The future of jobs growth in Ohio is in investing in our regional strengths and in making sure we have the most educated, highly skilled workforce possible.”

–Governor Ted Strickland

Ohio Skills Bank

http://lmi.state.oh.us/asp/sb/SkillsBank.htm
The Ohio Innovation Partnership includes two distinct elements – scholarship funds to recruit talented students to the science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine, known as STEMM, and STEMM education fields – the Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program – and endowment funds to recruit faculty to academic Centers of Excellence tied to the strength of our regional economies – the Ohio Research Scholars Program. The legislative leaders and the Governor agreed that both of these funds should be competitive in nature to ensure that the highest quality standards are met, but that the Board of Regents should also work with schools across the state to assist in the development of quality programs.

Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program

Unlike most scholarship programs that direct funds to students or schools based on a formula or a set group of criteria, the Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program called for schools to submit proposals describing how they would go about recruiting students to the STEMM disciplines, as well as the strategies they would employ to make sure that the students are successful once they enroll. It sought partnerships between public and private institutions, between community colleges and universities, between high schools and higher education, and between education and business to create internships and co-op programs. In short, the goal of the $50 million scholarship program is to recruit students to study in our best and most innovative programs.

Ohio Research Scholars Program

Jointly funded and administered by the Ohio Department of Development and the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Research Scholars Program (ORSP) provides grants to strengthen and increase the number of clusters of research excellence, led by Ohio's academic institutions that support regional economic priorities. The ORSP will achieve this through (1) aggressive investment in the attraction of senior research talent and related facilities and equipment, and (2) promotion of unique collaborations needed to build and sustain scientifically and commercially promising lines of research.

The ORSP is placing high priority on building a critical mass of research scientists and engineers in the five targeted technology/research focus areas identified to the left. The emphasis of this program is on the recruitment of research talent from outside Ohio. Some funding, however, will be available to support the retention or hiring from within Ohio of personnel that are important to the growth of a research cluster.