

**136F.305 Z-DEGREES.**

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the meanings given.

(b) "Custom textbook" means course materials that are compiled by a publisher at the direction of a faculty member or, if applicable, the other adopting entity in charge of selecting course materials for courses taught at a state college or university. Custom textbooks may include items such as selections from original instructor materials, previously copyrighted publisher materials, copyrighted third-party works, or elements unique to a specific state college or university.

(c) "Incentive" means anything provided to faculty to identify, review, adapt, author, or adopt open textbooks.

(d) "Open educational resources" means high-quality teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others, and may include other resources that are legally available and free of cost to students. Open educational resources include course materials, modules, custom and open textbooks, articles, faculty-created content, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

(e) "Open textbook" means a textbook that is distributed using an open copyright license that at a minimum allows a student to obtain, retain, reuse, and redistribute the material at no cost.

(f) "System office" means the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system office.

(g) "Z-Degree" means a zero-textbook-cost associate's degree.

Subd. 2. **Requirement.** Three additional colleges must offer the opportunity to earn a Z-Degree by academic year 2020-2021. A college's course offerings for its Z-Degree program must include at least two distinct courses in each transfer curriculum goal area and at least enough credits in each transfer curriculum goal area to complete the transfer curriculum package.

Subd. 3. **Open educational resource development.** (a) The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities must develop a program to offer a Z-degree at three additional colleges by expanding the use of open educational resources, including custom and open textbooks. The system office must provide opportunities for faculty to identify, review, adapt, author, and adopt open educational resources. The system office must develop incentives to academic departments to identify, review, adapt, author, or adopt open educational resources within their academic programs.

(b) The programs and incentives developed under this subdivision must be implemented pursuant to faculty collective bargaining agreements.

Subd. 4. **Report.** The board must submit reports by January 13, 2021, and January 12, 2022, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education. Each report must include (1) the number of courses transitioned to using an open textbook resulting from the programs in this section, and (2) the total amount of student textbook savings resulting from the transitions.

**History:** 2019 c 64 art 2 s 39