



## **Budget Proposal for Textbook Reimbursement Scholarship Program – 2021-2022**

**For consideration by ASI Finance Committee - October 8, 2021**

**Submitted by Barnaby Peake, ASI Executive Director**

This Fall, ASI restructured the Textbook Voucher Program by working with Financial Aid to create a reimbursement scholarship. The new application process required students to purchase their books and then submit an application that included their book receipts, class book list(s), and their class schedule. The Board of Directors allocated a total of \$12,000 for the 2021-2022 academic year for the program (\$6,000 each semester). The scholarship is not need-based and was to be awarded on a first-come-first-served basis, with a completed application. The program was initially marketed to students from EOP, Veterans, Project Rebound, and students with food and housing insecurity.

The program received a record number of applications and the funding requested far exceeded the allocated budget. Below are the final figures for the Textbook Reimbursement Scholarship program for the Fall 2021 semester.

- A total of 123 applications were submitted this Fall reporting a total of \$21,613 spent on textbooks, with an average textbook cost of \$178 per person
- The program established a maximum award amount of \$150 per student, resulting in an average award amount of \$121
- With the \$6,000 allocated for the program this Fall, ASI was able to award scholarships to 41 students
- 23 students will also receive \$25 gift cards to the University Bookstore for additional supplies or apparel because of the incentive program ASI offered for those buying their books at the Bookstore

On September 17, the Finance Committee discussed the possibility of allocating more funds to the Textbook Reimbursement Scholarship program, to increase the number of students receiving awards. The discussion favored an increase to the budget, but specific amounts were not discussed. The staff reviewed the budget and are making the following recommendation for the Finance Committee's consideration and then recommendation to the Board for approval.

The Textbook Reimbursement Scholarship Program helps students pay for the cost of educational materials, which supports students financially and aids in their academic success. This year, ASI has one-time funding available due to salary savings and unused budget, resulting from the pandemic's impact on ASI's programs and operations. Therefore, it is recommended that ASI increase the budget for the Textbook Reimbursement Scholarship Program to \$24,000, allocating \$12,000 for each semester. This amount would provide funds for approximately 80-100 students each semester. This amount includes the continuation of the \$25 incentive for any students purchasing their books from the University Bookstore. The additional funding will not impact or take away from any current or planned programs because of the use of last year's savings.