



## *Academic Senate*

*Professor Sang-Hee Lee  
Division Chair*

January 18, 2024

To: Heidi Scribner, Associate Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary Services

**Re: Proposed First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program**

Dear Heidi,

The Academic Senate has completed review of the subject proposal submitted on October 23, 2023. I write to provide you with comments from this consultation. Attached are comments from the committees that responded to the call for feedback on the proposed program.

The Academic Senate Executive Council discussed the proposed program on January 8, 2024 along with the attached comments from faculty committees. Like other Senate committees, the Executive Council has concerns regarding the proposed program in its current form. Executive Council echoes these critiques and questions and shares the serious reservations about whether the proposal helps UCR students both academically and financially. The Executive Council urges the gathering of data specific to these impacts on students under this program.

As always, we appreciate the opportunity to opine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sang-Hee Lee".

Sang-Hee Lee  
Chair, Academic Senate

Cc: Provost & Executive Vice Provost Watkins  
Vice Chancellor Bomotti  
Director Cortez



## *Academic Senate*

### **COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

December 6, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Ward Beyermann, Chair  
Committee on Educational Policy

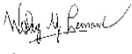
**Re: First Day Complete, Equitable Access Program**

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reviewed the First Day Complete, Equitable Access Program at their December 1, 2023 meeting and were not supportive of the program for several reasons. The Committee noted a concern with the opt-out option as the default and recommends that students should opt-in to the program instead so that they are not charged for a program they might not utilize. Additionally, the Committee was skeptical about the validity of data in the proposal and was concerned with the affordability of this program. The nearly \$300 fee for a student taking 15 units seemed excessive in comparison to what most students are now paying based on the experience of the committee's members. This seems to be supported by the survey included with the proposal on page two of the Textbook Access & Affordability Survey, which shows 90% of the students are now paying less than \$300 on textbooks and course materials. Instead, UCR should evaluate alternative options that provides students with greater cost savings and benefits, including reevaluating the partnership with Barnes and Noble regarding the management of the bookstore.



November 30, 2023

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

FROM: Wesley Leonard, Chair   
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: [Campus Review] Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

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The CHASS Executive Committee (EC), including its student representative members, engaged in a long discussion regarding this First Day Complete (FDC) proposal and left the discussion neither in firm support of nor fully opposed to FDC. We share the concerns of other campus stakeholders regarding course material affordability and support the idea of making costs predictable and directly linked to financial aid programs. We also appreciate the possibility of streamlined textbook purchases, rather than the status quo of students cobbling together textbooks and other course materials from various sources. Nevertheless, while we feel the basic intent of the proposal (i.e., to save students money) has merit, we have several concerns about its details and also urge consideration of alternatives to address the issue of affordability.

The CHASS EC's primary concern regards costs versus benefits of this program: the numbers presented in this proposal do not make a strong case for adopting FDC. Under the plan, an average courseload of 14 units would yield a cost of \$273. However, according to the UCR Textbook Access & Affordability Survey, only 11% of students spend more than \$300 on textbooks and materials. Indeed, for the 67% of students who report spending less than \$200 on textbooks and materials, the FDC clearly would not be a wise choice for them. (The value of the FDC to the remaining 23% of students who report spending \$201-\$300 is ambiguous). Thus, in its current form, the pricepoint offered by the FDC would seem to provide little value to most UCR students. For CHASS specifically, we considered several examples of current costs for EC members' courses; all were lower than what the proposed FDC cost would be.

Given the gap between the projected pricepoint in the FDC proposal and UCR students' reported textbook costs, the CHASS EC recommends that UCR formally explore UC Davis' model of an in-house textbook-provisioning system. In addition to engaging the cost concerns, such a system would provide UCR with a greater degree of local control over all aspects of the program. An in-house system could position UCR to take advantage of cost savings that would seem to be outside of the purview of a for-profit partner, such as resources that already have no direct costs to students. Examples include open-access textbooks, materials already paid for by other campus institutions (e.g., subscription-based journal articles or e-books paid for by UCR's libraries), and materials created by UCR faculty/staff. CHASS EC members identified several examples where such resources are already used, noting that in addition to avoiding expenses for students, use of these materials often incurs pedagogical benefits such as increased ability to incorporate the newest scholarship and to include a wider diversity of authors in course readings.

The CHASS EC identified several additional points for which we believe there needs to be additional information and consideration to make a fully-informed evaluation of the FDC:

- 1) In discussing the high pricepoint of the FDC program, the CHASS EC recognized that, in theory, students who would not benefit from the program could opt out. However, we have concerns about the associated details. First, the estimated opt-out rates included in the Executive Summary (30-40%) seem to be widely underestimated given the textbook costs reported in the UCR Textbook Access & Affordability Survey (i.e., 67% of students would not benefit from FDC). Second, given that the program requires opting *out* rather than *in*, we are concerned that people who do not wish to participate will still end up participating – thereby paying more than they would have without FDC – because they miss the deadline. The proposal's promise to communicate opt-out deadlines is vague.
- 2) The pay-per-unit cost model reflected in the FDC tacitly assumes that all courses require students to purchase instructional materials. However, there are many counterexamples. Beyond regular courses that require no materials or for which the materials are easily accessed without cost, some credit hours, such as those for research or training, do not correspond to normative courses at all. Such credit hours should be automatically excluded from the FDC cost. That said, even if both points are addressed, there remains a broader concern about the funding model: The idea of FDC seems to be predicated on sharing costs as an equitable collective, akin to a model of insurance where even those who do not use the system in a given moment still need to contribute to it financially in order for it to be sustainable. This conceptualization of the program is at odds with how it will be realized.
- 3) This proposal assumes best-case scenarios in details of course scheduling, staffing, and enrollment where, for example, courses are scheduled well in advance, instructors are

assigned and already employed by UCR (thereby equipped to adopt course materials early), and the courses for which students register before a term starts are the same as those they actually take. There is great variability in these and other details, thus raising several questions. For instance, how will FDC accommodate situations where instructor assignments occur late? Under the FDC, will a given course's materials be available to students who are waitlisted? If a student chooses to use FDC based on a plan to take courses with expensive materials but then is not able to actually get into those courses, will they have any recourse akin to returning purchased books for a refund?

- 4) The proposal lacks sufficient explanation regarding how the FDC costs will be annually evaluated and adjusted if the proposal is adopted. The CHASS EC calls for particular attention to limits on maximum allowable increases, and to how UCR will be engaged in the process of determining them.



## *Academic Senate*

### **COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

November 30, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: David Weisbart, Chair  
International Education

Re: **(Proposal) First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program**

The Committee on International Education reviewed the First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program proposal. The committee recognizes and appreciates the efforts of Auxiliary Services to prepare the First Day Complete (FDC) program proposal and recognizes that the program could benefit a portion of the students on our campus by reducing their overall expenses on textbooks. The program will also allow students to have all their required books by the first day of their registered classes, which seems to be another merit.

The committee has some additional comments and concerns pertaining to the proposal.

#### **Concerns:**

(1) The committee questions the sustainability of the projected commission on books. Based on the Textbook Access & Affordability Survey conducted in 2023, it seems that the program will benefit only 20% of our students.

(2) The committee is concerned that the program does not recognize that students can make use of a used book market that can significantly decrease textbook costs. Students should be made aware of such options.

(3) Fundamentally, the FDC program seems to be a push in the wrong direction for our students. The substantial amount of freely available resources supports the efforts of instructors to utilize such resources rather than commercial products.

#### **Comments:**

(1) If the campus will move forward with FDC, then it is critical to retain the opt-in opt-out process for students and ensure that students are aware of the ability to opt out.

(2) If the program is implemented, then instructors will need to be provided a clear and concise explanation of FDC options for their courses that they can share with their students in their

course syllabi.

(3) It is necessary to lock in an agreement that caps annual or quarterly rate increases.

(4) The abbreviation EqA or an alternative should be used instead of EA to reduce confusion between Equitable Access and Education Abroad.



December 5, 2023

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Bahram Mobasher, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

SUBJECT: Response to Campus Review Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC) and Equitable Access (EA) Program

Dear Sang-Hee,

The CNAS Faculty Executive Committee wants to address several questions regarding this program.

The Executive Committee requests more information from Barnes and Noble and the student body to determine if this is the most equitable option for students.

The Committee doesn't feel that the proposal was an accurate portrayal of student textbook/supply cost, so the committee would like additional information to ensure that students have autonomy in how and where they get their textbooks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Mobasher" with a stylized flourish underneath.

Bahram Mobasher, Ph.D

Chair, Faculty Executive Committee College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences






**COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION**

November 30, 2023

**To:** Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division Academic Senate

**From:** Gareth Funning, Chair   
Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

**Re:** [Campus Review] Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

The Committee on Diversity Equity and Inclusion discussed the proposed First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program with UCR's current bookstore partners, Barnes & Noble (B & N). The Committee commented on the potential value and benefits of the proposal, especially for students on financial aid. The Committee, however, noted the following concerns and considerations for further review if the program is implemented:

- The FDC effectively rents required books. Students will need to return all the materials by the end of the quarter (Page 17). It also doesn't cover *consumable* materials that cannot be returned. The survey didn't seem to make this distinction when asking students about their expenses so the projected savings might be inflated.
- Faculty will need to be educated about the proposed program. Some faculty might be encouraged to make more materials 'required' knowing that this program is available.
- Uncertainty if the proposed program has a significant impact on equity given the UCR student population. The campus should ensure increased equity by removing or decreasing the cost of textbooks substantially.
- Reconsider changing the default to "opt-in" to ensure that low-income students are not inadvertently impacted by the default to participate. Additionally, not all majors utilize high priced textbooks which may cause some students to incur a higher cost than without the program.
- The proposed program is based on a per-unit charge, which effectively penalizes students who take more units. UCR students need to take 15 units per quarter to graduate in 4 years, and raising obstacles that could discourage taking more classes per quarter may be counterproductive.



## *Academic Senate*

### **GRADUATE COUNCIL**

November 17, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Sarita See, Vice Chair  
Graduate Council

Re: [Campus Review] (Proposal) First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

Graduate Council reviewed the proposal for First Day Complete, an Equitable Access Program at their November 16, 2023 meeting. The Council had concerns about students' ability to opt-out of the program as this was not detailed in the proposal. We see that there is a reference to the existence of an opt-out option, but we are concerned that the option be sufficiently visible and available — in actual practice — to students. Students should have the option to shop around for cheaper textbooks; and they should not be subject to a monopoly. How does the opt-out process work, and which unit on campus will be responsible for handling this for students? We also want confirmation that this promise of “inclusive access” or “equitable access” actually delivers on inclusivity and access. We understand that these programs tend to focus substantially on digital materials delivery and may be in direct competition with secondhand or used print textbook companies/platforms. For example, we understand that digital versions of textbooks can be more expensive — and not cheaper — than used print textbooks.



## *Academic Senate*

### **Committee on Information Technology**

November 28, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Ilya Brookwell, Chair  
Committee on Information Technology

### **Re: 22-23. CR. First Day Complete (FDC), and Equitable Access (EA) Program**

On behalf of the Information Technology (IT) Committee, I would like to offer a few key comments regarding the First Day Complete (FDC) proposal. Our committee members discussed the proposal on November 16<sup>th</sup>, and we share the following concerns:

1. We are troubled by the lack of a more robust analysis covering alternative bookstore options as well as different distribution models.
2. ITS acknowledges that the backend of these efforts will be a net benefit for student access, especially given the option for digital distribution of texts. However, we are concerned that the opt-out process may develop as a critical failure point both for students and for administrators.
3. The instructional needs of faculty differ across departments and schools. We would like to see more evidence and reporting on students studying in different areas and how this proposal will enable and **constrain** materials acquisition for a variety of different majors.

Considering these items, the committee suggests that any implementation of FDC should be carried out with a high level of scrutiny. We should see an annual report on costs to students as well as profits to the bookstore and university. We should also monitor closely the future trend on the opt-out rate as well as any increases to the per unit cost of \$19.50. Finally, students deserve a high level of transparency on this program. We should increase visibility through clear marketing and communication. Students need to understand what they are paying for and how they can benefit.



## *Academic Senate*

November 18, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Curt Burgess, Chair  
Committee on Library & Scholarly Communication

Re: 23-24. CR. First Day Complete

The committee reviewed the proposal and noted a few concerns listed below:

1. many of our students add and drop courses in the first few weeks, which would need to be considered in the implementation
2. a majority of students per the Survey spent less than \$200 per quarter, while this system charges \$250 per quarter
3. faculty are likely to resist if Barnes & Noble uses the system to direct us towards materials from their preferred publishers
4. this system removes the major incentive for faculty to keep course material costs under control: student feedback/revolt
5. this system might remove incentives for faculty to invest in, develop, and use open course materials.




## *Academic Senate*

### **PLANNING AND BUDGET**

November 29, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Reza Abbaschian, Chair   
Committee on Planning and Budget

**RE: [Campus Review] Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program**

At our October 31 meeting, the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) reviewed the proposal for First Day Complete (FDC), an equitable access program with Barnes & Noble that would serve as an additional option for UCR students to procure course materials. CPB supports the proposal, particularly that students have a choice of whether or not to participate in FDC and can opt out of FDC by the drop deadline in any given quarter (or opt back in if so desired). CPB members also note that an assessment should be completed after a few years to determine whether or not students are satisfied with FDC.



12/14/23

**To:** Sang-Hee Lee, Division Chair of the UCR Division of the Academic Senate and Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of the UCR Academic Senate

**From:** Katherine Meltzoff, Ph.D., Faculty Chair of the School of Education Executive Committee

**Subject:** Response to Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

The SOE Executive Committee reviewed the First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access Program. Comments/feedback were solicited at our executive committee meeting and via email.

We do not have any questions or comments regarding this proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

Katherine Meltzoff  
Faculty Executive Committee Chair  
School of Education  
University of California, Riverside



January 5, 2024

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Marcus Kaul, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine

SUBJECT: Response to [Campus Review] First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

Dear Sang-Hee,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed *First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program*. The FEC had the following comments:

The committee agrees with the proposal's wide-standing agreement that UCR's student population needs this program, and that the campus would benefit from it. However, the committee is concerned that the proposal does not specify, if students are automatically enrolled in the program or if an opt-out option is available. The committee would prefer an opt-out option available to each student at UCR for each quarter. Furthermore, the committee thinks the proposal might prove difficult for students who are provided free material for their classes by faculty. So, these students would be obligated by the proposal to pay for a service they do not use.

The committee noted the proposal needs to clearly lay out how the University will negotiate with Barnes & Noble to obtain cheaper access to books for students. The committee is concerned regarding language in the proposal that would allow Barnes & Noble to refuse to negotiate with the University, such as when materials lack an ISBN.

Ultimately, the committee would like a more nuanced approach to obtaining lower class material prices, and the committee is hesitant to allow Barnes & Noble such leverage in negotiating, as it may enable Barnes & Noble to dictate the teaching options of faculty.

Otherwise, the committee has no further comments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Kaul".

Marcus Kaul, Ph.D.  
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee School of Medicine

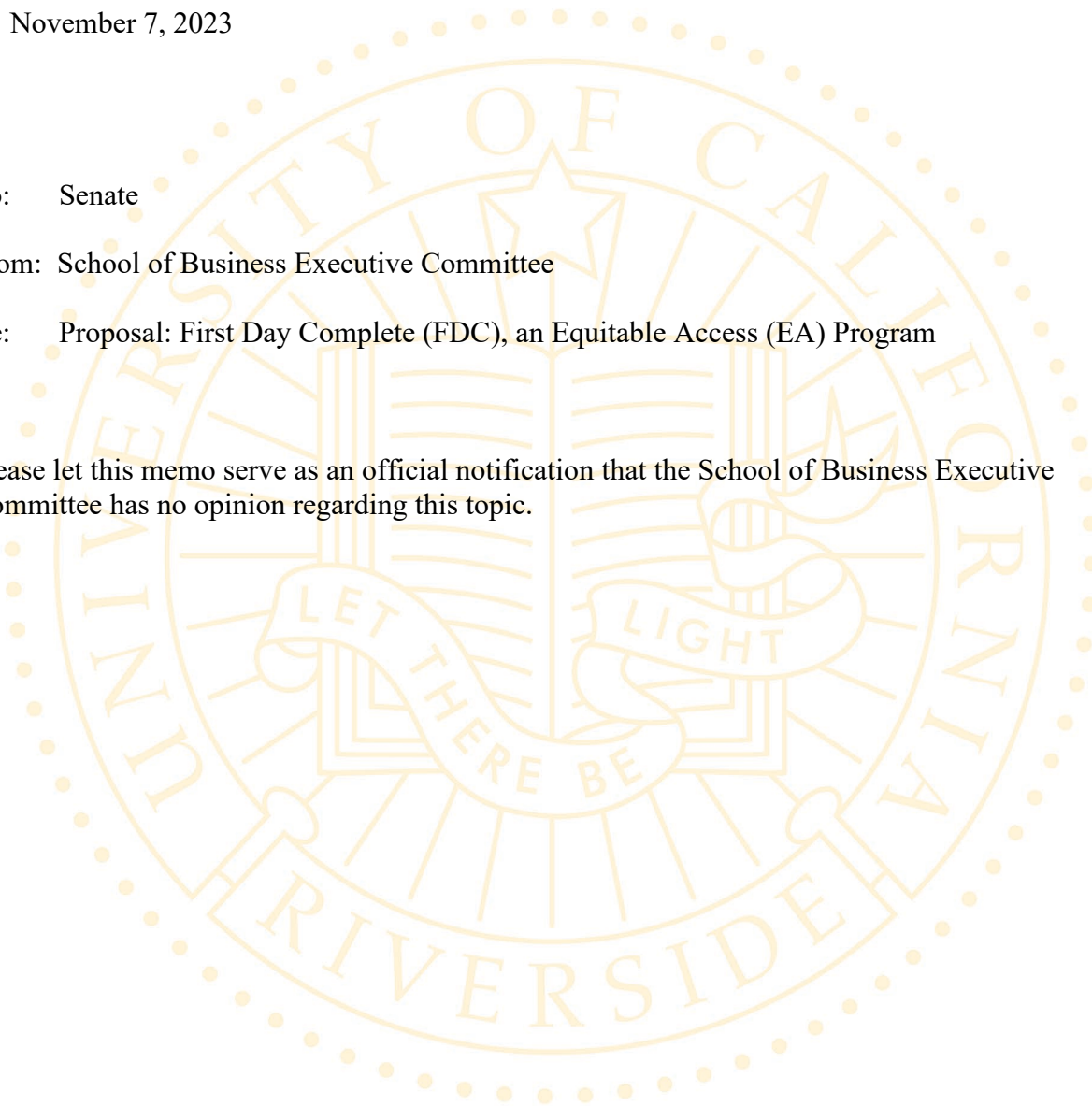
November 7, 2023

To: Senate

From: School of Business Executive Committee

Re: Proposal: First Day Complete (FDC), an Equitable Access (EA) Program

Please let this memo serve as an official notification that the School of Business Executive Committee has no opinion regarding this topic.







## *Academic Senate*

### **COMMITTEE ON COURSES**

November 29, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: James Flegal, Chair  
Committee on Courses

**Re: First Day Complete, Equitable Access Program**

The Committee on Courses reviewed the First Day Complete, Equitable Access Program at their November 29, 2023 meeting and do not have feedback related to their charge of courses and instruction.