


**UC RIVERSIDE** UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA | **Academic Senate**  
**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

April 8, 2016

To: Jose Wudka, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

From: Ward Beyermann, Chair   
Committee on Academic Freedom

**Re: Professors Assigning Their Own Texts to Students**

At its February 18, 2016 meeting, the Committee on Academic Freedom discussed the issue brought up in the memo from Ameae Walker, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel, regarding instructors assigning their own textbooks. While the committee understands the concern over a conflict of interest, possibly associated with the financial benefit from royalties, when an instructor assigns their own material, the academic freedom of the instructor to use whatever material deemed appropriate in teaching the course has priority. In some cases, the instructor may be the leading authority in subject, and it would be a disservice to the students to be denied access to this resource. A monetarily driven motivation to assign one's own textbook is weak because the fraction of revenue from that class is usually very small for commercially produced resources.

CAF has three recommendations regarding this issue. First, an instructor's right to assign the textbook or other material thought to be important must not be infringed. Second, when this material is not commercially produced, we recommend the costs charged to the students be limited to covering just the expenditures for production and distribution. Third, we recommend the University explore mechanisms that could prevent or divert royalties associated with commercially produced material sold in an instructor's own course.