



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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California Community Colleges Board of Governors Votes to Make Publicly Funded Grant and Contract Work More Accessible

Change in regulations will enable colleges, public to access, share and build upon contracted work

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors on Monday voted to require that any works created under contracts or grants funded by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office carry the Creative Commons Attribution license that gives permission to the public to reproduce, distribute, perform, display or adapt the licensed materials for any purpose so long as the user gives attribution to the author.

The California Community Colleges now becomes the largest system of higher education in the world to require a Creative Commons Attribution license on publicly funded grants and contracts, a move that will save taxpayers and students money.

The rules change will affect all materials created from now on and is not retroactive. By requiring a Creative Commons Attribution license, the board of governors has given individuals, nonprofits, and businesses permission to use and build upon material created with public funds, so long as the creator is credited. Innovative use of these materials may be made by any teacher, parent and school district, nationwide and beyond. The materials will be available for reuse and improved by creative entrepreneurs, education start-ups and traditional commercial businesses.

Using a Creative Commons Attribution license also saves taxpayers money by not funding duplicate work that may only be accessible on the local level. For instance, under the old grant requirements a community college staff may have produced a report under contract from the system Chancellor's Office but was not required to openly license or share that report with other colleges. This made it difficult for other colleges to access and reuse the report but, with the new Creative Commons Attribution license requirement, other colleges can both view the report and reuse, share and improve upon it with updated information and data.

"The Chancellor's Office already held copyrights to all materials that had been contracted," California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris said. "But the significant thing about the action taken by the

board of governors this afternoon is that those materials will now be available to a world-wide audience. Also, the tax-paying public shouldn't be required to pay twice or more to access and use educational materials, first via the funding of the research and development of educational resources and then again when they purchase materials like textbooks they helped fund. So, ultimately this decision to change the board's regulations will save taxpayers money over time. That's always a good thing."

The \$2 billion United States Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grants already fall under the Creative Commons Attribution license requirements. Publicly funded educational materials released under the license can be easily and seamlessly used in the many systems where Creative Commons licenses are already used such as OpenCourseWare available at dozens of major universities, K-12 and community colleges.

"A Creative Commons license is considered to be the gold standard," said California Community Colleges Board of Governors President Manuel Baca. "These licenses are already in use by scientists when they publish their work, by national museums and libraries around the world and by businesses such as Microsoft. Changing our regulations to require the licenses for any work done in the future is a necessary next step and I look forward to seeing the results as the material we contract for as a system becomes more accessible and improved with more input."

De Anza College mathematics professor Dr. Barbara Illowsky and fellow professor Susan Dean co-wrote a statistics book in the mid-1990s called "Collaborative Statistics" and converted it as an open education resource in 2007 under a Creative Commons license to help community college students afford it. Since then, Illowsky estimates that students at De Anza College alone have saved more than \$1 million in textbook costs.

Illowsky, who has been working for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office academic affairs division since 2012, has been a proponent of Creative Commons licenses for years and received the 2013 OpenCourseWare Consortium's Educator ACE Award in April for her work to expand open educational resources throughout the world.

"We are a system of 112 colleges and we should all collaborate and share our materials," Illowsky said. "So often our work at one college would disappear but now, with a Creative Commons Attribution license, we can share this information so others can access, adapt and improve upon it all for free."

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.3 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

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