



# Minnesota State FY24 Z-Degree – Funding Interest Application

Release Date: 01/08/2024

## OVERVIEW

The Minnesota State Educational Development and Technology unit is pleased to announce the FY24 Z-Degree call for applications. The Z-Degree project, with funding from the State of Minnesota and Educational Development and Technology, supports the development of a complete associate or bachelor's degree program that exclusively uses course resources that are no cost to students. These [zero-cost course resources](#) include open educational resources, open textbooks, library-curated materials, and other resources provided at no cost to the student. To be considered as a Z-Degree course the instructor cannot require students to purchase any courses resources. Supplemental or optional resources that have an associated cost can be recommended.

The [Z-Degree program](#) is entering its fifth year. Ten colleges are currently offering Z-Degrees and eight colleges and universities are in the process of developing Z-Degree programs.

This application is for institutions interested in participating in the efforts of exploring, creating, expanding and/or sustaining Z-Degree development. A college or university'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.

Campuses are eligible to apply for only one type of grant.

## CALL FOR CAMPUS PARTICIPATION

The Minnesota State system office invites campuses within the system to submit an interest application as the first step to participation in the Minnesota State Z-Degree Project in FY25-26. The system office will select participating campuses from the pool of applicants based upon responses provided in the following readiness categories:

- [Part A](#) – Campus Information {[all applicants to complete](#)}
- [Part B1](#) – Readiness Assessment {[exploration and implementation grant applicants to complete](#)}
  - [SECTION 1](#): Readiness of Campus Personnel
  - [SECTION 2](#): Structural Readiness
  - [SECTION 3](#): Cultural Readiness
  - [SECTION 4](#): Current Open / zero textbook cost inventory
  - [SECTION 5](#): Proposed Z-Degree and Course Sequence
- [Part B2](#) – Expansion Narrative {[expansion grant applicants to complete](#)}



- [Part C](#) – Course Information {all applicants to complete}

## DEFINITIONS

- **Zero Textbook Cost Degree (Z-Degree)** means a complete associate's or bachelor's degree program that exclusively uses course materials that are no cost to students such as open educational resources, open textbooks, and library-curated materials. Students may still incur costs for printing digital materials or for the following: art supplies, calculators, equipment, fees in statute or policy mandated to be charged by all colleges and universities, campus discretionary fees established by the board and adopted by the college, personal property, and service charges for course activities having value outside of the classroom.
- **Zero Textbook Cost Course** is a course that exclusively uses one or more of the following:
  - **Open Educational Resources (OER)** are 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.
  - **Open Textbooks** means a type of open educational resource released under an intellectual property license that at a minimum allows a student to obtain, retain, reuse, and redistribute the material at no cost.
- **Zero Cost Resources** are educational materials and resources available for use in a course at no cost. These can include copyrighted resources, openly licensed materials, and public domain resources. *OERs (including open textbooks) are zero cost resources.*
- **Grant Type**
  - **Exploration** – Prepare a foundation for Z-Degree development.  
*Activities may include:*
    - Faculty development
    - Open textbook exploration and review
    - Building open textbook capacity in the transfer curriculum*Exploration award requirements include:*
    - Participate in Minnesota State Z-Degree community of practice
    - Meet each semester with Associate Vice Chancellor for Educational Development and Technology and System Director for Student Success Technologies to discuss project status
    - **Funding up to \$25,000**
  - **Implementation** – Create, finalize, and implement a *new* Z-Degree.  
*Activities may include:*
    - Course development for Z-Degree with 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



- Acquisition of Library curated resources that would be available at no-cost to students

*Implementation award requirements include:*

- Ability to offer a Z-Degree by spring 2026
- Enabling of the Course Marking feature in ISRS which allows for the identification of no-cost courses
- Participate in Minnesota State Z-Degree community of practice
- Meet each semester with Associate Vice Chancellor for Educational Development and Technology and System Director for Student Success Technologies to discuss project status
- **Funding up to \$100,000**

- **Expansion and/or Sustaining** – Increase number and type of courses offered or update current Z-Degree courses in an **existing** Z-Degree.

*Activities may include:*

- Add courses or course sections
- Updating courses to reflect changes in instructors or content
- Increase the number of faculty using zero textbook cost materials in a course already part of an existing Z-Degree

*Expansion and/or Sustaining award requirements include:*

- Continued use of the Course Marking feature in ISRS which allows for the identification of no-cost courses
- Participate in Minnesota State Z-Degree community of practice
- Meet each semester with Associate Vice Chancellor for Educational Development and Technology and System Director for Student Success Technologies to discuss project status
- **Funding up to \$50,000**



## PART A – CAMPUS INFORMATION

All applicants must complete

Campus Information			
Campus Name:	Northland Community & Technical College	Campus Address:	2022 Central Ave NE, East Grand Forks, MN & 1101 Hwy First E, Thief River Falls, MN
Submitted by:	Marnie Glazier	Email:	Marnie.glazier@northlandcollege.edu
Title:	Dean, Liberal Arts, Online, & Transfer Programs	Phone:	218-683-8545
Grant Type (select one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expansion

## PART B1 – EXPLORATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

All applicants applying for **Exploration** or **Implementation** grants must complete

### SECTION 1: READINESS OF CAMPUS PERSONNEL

Has a **campus administrator** been assigned work on open educational resources as part of their **FY22-23** work plan?  Yes  No

Is there a **faculty member** (or faculty members) on your campus who is recognized as an OER champion / expert on campus?  Yes  No

Is a **campus librarian** directly involved in OER work on your campus?  Yes  No

Are there academic support staff (such as **instructional designers** or **instructional technologists**) that can assist faculty with curriculum development or the use of open educational resources?  Yes  No

Are there other personnel on your campus who could support the creation and implementation of a Z-Degree?  Yes  No

If the answer to the previous question was “yes,” please describe those personnel:

We have a dedicated and supportive ITS team, marketing department, and group of faculty who are dedicated to zero textbook cost offerings.

### SECTION 2: STRUCTURAL READINESS

Is there a designated **OER committee**, advisory group, or similar collection of professionals (i.e. textbook affordability) active on your campus?  Yes  No

Does your campus **library staff** help faculty find OER materials, materials in the public domain, or otherwise support zero textbook cost through textbook loans or similar programs?  Yes  No

Is your **campus bookstore** actively involved in an OER initiative (this may include, among other things, tracking open textbook adoptions, printing open textbooks on demand, or assisting students in accessing open textbooks online)?  Yes  No

Has your campus considered or implemented an OER **sustainability plan** that helps support continued faculty work on OER use and adoption?  Yes  No

Provide detail or additional information related to your campus' structural readiness that you wish to share:

While much of the foundational work has been done, actual implementation of the Z Degree has been stymied by economic challenges and administrative turnover.

### SECTION 3: CULTURAL READINESS

Has OER been part of *campus-wide* conversations regarding textbook and college affordability?  Yes  No

Have *campus-wide* OER trainings or workshops been provided for faculty and staff on your campus?  Yes  No

Is there a *campus-wide* textbook affordability initiative underway on your campus?  Yes  No

Is your campus student senate currently advocating for OER or textbook affordability efforts, or alternatively, have students on your campus organized around OER or issues of textbook affordability?  Yes  No

Provide detail or additional information related to your campus' *cultural readiness* that you wish to share:

A strong culture of OER and ZTC mindfulness is in place at the college, and intentional, concerted investment in the expansion of the Z-Degree would uplift and advance that culture for increased access.

### SECTION 4: CURRENT OPEN / ZERO TEXTBOOK COST INVENTORY

Approximately **how many courses** on your campus are using an open textbook, collection of OERs, or zero material cost as a replacement for a publisher alternative? 52

Approximately **how many faculty members** on your campus are using an open textbook, collection of OERs, or zero material cost as a replacement for a publisher alternative? 23

Which disciplines/programs on your campus are known for using zero material cost and/or OER?

Agriculture, Anthropology, Biology, Business, Child Development, Chemistry, Economics, English, Geology, History, Health, Math, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, & Speech

## SECTION 5: PROPOSED Z-DEGREE AND COURSE SEQUENCE

What kind of Z-Degree is your campus proposing? (*Preference will be given to Transfer Pathways, Associate of Arts that are transfer efficient, and associate degrees in high demand fields*)

We intend to offer continue to offer the Liberal Arts, History, Sociology, & Economics Transfer Pathway Z-Degrees. The goal is to expand Z Degree Transfer Pathway offerings as we go forward.

### COROLLARY QUESTIONS

Does this Z-Degree include two distinct courses in each of the 10 Transfer Curriculum Goal Areas (or fulfill Goal Area 2 by completing at least two distinct courses in the remaining 9 Transfer Curriculum Goal Areas)?  Yes  No

Does this Z-Degree have credits sufficient to complete the required Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) for the degree type (minimum 40 credits for AA, minimum 30 credits for AS)?  Yes  No

## PART B2 - EXPANSION

*All applicants applying for **Expansion** grant must complete*

Describe how you plan to expand your existing Z-Degree capacity.

We are seeking additional funding to help Northland expand our existing Z-Degree capacity, allowing us to reconvene a dedicated, faculty-led OER Working Group, thoroughly review, assess, and track our Z-Degree offerings, and follow through in expanding Z-Degree transfer pathways in alignment with Equity 2030.

This will help increase access and opportunity for students in our region, and through our Distance education expansion.

## PART C – COURSE SEQUENCE

*All applicants must complete*

## Z-DEGREE COURSE SEQUENCE

Below is the model course sequence for the Z-Degree we are proposing, including the course acronyms, the course numbers, the course titles, the number of credit hours, the MnTC goal area (or areas) they fulfill, and an indication that each course is already using zero material cost as a replacement for a publisher textbook. *(The chart below represents our Liberal Arts Z-Degree, though we have also aspired to offer Z-Degrees in History, Sociology, and Economics. The intention with the Expansion Grant would be to expand these Z-Degree transfer pathways, by adding at least two additional transfer pathways by 2026.)*

#	Course Acronym	Course #	Course Title	Credits	Goal Area(s)	Currently Using OER?			
1	SPCH	1101	Public Speaking	3	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
2	SSCI	1101	Human Relations	3	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
3	ENGL	1112	Composition I	3	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
4	ENGL	1111	Composition II	3	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
5	BIOL	2131	Nutrition	3	3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
6	NSCI	1103	Geology	4	3/10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
7	MATH	1110	College Algebra	3	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
8	MATH	1110	Statistics	3	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
9	SOCI	1101	Introduction to Sociology	3	5/7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
10	HIST	2201/2202	US History Pre-1865/Post-1865	3	5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
11	PLSC	1102	American Government/Politics	3	5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
12	ENGL	1126	Introduction to Literature	3	6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
13	MUSC	1210	Rock Music Through Time	3	6/7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
14	PHIL	1101	Introduction to Philosophy	3	6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
15	PLSC	2204	Comparative Governments	3	7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
16	SOCI	1102	Social Problems	3	7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
17	ANTH	2202	Cultural Anthropology	3	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
18	HIST	1103/1114	World History Pre-1500/Post-1500	3	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
19	PHIL	2210	Morals and Medicine	3	9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
20	PLSC	1102	American Government	3	9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
21	BIOL	1111	Biological Principles I	4	10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
22	NSCI	1103	Geology	4	10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No

## ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE OPTIONS (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LIST)

### OTHER

Is there any other information you wish to share in support of this interest application?

Northland Community and Technical College developed a Z-Degree in partnership with Distance Minnesota for online AA students through the Achieving the Dream grant.

Northland has since had three additional OER initiatives - two through support of Minnesota State Innovation funding projects, and one through the Minnesota State Z-Degree Project. These combined supports have allowed for college-wide trainings and conversation, and have helped create a culture among our faculty of considering OER in text adoption and laying the groundwork for Z-Degrees, as well as laying the groundwork for a new program page on the Northland web site for no-cost and OER courses, as well as Z-Degree pathways.

We've invested all of these funds in faculty development to develop a large assortment of OER courses and to allow professional development for some of our faculty.

Additional funding at this point will be used to develop at least two additional transfer pathways aligned with Equity 2030 work, by spring of 2026. Faculty will create and adopt new texts, as well as to maintain current and future zero cost course materials, to fully serve students on both of our campuses as well as online and through our satellite programs.

development support will enable the careful tracking, review, course marking, and web publishing of Northland's Z Degree offerings.

We have had a number of faculty members who have enthusiastically embraced the Z Degree initiative and more who are interested in adapting their courses to include them in the college's Z Degree offerings. Funding, however, remains challenging at the college, and this grant would enable continuation of the work that's begun, helping Northland to expand upon and sustain that work in going forward.

## PROJECT TIMELINE

January 8, 2024	Interest Applications Distributed
January 11, 2024 at 1p.m. CT	<a href="#">Z-Degree Project Information Session</a> (for faculty, staff, and administrators)
January 17, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. CT	<a href="#">Z-Degree Project Information Session</a> (for faculty, staff, and administrators)
February 2, 2024	Interest Applications Due
March 1, 2024	Z-Degree Project participants announced
May 15, 2024	Z-Degree Project funds disbursed to campuses
Fall 2024	Awardees meet with Associate Vice Chancellor for Educational Development and Technology

Spring 2025

and System Director for Student Success Technologies to discuss project status

Fall 2025

Spring 2026

Spring 2026

Implementing campuses offer Z-Degree Courses to students

### Statement of Understanding/Assurance Verification

I verify that I have thoroughly reviewed the information included within this application and have submitted the appropriate documents required as a part of the application process. I understand that if this Z-Degree project is funded, my college/university will be responsible for creating a Z-Degree in accordance with both this application and recent legislation. My signature below certifies that the information provided accurately describes the project and the commitment of my institution.

Minnesota State President’s Signature:

Minnesota State President’s Name and Title (printed):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Date:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Supporting Administrator Signature:

Minnesota State Administrator’s Name and Title (printed):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Date:

Click or tap here to enter text.

## SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please submit your application to Michael Olesen [michael.olesen@minnstate.edu](mailto:michael.olesen@minnstate.edu)

## QUESTIONS?

Contact [Michael Olesen](#).

Visit [MinnState.edu/OER](http://MinnState.edu/OER) to learn more about OER at Minnesota State.

*This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities. To request an alternate format, contact Human Resources at 651-201-1664. Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities may contact us via their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service. Minnesota is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer and educator.*



Course	Zero Cost	OER	CC Status	non-MnTC	MnTC Goal Areas										Grant Source	
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
FYEC 1111: Pathways to Success	x	x	CC BY	1												ATD
AGRI1105: Agribusiness and Records	x	x		3												MN State
AGRI 1110: Intro to Animal Scienc	x	x		3												MN State
AGRI 1120: Food Products and Pro	x	x		3												MN State
ANTH 2202: Cultural Anthropology	x	x							3			x				
BIOL 1111: Biological Principles I		x	CC BY				4								x	MN State
BIOL 1112: Biological Principles II		x	CC BY				4								x	MN State
BIOL 2131: Nutrition	x	x					3									
BIOL 2221: Microbiology	x	x					3									
BUSN 1110: Intro to Business	x	x		3												MN State
CDEV 1105: Development/Guidance	x	x		3												ATD
CHEM 1121: General Chemistry I	x	x	CC BYNCSA				5									
CHEM 1122: General Chemistry II	x	x	CC BYNCSA				5									
CHEM 2205: Survey Gen/Org/Bio	x	x	CC BYNCSA				4									
ECON 2201: Microeconomics	x	x	CC BY						3							ATD
ECON 2202: Macroeconomics	x	x	CC BY						3							ATD
ENGL 1111: Composition I	x	x	CC BY		3	x										ATD
ENGL 1112: Composition II	x	x	CC BY		3	x										ATD
ENLG 1126: Intro to Literature	x	x								3						MinnState
HIST 1103: World History Pre 1500	x	x							3			x				
HIST 1114: World History Post 1500	x	x							3			x				
HIST 2125: World Wars 1914-1945	x	x							3			x				
HIST 2201: US History Pre 1865	x	x							3			x				
HIST 2202: US History Post 1865	x	x							3			x				
HIST 2213: Civil War/Reconstruction	x	x							3							
HIST 2215: American Indian Studies	x	x							3			x				
HIST 2250: American Minorities	x	x							3			x				
HLTH 1108: Cultural Diversity	x	x	CC BY	1												ATD
HLTH 1110: Nurs Assist	x	x		3												
HPER 2270: Health and Wellness	x	x	CC BY	3												ATD
MATH 1110: College Algebra	x	x	CC BY						3							ATD
MATH 2220: Statistics	x	x	CC BY						4							ATD



Faculty Developer/user	Notes
J. Dahlen/Any	
A. Nelson	
A. Nelson	
A. Nelson	
L. Neppel	
Jeff Bell/Jung	Lab manual fee
Jeff Bell/Jung	Lab manual fee
T. Moody	
T. Moody	
Shannon Nelson	
Rogers	
K. Kizer	
K. Kizer	
K. Kizer	
K. Paulson	
K. Paulson	
J. Dahlen	
J. Dahlen	
S. Dupree	
Curfman	
Curfman	
Curfman	
Boone/Curfman	
Boone/Curfman	
Curfman	
Curfman	
Curfman	
J. Berry	
/Any	
E. McMahon	
M. Simmers	Redone 2022
M. Simmers	

L. Samuelson	
K. Kizer	
Feldmeier	
Stephen Nelson	
B. Braga	
B. Braga	
Curfman	
/Any	
Curfman	
Curfman	
L. Neppel	
Andrys/Paulson/Dahlen/Pasierb	
S. Dupree	