



OPEN
ILLINOIS

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KEY FINDINGS AND STUDENT REFLECTIONS FROM THE "ILLINOIS COURSE MATERIALS SURVEY: STUDENT PERSPECTIVE"

Zoom's live transcript is enabled.





Key Findings

Q&A



Student Panel Reflections

Q&A



- **CARLI Staff**
 - Nicole Swanson
 - Elizabeth Clarage
 - Michele Leigh
 - Anne Craig
 - Margaret Chambers
- **CARLI Open Educational Resources Subcommittee**
 - Kim Hale, Columbia College Chicago
 - Mallory Jallas, Illinois State University
 - Lauren Kosrow, College of DuPage
 - Daniel Matthews, Moraine Valley Community College
 - Christina Norton, Bradley University
 - Dee Anna Phares, Northern Illinois University

- **Full Report**
- **Survey Goal**
 - Identify Illinois students' needs regarding affordable course materials and interest in OER or other affordable options.

How much did students spend?

How are students affected by the cost?

Which demographics are most impacted?

Interest in open educational resources?

Interest in other affordable options?

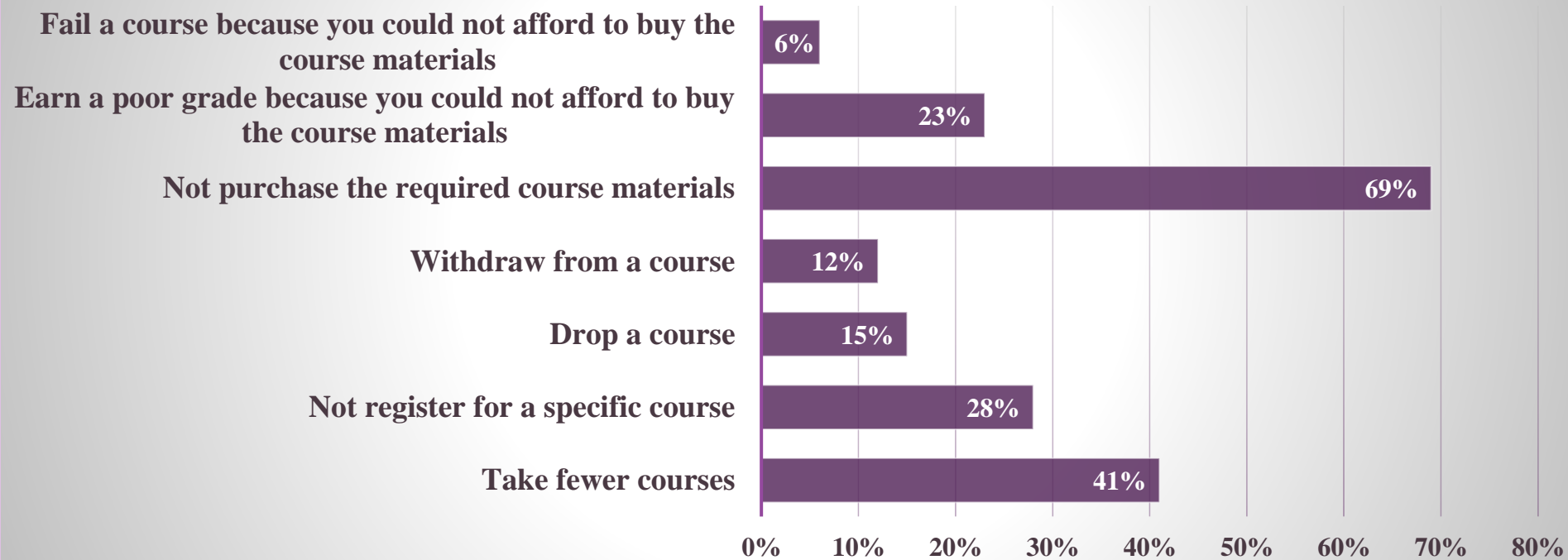
Formats and features preferences?

- **Conducted April 5 - December 31, 2023**
- **Participation**
 - **4,617** eligible students
 - **52** Illinois institutions represented
 - **22** community colleges
 - **21** private colleges and universities
 - **9** public universities

Course material costs are adversely impacting students' academic careers

“I can't get the education I'm putting myself in debt for because I can't afford to put myself more in debt.”

Cost Impact



FINDING 1 (CONTINUED)

“Being unable to pay for materials has dictated what class I do and don't take.”

“I can't get the education I'm putting myself in debt for because I can't afford to put myself more in debt.”

“I do feel as though sometimes other kids have a greater advantage since they have access to the book and I do not.”

“I had to drop multiple courses due to textbooks costs. It slowed my dream and my pace.”

Course material costs are lowering students' abilities to meet basic needs, increasing their debt, increasing their work hours/jobs, and increasing their emotional stress.

"I am stressed and can barely afford school."

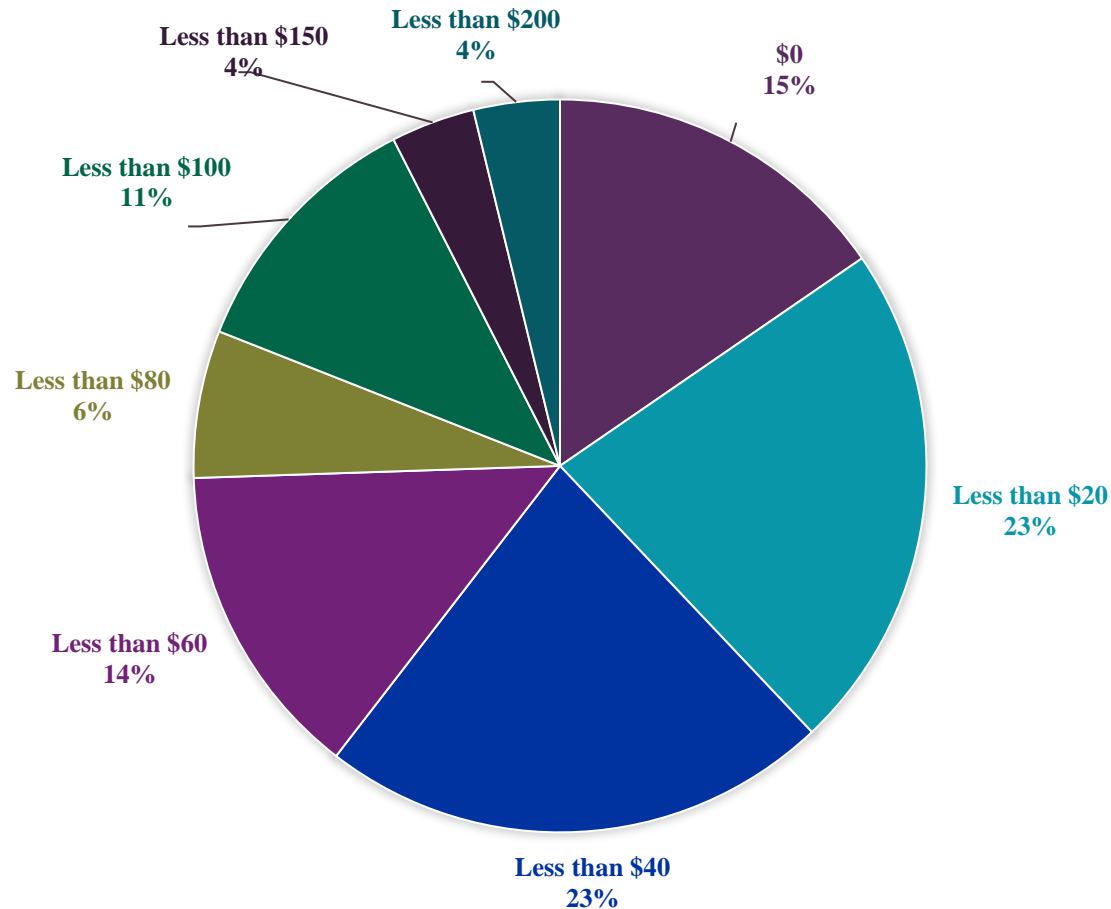
"I have to put in extra hours at both of my jobs (35+ hrs per week) in order to cover both tuition and textbooks. This causes me to fall behind in my schoolwork and miss important educational opportunities."

"I entirely support myself at college, which sometimes means buying an expensive textbook instead of food, clothes, insulin (I'm diabetic), etc."

"I find myself in credit card debt to pay."

61% of students considered costs of \$0 - less than \$40 to be low cost for the course materials in one course.

COURSE MATERIALS CONSIDERED LOW-COST



FINDING 4

On average, students are spending \$297.71 on course materials per term.

Number of Courses	Number of Students (Percentage)	Average Amount Spent for Course materials
1	335 (9%)	\$227.28
2	603 (16%)	\$276.84
3	515 (14%)	\$295.46
4	1036 (28%)	\$277.97
5	764 (21%)	\$323.07
6	289 (8%)	\$334.59
7	139 (4%)	\$445.83

Students are extremely frustrated by online paid-access code materials required to complete assignments/quizzes.

It's insulting to be forced to buy a textbook just to take the class and then not even be allowed to keep the book. It shows a real lack of desire to educate students. The point is not to hoard some secret knowledge."

"I'm especially sore about the online courses because I can't even take tests without paying over \$100 for access. This is extortion! University is now pay-to-grade!"

"Begged and borrowed books when possible, but when codes were required to purchase for the class it became harder. The cost of books each semester was nearly the cost of attending the school."

Students emphasized a wide variety of benefits when faculty provided materials that were free to students.

“These materials show me that the professor cares about me as a human not just a student. I am more likely to actually use these resources when they are already provided for me.”

“The free textbook helped me to be able to make the semester affordable enough to continue and earn good grades in the class.”

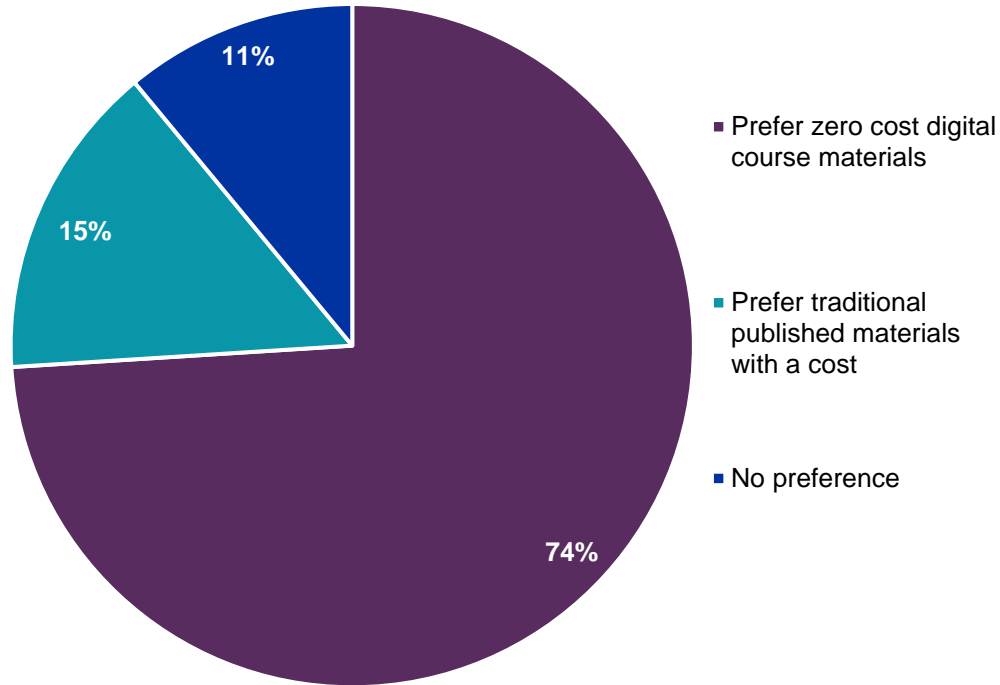
“Free materials even the playing field and allow all students to fully participate.”

“All free materials were always the most relevant to class and typically related to current events.”

“Free materials are not just lower cost, but higher quality, building information literacy skills, offering multiple viewpoints, requiring comparison and analysis and other critical thinking. Students also build knowledge of how to find and use sources as a professional and in the future.”

74% of students prefer digital course materials with no cost over traditionally published course materials with a cost.

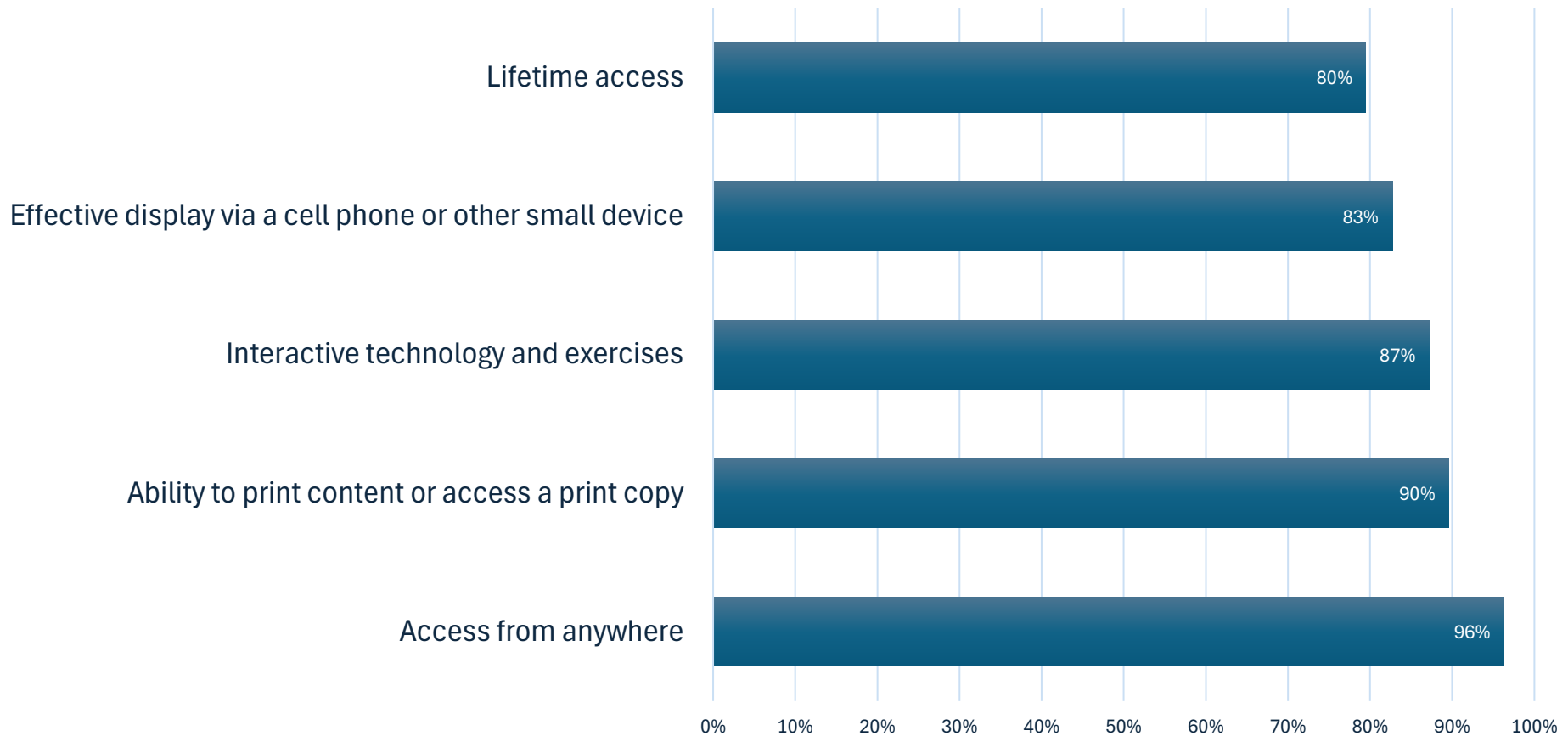
Student preferences for course material formats



FINDING 8

Over 75% of respondents identified that all course materials features that allow them to use the materials how, when, and where they want are very helpful or helpful.

Preferred access to course materials



- Power BI data visualization dashboard
- Continue our support for creation and adoption of OER and other affordable options in Illinois.
- Advocate for stable, recurring funding to support these efforts.
- Elevate students' voices through this survey data.
- Work together with state partners.
- Redistribute this survey periodically in the future.

QUESTIONS?



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Moderator:

- Christina Norton, Bradley University

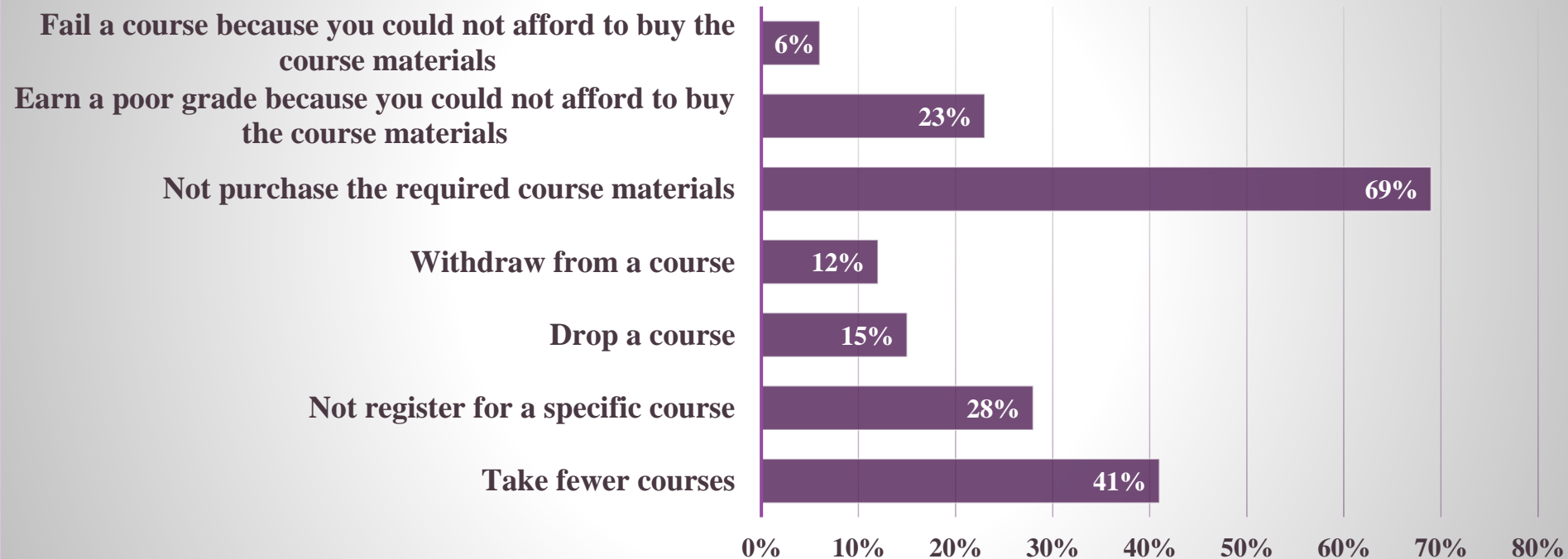
Student panelists:

- Alejandro Bottia-Forero, Columbia College Chicago
- Franklin Ocaña II, Oakton Community College
- Ayesha Shafiuddin, College of DuPage
- Lauren Stec, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
- Claudia Zarycki, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

What frustrates you about how the cost of course materials is impacting fellow students' academic careers?

“I can't get the education I'm putting myself in debt for because I can't afford to put myself more in debt.”

Cost Impact



Are there any things you'd like to see Illinois campuses do better to support students for classes that have high course material costs?

"BRO SO MUCH LIKE WHEN I TELL YOU BOOKS ON TOP OF A PARKING PASS AND MATERIALS LIKE I HAVE NO MONEY LEFT AND I WANT MY DEGREE SO BAD BUT THERES SO MANY COSTS I HAVENT ACCOUNTED FOR AND I THOUGHT I WAS DECENTLY PREPARED :("

What has been your experience with online paid-access code course materials which often require purchase in order to complete course assignments and quizzes?

“Beyond the simple fact that many of these textbooks are glorified quiz books, paying exorbitant fees for them feels especially ridiculous since the access we are provided expires after the course ends. It's insulting to be forced to buy a textbook just to take the class and then not even be allowed to keep the book. It shows a real lack of desire to educate students. The point is not to hoard some secret knowledge.”

Have you taken a course where the instructor provided Open Educational Resources, or other materials freely available to you? What were your experiences?



Are there any additional topics you would like to discuss regarding the results of this survey or college course materials in general?



QUESTIONS?



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Contact CARLI:
support@carli.illinois.edu

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