

Instructor Tips: Making Textbooks More Affordable

Textbook Selection

1. Commit to using the same textbook and edition for two or three years to ensure a supply of used books. If you commit to the same textbook for at least four semesters (they don't have to be consecutive) notify the bookstore; they will most likely make the book available for rental.
2. Talk with your colleagues about adopting the same textbook for the same or similar courses taught by different faculty.
3. Use price as one factor in the textbook adoption process; if quality is comparable, consider adopting the less expensive textbook.
4. Let students use an older edition of the textbook and provide them with information about which parts are different from the newer edition.
5. Where possible and academically appropriate, assign editions and translations in the public domain, as this can significantly reduce the cost of the title or excerpt.
6. Consider unbundled textbook packages.
7. Contact the publisher's sales representative and negotiate for a lower price. Publishers sometimes raise the price of textbooks on a schedule, without notifying instructors, regardless of whether or not their costs are increasing. And, if you are choosing between multiple books, you may have a negotiating advantage. You can find contact info for sales reps on most publishers' websites. If you need assistance, the textbook department at the ASUC store may be able to help you.

eResources and Other Alternatives to Purchasing Textbooks

1. Use open resource textbooks and course materials as much as possible; create online syllabi with links to online reading materials that combine open educational resources with e-book and e-journal content licensed by the Library and available for linking. Please see Services for Instructors (http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/services/for_users/faculty_instructors.html#reserves) and eReadings (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/services/ereadings.html>).
2. Place several copies of the textbooks on Library reserve for use by students. (Check to see whether the Library already has copies; consider contributing your advance copies.)
3. Consider whether textbook edition is rentable by checking its status at Rent-A-Text (<http://www.rent-a-text.com/faculty.php>). If a title is not currently rentable and you plan on using it for multiple semesters, contact the bookstore to check the viability of offering it as a campus-specific rental.
4. Consider using electronic and open content solutions available to students at very low or no cost (<http://www.flatworldknowledge.com/>).

Timely Placement of Textbook Orders

1. Meet Cal Student Store textbook adoption deadlines: October 15 for spring textbooks, March 15 for summer textbooks, and April 15 for fall textbooks. This allows the bookstore to post required books in a timely manner in the schedule of classes and to source used textbooks. While the deadlines are important factors in cost, if you miss the deadlines, the bookstore will still try to fill your order.
2. Even if you use other vendors, submit your book lists to the Cal Student Store:
 - The Higher Education Opportunity Act requires the campus to post the required books in the schedule of classes; the Cal Student Store compiles this list.
 - The Store can offer students more money at buyback if it knows that the book is being used on campus again.
 - The Store offers book buyback, used books, and rental books, more options than many stores.
 - The Store shares the full booklist with Ned's Bookstore.
3. Post required textbooks as early as possible with ISBN as well as author, title, publisher, copyright date and edition number to allow students to comparison shop.
4. Although a complete list is of course preferable, you should submit a partial list to the store if you haven't decided on all your books.
5. Enable the Assistive Technology Teaching and Learning Center (ATTLC, <http://attlc.berkeley.edu>) to provide more timely services to students with visual or other disabilities by early adoption of textbooks and readers.

Spread the Word

1. Add Textbook Affordability Tips for Students <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/textbooks/students.shtml> to your bspace page and link to it on your syllabus.
2. Share best practices and knowledge of more affordable options for course materials with colleagues.