

Textbook Strategies

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September 2009

Goals:

1. Reduce prices for students. The aim should be to reduce costs to less than 50% of the current list price of the course textbook.
2. The textbook or alternative content must meet the teaching needs of faculty.
3. In the near term, we should experiment. The textbook industry is in flux and there are many approaches being tried. The more experience we have the better.
4. In the longer term, we should look for solutions that are sustainable over time.

Strategies:

1. If you are using traditional textbooks:
 - a. If you do nothing else, **get your textbook requests in early**. This provides students with time to find the best price and means that the bookstore will buy back books and sell them used. It is also a federal requirement that student know what books are required when they register.
 - b. **Don't require textbooks that are bundled** with other material. This reduces the resale possibilities for students.
 - c. **Allow older editions** when possible and make sure students and the bookstore know this is an option.
2. **Don't Change Editions.** Where the content of a discipline does not change rapidly, declare that you will continue to use the current edition of a textbook and will continue to do so for four or five years (skip one or two editions). Let the bookstore and your students know. Older editions can be purchased on the used book market for very reasonable prices. This strategy can be especially meaningful in large enrolling multi-section courses.
3. **Consider e-book alternatives.** Look at FlatWorld Knowledge (www.flatworldknowledge.com) or CourseSmart (www.coursesmart.com). Note that CourseSmart is the e-textbook portal for the established corporate publishers it has thousands of titles; the prices are about 60% of list for 180 days of access.
4. **Consider a rental program.** If you can make a multi-year commitment to a particular edition of a textbook, especially for a high enrolling course, this could be a good option.
5. **Consider Open Educational Resources.** IU has recently joined Connexions (www.cnx.org) a major provider of open education resources. Some courses and areas of study have flourishing content here that can be linked to or imported into Oncourse.
6. **Create and manage the textbook materials** your students require. It may be possible to create content that can be shared through Connexions or other means.