
UNIVERSITY BEST PRACTICES FOR TEXTBOOK ADOPTION

The University of Maryland is committed to ensuring that textbook adoptions promote a high quality educational experience. The University is also committed to minimizing the costs of textbooks for its students, which have increased substantially in recent years and have had a significant fiscal impact on students. Faculty should carefully consider the appropriateness of textbooks and other supplemental materials for each course (content, pedagogy, and teaching in the discipline), the cost to students, and factors that determine the cost. The importance of considering costs in textbook adoption decisions was addressed in the State of Maryland's College Textbook Competition and Affordability Act of 2009.

UNIVERSITY BEST PRACTICES GUIDELINES

1. **Educational Appropriateness:** Textbooks and other supplemental materials assigned for use in coursework serve as important tools in the educational process. Faculty members should select textbooks and other materials that are suitable for the subject matter in a course, that support appropriate pedagogical approaches to teaching within a discipline, and that promote the goal of providing a high quality educational experience.
2. **Prices of Textbooks:** Publishers are required to provide information on prices of textbooks and supplemental materials, both in bundled and unbundled form, and for both the current edition and previous editions. Publishers are required to include information on substantial content revisions between current and previous editions. Publishers are also required to provide information on paperback or other alternative forms for materials and lists of textbooks that are classified as integrated textbooks. This provides the opportunity for faculty to obtain information on a variety of textbook choices. The University Book Center will also provide price information to faculty. Faculty should take into account price considerations in making textbook decisions.
3. **Early Adoption:** To ensure textbook adoptions are made with sufficient lead time to confirm availability and, where possible, ensure maximum availability of used textbooks, faculty members (or textbook coordinators) should submit textbook and course material adoption information to the University Book Center (See Textbook Adoption Process below) on the following schedule:

Fall Semester and Summer Session adoptions by May 1

Spring Semester and Winter Term adoptions by December 1

Faculty members assigned to a course after the deadlines above should make textbook selections on a timely basis.

Early adoption of textbooks enables bookstores to pay students the most for their used books. It enables bookstores to secure additional textbooks from the national book market and helps to ensure that textbooks will be on the shelves in time for the start of classes.

4. **Content of New Editions and Consideration of Used Textbooks:** Faculty should carefully consider the content of new versus existing editions of textbooks. Repeated use of the same textbook in a course provides opportunities for students to acquire used textbooks, which can often save students significant costs. In choosing between a new version and an existing edition, faculty should consider whether content revisions warrant the cost differential that is often associated with using a new edition.
5. **Use of Required Items:** Faculty members should ensure that a significant portion of each assigned textbook will be used in the course. If supplemental materials are sold with the textbook (a practice called bundling), faculty members should be aware of the variance in price between the bundled and unbundled items. They should consider whether all parts of the bundle are intended for use in the course. Faculty may ask the bookstore whether it can obtain from the publishers only a subset of the bundled items.
6. **Alternative Approaches:** Faculty members may want to consider permitting students to purchase electronic versions of textbooks when available or to incorporate the use of online resources into course instruction wherever feasible or prudent.

TEXTBOOK ADOPTION PROCESS

All textbook adoption information, including the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), should be submitted to the University Book Center (UBC) by May 1 for Summer and Fall classes and by December 1 for Winter Term and Spring classes. At the UBC website, click on “Faculty” then follow the directions from that point. UBC textbook staff are available for additional assistance at 301-314-BOOK (2665).

Textbook information may be provided to other vendors (including Maryland Book Exchange, BookHolders.com, or other online vendors) but not in lieu of submitting it to the UBC. Once the textbook adoption information is verified, it will be posted on Testudo by UBC in compliance with the University policy on textbook orders. Information posted will include title, author, publisher, edition, copyright date and publication date, ISBN, and anticipated enrollment for the course.

FACULTY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:

As directed by the provisions of the Textbook Affordability Law of 2009 and to ensure compliance with that law, faculty members must submit an acknowledgement of compliance at <http://www.faculty.umd.edu/textbooks/acknowledge>. The text of the law is incorporated into the acknowledgment form.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Faculty-authored texts required for purchase by enrolled students must be approved through the process defined by the University’s “Policy Concerning the Use of Self-Authored Course Materials” found at www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii100b.html.
2. The University System of Maryland’s “Policy on Textbook Affordability Measures” can be found at www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-1000.pdf.