


MEMORANDUM**TO:** Deans, Directors, and Department Heads**FROM:** Warwick A. Arden
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost **SUBJECT:** Textbook Adoption and Additional Course Costs**DATE:** November 18, 2019

It is time to choose your textbooks and make decisions about any additional software or hardware needed for your course for the spring semester. As you make these decisions, please remember that we strive to provide a world-class education to students at a reasonable cost, minimizing additional fees when possible, and that is fully accessible.

Textbooks

The emphasis on textbook costs across the UNC system continues to create a greater sense of urgency to submit timely textbook requests. The early deadline of October 15 to submit your textbook requests for the Spring 2020 semester has already passed. The bookstore still accepts textbook requests, though, and timely adoptions allow the bookstore:

- To buy back eligible textbooks thereby returning more money to our students
- A greater opportunity to obtain low-cost used books from the open market, internet, and wholesalers
- To have enough time for materials to be delivered, stocked, and available to students before the first day of classes
- To resolve any issues between publishers and/or wholesalers that might delay course material availability for student purchase
- To work with the Libraries to provide a copy of all required texts on Library Course Reserves

Mandates of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, as well as the UNC Board of Governors, specify that the bookstore must be notified if instructors or departments adopt materials not supplied by the bookstore or do not use any texts at all. As the main point of contact for students, it is important the bookstore know what materials an instructor is using (or not using) so that it can relay accurate course information.

Accessibility

The university requires that all course materials, i.e. textbooks, supplemental materials, hardware, software, and website access, be accessible to all students, particularly those using assistive technologies.

Hardware/Software

In addition to textbook costs, the accessibility of and rising costs of software and hardware are also of concern across the UNC system. In addition to, or in lieu of a textbook, instructors often ask students to purchase individual licenses for access to content or the use of hardware or software (for example, access to WebAssign or a license to use some other online tool). Across multiple courses, these purchases for additional access to materials or resources continue to add up significantly as a cost to our students.

Before asking students to purchase additional software or hardware for your course, please review the resources that are currently available campus wide to students at no cost, for example:

- Moodle - which includes online assignment submission, quizzing/testing, and discussion tools
- Top Hat – a classroom response system available for faculty to use at no cost to students
- My Mediasite for recording videos
- Zoom and Google Hangouts - for online meetings

Additionally, please check for resources that may be freely available to your students in your college or online. Contact DELTA, learntech@ncsu.edu for additional information.

Feedback

The continuing rise in the cost of textbooks, hardware, and software is a concern to everyone in higher education. Reducing the cost of learning materials will take a combined effort of the NC State Bookstores, faculty, departments, and the Administration.

If you have questions or additional ideas for effective management of these costs, please contact me (provost@ncsu.edu), Anthony Sanders (anthony_sanders@ncsu.edu), or Christopher Walsh (crwalsh@ncsu.edu).

If you have questions or additional ideas for software or hardware that should be considered for an enterprise-level license for student use, please contact LearnTech (learntech@ncsu.edu).

If you would like to have a conversation about adopting an Open Educational Resource in place of your current textbook, please contact either David Howard (dlhoward@ncsu.edu), DELTA, or Will Cross (wmcross@ncsu.edu), Libraries.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Attachments: Best practices in textbook management
Best practices in adopting additional hardware, software, or license to support your teaching
OpenStax Institutional Partnership Program