

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors, and Department Heads

FROM: Warwick A. Arden
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost



SUBJECT: Textbook Adoption and Additional Course Costs

DATE: March 7, 2018

It is time to choose your textbooks and make decisions about any additional software or hardware needed for your course for the fall 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.

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 April 5 to submit your textbook requests for the Fall 2018 semester is approaching. The bookstore accepts requests at any point, though early adoption allows 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.

Hardware/Software

In addition to textbook costs, rising software and hardware costs 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 (for example, clickers) 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 in rooms with [adequate instructional wifi](#)
- My Mediasite for recording videos
- Blackboard Collaborate 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 licenses to support your teaching