

OPEN 101

AN ACTION PLAN FOR AFFORDABLE TEXTBOOKS

THE STUDENT PIRGS

NeedTech MTS

- active in tempo
- has training man
- learners have laptops
- wants online provider
- using Robo for several years
- some have limited experience
- 2015 on subscription
- make courses more easier
- new functionality not necessary
- keep it simple
- no graphic interface
- no import icon
- no digital icon
- no choice
- no choice
- no choice
- no choice

LAUREN

Wife's Skills

LOOKS

- look - search on middle and then where

STARTLINE FEB 15

DAVID

SHIRAZ

→ 508C?

Joshua Soren Center

Remaining projects, projects, etc.

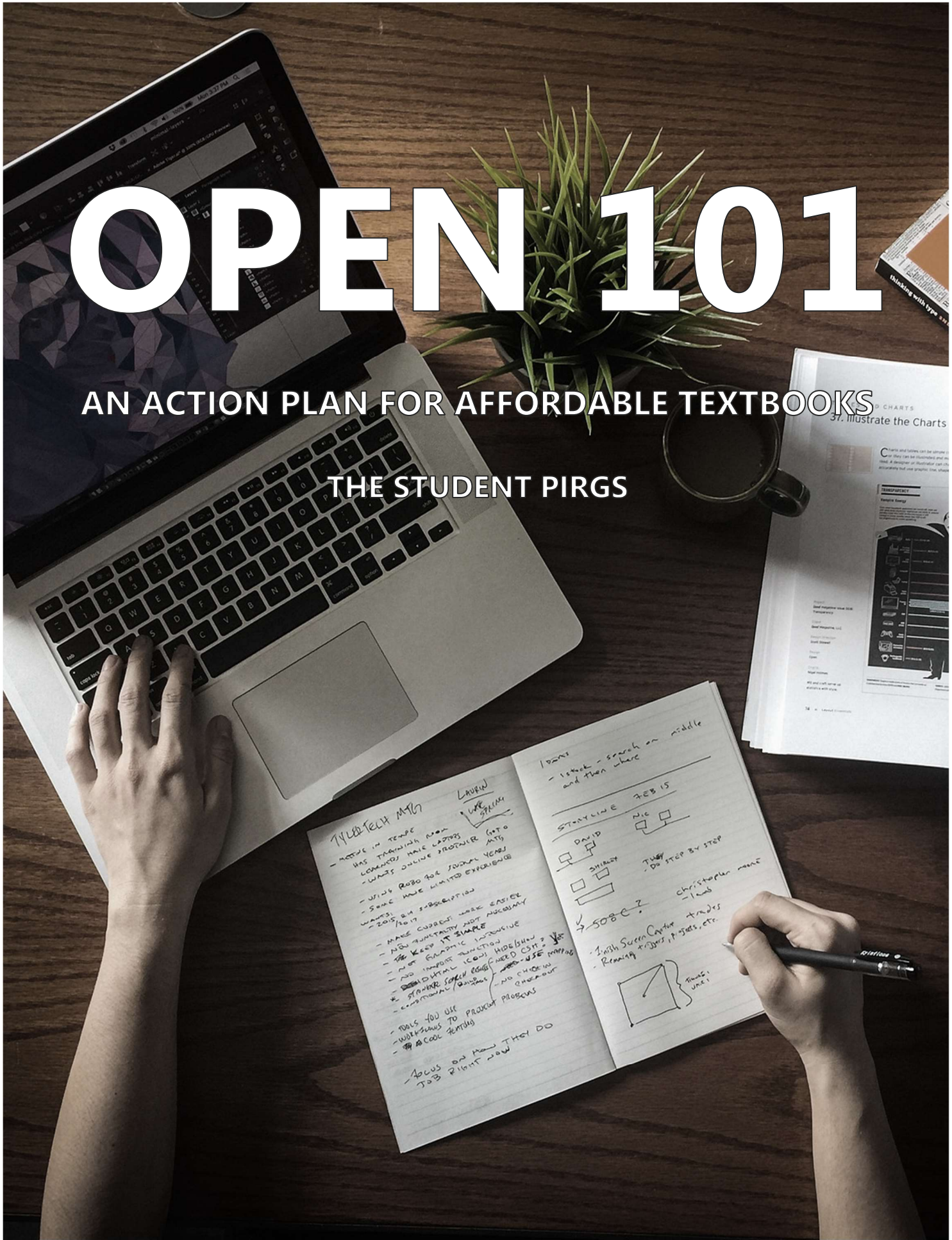
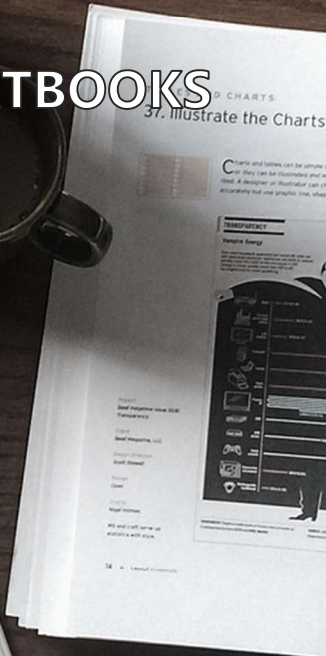
christopher more

- 100%

Trade

UNE 1

The notebook contains handwritten notes and diagrams. On the left page, there is a list of bullet points under the heading 'NeedTech MTS'. On the right page, there are notes under 'LOOKS' and 'STARTLINE FEB 15', including names like 'DAVID', 'SHIRAZ', and '508C?'. There is also a flowchart with boxes and arrows, and a graph showing an upward trend. A hand is visible at the bottom right, holding a pen and writing on the notebook.



OPEN 101

AN ACTION PLAN FOR AFFORDABLE TEXTBOOKS

BY KAITLYN VITEZ

THE STUDENT PIRGS
JANUARY 25TH, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
Purpose.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Analysis.....	7
Course Comparison.....	9
Recommendations.....	20
Methodology.....	21
Listing of Colleges in Study.....	22
Citations.....	23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to first thank the volunteers and campus organizers of the Student PIRGs for their advocacy on the ground. The progress we've made to make college more affordable would not have been possible without the countless hours you've dedicated to faculty outreach, petition and survey collection, and student government lobbying.

Thank you to Chris Lindstrom (USPIRG Education Fund) and James Dubick (Student Government Resource Center), for their help with the report, and lots of #gratitude to the indefatigable Saman Azimi (Student Government Resource Center), who helped gather class and textbook data.

Additionally, thank you to the PIRG alumni in the open education community for their feedback on this report: Nicole Allen, Ethan Senack, and Katie Steen.

And, of course, the author would like to thank the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation for their continued financial support for this campaign.



To attribute this work, please credit the Student PIRGs and provide a link to www.studentpirgs.org/textbooks.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Cover photo credit: Lumenbrite via pixabay.com/en/users/lumenbrite-2478906 (CC0)

The Student Public Interest Research Groups (Student PIRGs) are independent statewide student organizations that work on issues like environmental protection, consumer protection, and hunger and homelessness. For more than 40 years, our students and staff have been making a real difference in people's lives and winning concrete changes to build a better world.

AUTHOR: Kaitlyn Vitez

600 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003
(908) 894-0642
kvitez@pirg.org
@HigherEdPIRG

Introduction

Since 2006, the cost of textbooks has increased four times the rate of inflation.ⁱ The textbook market does not function like others, where companies compete for their share of the marketplace and the laws of supply and demand affect the price of the product. In contrast, students *must* purchase the materials assigned by a professor, who may or may not be considering price among other factors when assigning materials. While students can save money with some types of digital materials and through the used books market, publishers have found ways to keep prices high and diminish the cost saving impact of these alternatives. Many professors who adopt publisher materials for their courses now require students to purchase more restrictive and costly products such as access codes, which hide homework and quizzes behind an online paywall. These products are costly because they are typically bundled with print or digital textbooks, and students usually cannot find the bundle for sale anywhere but at the campus bookstore, which locks them into paying full price. Worse, at the end of the term, the student's access to the online material expires, and this expiration also renders the other material in the bundle valueless in the market for used materials. Existing federal statute regulates the practice of bundling, but includes sizeable loopholes that allow it to continue.

Methodology

Our study looked at forty public and private non-profit two- and four-year colleges. Based on enrollment figures published in the course catalog or institutional research data, we identified the ten courses taken most often across these schools. These top ten courses often form a "core" curriculum requirement for graduation, such as the requirement at liberal arts colleges that students take a lab science class, a social science class, and a writing class. We then cross reference that list with each school's bookstore or book list and tracked the costs of required class materials across colleges in our sample. A side-by-side cost comparison of these assigned materials by course appears in the body of the report.

Key Findings

1. When publishers bundle a textbook with an access code, it eliminates most opportunities for students to cut costs with the used book market. Of the access code bundles in our sample, forty-five percent—nearly half—were unavailable from any other source we could find except the campus bookstore. This eliminated student's ability to shop around and meant that they were forced to pay full price for these materials. For the classes using bundles, students would likely be stuck paying full price, whereas for the classes using a textbook only, students could cut costs up to fifty-eight percent by buying used online.
1. Schools that have invested in open educational resources (OER) generated significant savings for their students. OER are educational materials that can be downloaded or accessed for free online while carrying many other benefits for students and professors. For example, in Massachusetts, Greenfield Community College's use of OER in three of the six courses in our study meant that students there could spend as little as \$31 per course on materials, compared to a national average of \$153 per course.
2. Switching the ten introductory classes in our study to OER nationwide would save students \$1.5 billion per year in course materials costs.

PURPOSE

Since we first launched the Make Textbooks Affordable campaign in 2004, the Student PIRGs have explored many factors in the rapid rise of textbook prices, as well as the ways that the higher education community can address these costs. Our research has consistently found that major textbook publishers have abused their position in this marketplace, pushing prices higher and making products more restrictive in their resale and retention. Based on publishers' past performance, students cannot expect this same industry that caused the textbook cost crisis to adequately address their dire need for affordable textbook options in a profit-driven marketplace.

In addition, textbook prices are frequently overshadowed in the public debate by the rising cost of tuition and rising rates of student debt. Since the price of books is comparatively smaller, textbook affordability is rarely afforded the same consideration, even though it can have a significant impact on student finances.

However, textbook affordability is a problem that college administrators, staff, faculty, and other decision makers can no longer ignore. In our 2014 report *Fixing the Broken Textbook Market*, we discussed the reality that faculty see every day in classrooms- sixty-five percent of students have skipped buying the materials they need to fully participate and succeed in their courses because of the cost.ⁱⁱ

Furthermore, in 2016's *Covering the Cost*, we pointed out that more than \$3 billion in financial aid goes to pay for textbooks- money that could instead be spent to reduce the cost of higher education.ⁱⁱⁱ

After studying many different options for reducing textbook prices, our research has found that open educational resources (OER) present the best solution. Open education aims to reshape the marketplace by moving knowledge into the commons and allowing students of all socioeconomic backgrounds and institutions to access the materials they need to succeed in class.

However, despite the advantages of open textbooks, awareness and adoption has been incremental. In the recent survey by Babson, only one-fifth of faculty were satisfied with the price of their existing materials, but half expressed difficulty in finding OER to fit their course's needs.^{iv}

This report aims to identify ways to promote textbook affordability in a place where campuses can make a large and immediate impact- in core required classes that all undergraduates must take to get a degree.

INTRODUCTION

Our Research

Over the past 14 years, the Student PIRGs have investigated publisher practices and the student experience in the textbook market. The data our reports present have advanced the understanding of the textbook market and identified many arguments to support the need for more affordable textbooks. Furthermore, in our national and campus-based grassroots organizing, our team has won the support of thousands of faculty members, surveyed more than 15,000 students, and worked to implement real solutions to the textbook affordability crisis from book swaps and rentals to implementing competitive OER grant programs.

The Broken Textbook Market

The skyrocketing price of course materials over the past decade has been well documented. Analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that over the past decade, the price of textbooks and supplies has risen four times as fast as inflation;^v over the past forty years, textbook costs rose 1,041 percent.^{vi}

This problem does not exist in a vacuum- the cost of higher education has also risen, thanks largely to a decline in state and federal investments. Seventy percent of Americans hold student loan debt, which in total has surpassed \$1.31 trillion.^{vii}

On a fundamental level, the textbook market does not function like others, where companies compete for their share of the marketplace and the laws of supply and demand affect price. Students must purchase the materials assigned by a professor, who may or may not be taking considerations like price into account when they choose materials. This means that publishers can raise prices with abandon, and focus their marketing materials on features that appeal to faculty instructing needs and styles. The current trend in course materials is bundling, which combines a textbook with an online access code for supplemental material. Bundles of courseware lock students into paying full price, and render all material in the bundle useless for resale.

In response to this problem, in 2008 Congress reauthorized the Higher Education Act with new rules on textbook information disclosure, including a requirement that publishers disclose textbook pricing information with professors in marketing materials. Additionally, it required publishers to “unbundle” textbooks by offering all components of a bundle for sale individually, with a few exceptions for “integrated products.” While a 2013 GAO report^{viii} found that publishers generally offer the components of bundles for sale separately, it also noted that students may have limited options for obtaining these components because they are not always stocked at the campus bookstore. As a result, if a student is assigned a bundle, they are still too often pushed to buy at the bookstore, as we will demonstrate later in this report.

When just a handful of publishers control the majority of the textbook publishing business, students suffer. Our previous reporting has shown that at some point in their college careers,

sixty-five percent of students have skipped buying a book because of cost, despite the fear that their grades will suffer as a result.

Products on the Market Today

Here are a few definitions that will guide our conversation in this report.

Traditional textbook- a printed text, peer-reviewed and faculty-written, that is published under closed copyright. This is the basic product that has dominated course materials lists for decades, and is published by an academic press or one of the large commercial publishers like Pearson.

Open textbook- a peer-reviewed and faculty-written text that is published under open copyright and freely accessible online. The open license means that anyone can freely download, edit, and share the content with attribution to the original author. OpenStax, based at Rice University, is a popular publisher of open textbooks.

Open educational resource (OER)- as defined by the Hewlett Foundation, OER are “teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.”^{ix}

E-textbook- a digital version of a textbook. Typically, these are hosted on a secondary platform like VitalSource or RedShelf. While often available at a lower price point, these digital rentals come with limitations that students don't like- such as copy-paste or print limitations. Additionally, many e-texts that are sold to students at the campus bookstore expire just like access codes do.

Access code- a string of letters or a login that grants a user term-limited access to various supplemental resources like homework, quizzes, and exams. Access codes can only be redeemed once, and often students cannot retain the coursework hosted online at the end of their course.

Bundling- the act of combining a textbook (e-text or traditional) with an access code and/or other supplemental materials like a lab manual. The pervasiveness of bundled textbooks with access codes means that students cannot resell the book- or will receive pennies on the dollar for the resale.

Custom edition- a version of a textbook created by the publisher specifically for a school or professor, adding or rearranging content to suit their needs. These can only be bought and sold on-campus, reducing opportunities to cut costs by buying used online. In some cases, these are sold without a binding in loose-leaf (or “a la carte”) format that is impossible to resell. Custom editions can sometimes be conflated with bundles, since a book labelled “custom” may simply

bundle with a “generic” textbook with a supplemental access code, rather than an actual custom edition of a book.

New edition- an updated version of a textbook, typically every 2-4 years. Publishers claim this is to update facts, graphics, and other features, but our previous research found that these changes are merely nominal. The frequent revision of textbooks is a classic publisher tactic to undermine the used book market, since when faculty adopt a new edition, students cannot resell older editions at the end of the class. Sometimes, professors will assign an older edition of a textbook to help students find cheaper used versions, but after a few years the online used book market dries up and students must purchase higher-priced books from the campus bookstore.

ANALYSIS

After reviewing hundreds of courses across the country, we’ve found a few trends that highlight the challenges of today’s textbook marketplace. Course materials are becoming increasingly restrictive- and with restricted access comes inflexible pricing that hurts students. The practice of bundling textbooks with access codes essentially locks students in to paying full price. When faculty choose not to use a bundled access code the costs not only drops, but students can seek out more affordable used options instead. Costs drop even further if faculty transition to open textbooks. Open textbooks give faculty the ability to adapt course materials to perfectly fit their course, without the sticker shock of traditional textbooks.

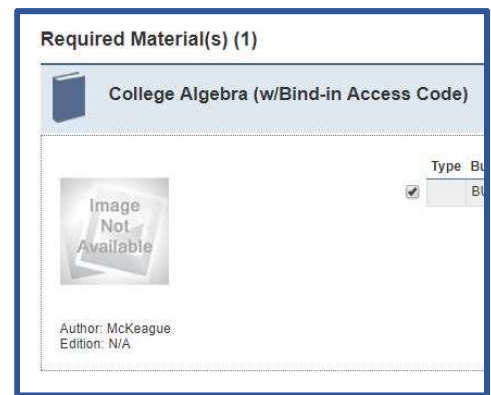


Figure 1: an example of a bundle listed without ISBN, courseware name, image, publisher, or edition number.

1. When publishers bundle a textbook with an access code, it often eliminates the opportunity for students to cut costs with the used book market. Faculty unlock huge savings for students by not assigning access codes.

Forty-five percent of the textbook bundles in this study were unique to the campus, and could not be found online at third-party retailers at the time of writing. This was either because the professor assigned a custom book edition, or the bookstore website did not offer enough information for students to buy the separate components of the bundle separately. In those cases where bundles were unique to the campus, the average price was \$157, which is the price students would pay since they could only purchase it at the bookstore. In the other fifty five percent of courses sampled that used bundles not unique to the campus, the average price at the bookstores was only slightly higher at \$162, but students could save an average of twenty-three percent by buying it used on Amazon. However, in classes that did not assign a bundle, both the average price and the potential savings were significantly better for students, since they could take advantage of the used book market. The average cost of an unbundled textbook new at the

bookstore was \$134, but students could save an average of fifty-eight percent by buying a used copy online.

COURSE	AVG COST	AVG COST (BUNDLE)	AVG COST (NEW TEXT, BOOKSTORE)	AVG COST, (USED TEXT, AMAZON)	PROJ SAVINGS, USED
Algebra	\$ 132	\$ 147	\$ 68	\$ 46	32%
A&P I	\$ 306	\$ 337	\$ 303	\$ 128	58%
Bio I	\$ 203	\$ 193	\$ 206	\$ 72	65%
Chem I	\$ 242	\$ 232	\$ 257	\$ 97	62%
Composition	\$ 108	\$ 143	\$ 99	\$ 50	49%
US History I	\$ 77	\$ 65	\$ 92	\$ 63	32%
US Gov	\$ 107	\$ 75	\$ 126	\$ 59	53%
Psych	\$ 170	\$ 170	\$ 170	\$ 54	68%
Soc	\$ 144	\$ 108	\$ 153	\$ 49	68%
Stats	\$ 177	\$ 172	\$ 187	\$ 99	47%
NATIONAL	\$ 153	\$ 157	\$ 134	\$ 56	58%

Figure 2: cost of bundled (new) versus unbundled textbooks (new and used)

2. Schools can significantly reduce costs for their core curriculum by transitioning to OER.

Of the schools investigated, Greenfield Community College in Massachusetts as an example of the positive impact of OER can have for students in general education classes. The GCC library runs a competitive grant program that supports faculty in transitioning a course to OER. The use of OER in three of the six courses we analyzed at GCC meant that students there spent an average of \$31 per course on materials, assuming that they used the free OER download and purchased used books where available for the other courses. Compare this to Hudson County Community College in New Jersey, which does not have an OER grant program and did not use OER in any of the courses we studied. There, students spent an average of \$103 per course when choosing the cheapest option available. Nationally, students spent an average of \$153 per course in our study, and could spend an average of \$92 per course if they chose the cheapest option available.

3. If colleges nationwide switched just these ten core courses to OER, we could save students \$1.5 billion per year.

At just the forty schools in the study, switching over these courses to OER would save up to \$13 million in one semester alone, assuming students use the OER free online. Multiplied out to the full national enrollment at public and private non-profit schools, this switch would save students an estimated \$763 million per semester, or \$1.5 billion per year. Open textbooks are already available in each of these subjects from OpenStax and other open textbook publishers.

COURSE	AVG COST, NEW	PROJ, SAMPLE	PROJ, NATIONAL
Algebra	\$ 129	\$ 932,154	\$ 52,853,132
A&P I	\$ 321	\$ 1,729,548	\$ 98,065,372
Bio I	\$ 174	\$ 1,544,424	\$ 87,568,841
Chem I	\$ 209	\$ 2,198,471	\$ 124,653,306
Composition	\$ 108	\$ 2,439,180	\$ 138,301,506
US History I	\$ 69	\$ 284,487	\$ 16,130,413
US Gov	\$ 108	\$ 354,456	\$ 20,097,655
Psych	\$ 137	\$ 2,063,083	\$ 116,976,806
Soc	\$ 144	\$ 708,912	\$ 40,195,310
Stats	\$ 177	\$ 1,209,795	\$ 68,595,377

Figure 3: projected savings generated by switching to OER, per semester.

COURSE MATERIAL COMPARISON

In the following pages, we will compare course materials from our sample colleges on several key criteria that students use when making purchasing decisions. For example, students weigh whether they will save more money by renting or buying and reselling a used copy, or if a digital version makes the most sense

Thirty-eight percent of courses in our study used access codes, and ninety-four percent of the time these access codes were sold in a bundle. Materials listed within parentheses after the edition number of a textbook are part of a bundle, whereas required materials that are sold unbundled will be indicated by the word “plus.” When there was a textbook bundled with an access code, we took the price for a new bundle on the campus bookstore website; when there was a solo textbook, we assumed the student would buy a used physical book on Amazon rather than buying or renting digital.

Open textbooks were used in six percent of the courses in our study, across eight of the ten courses. We did our best to include those materials in the panels below. In the two classes where an OER was not identified, American government and statistics, we substituted an open alternative. For an alternative to expensive access code to accompany a textbook, we would point faculty to the existing course shells on MyOpenMath or adapting another open problem set to their school’s learning management software.

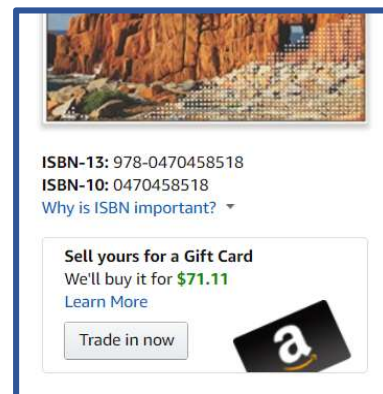
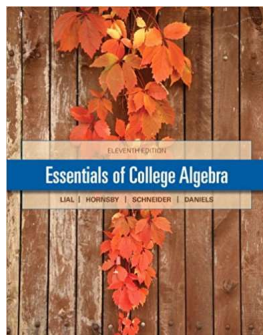


Figure 4: estimated resale value for a traditional textbook via Amazon.

College Algebra

Bundle with access code: \$147 (78% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$68 new or \$46 used



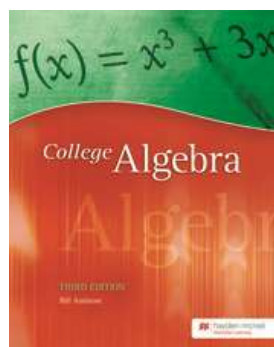
Essentials of College Algebra (11e, loose-leaf) with MyMathLab
ISBN- 9780321912152 // Aurora University

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$195.95 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at Amazon (new)- \$188.00 |
-



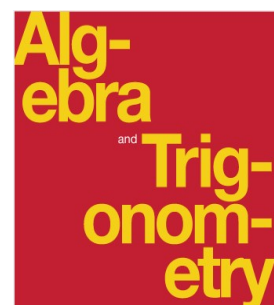
MyMathLab
ISBN- 9780321199911 // Arizona Western College

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$132.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at Amazon (new)- \$79.98 |
-



College Algebra (1e, loose-leaf)
ISBN- 9780738078748 // West Texas A&M University

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$48.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at Amazon (used)- n/a |
-



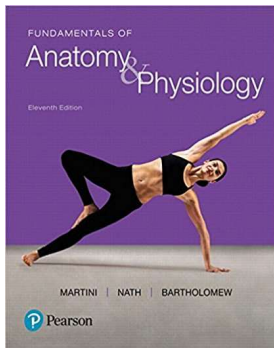
OpenStax Algebra and Trigonometry (1e)
ISBN- 9780738078748 // Southwest Oregon Community College

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$58.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at Amazon (used)- \$44.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at website (digital)- \$0 |

Anatomy and Physiology I

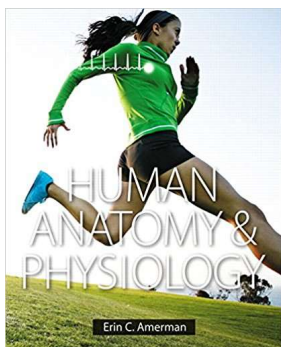
Bundle with access code: \$337 (69% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$303 new, \$128 used



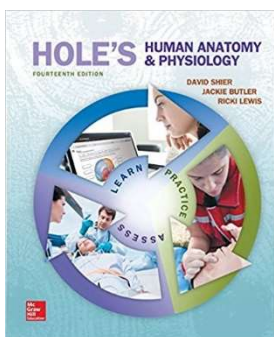
Fundamentals of A&P (11e, custom book bundle) plus local manual (\$100)
ISBN- 9780134836058 // Housatonic Community College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$337.75
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
-



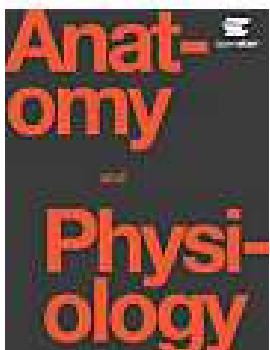
Human A&P (1e, book with code and e-text) without local manual
ISBN- 9780805382945 // Eastern Oregon University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$337.70
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$275.13
-



Hole's Human A&P (14e) plus publisher manual (\$86 digital or \$97 used)
ISBN- 9780078024290 // Community College of Beaver County

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$232.65
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (digital)- \$112.55
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (used)- \$69.74
-



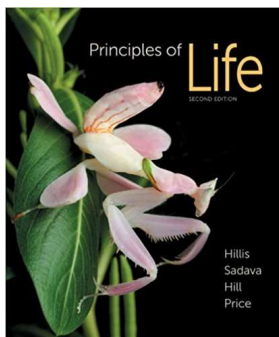
OpenStax A&P (1e) without local manual
ISBN- 9781938168130 // Texarkana College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$55.00
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- \$42.50
 - Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0
-

General Biology I

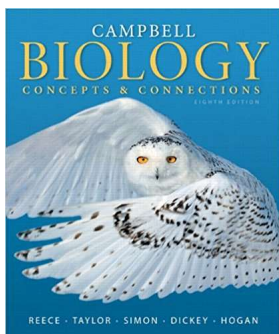
Bundle with access code: \$193 (33% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$206 new, \$72 used



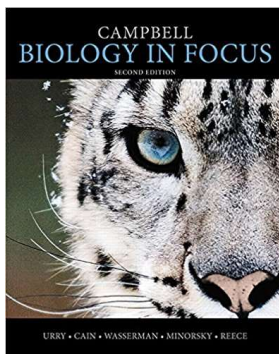
Principles of Life (2e, with code)
ISBN- 9781464189838 // Johns Hopkins University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$232.05
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (digital)- \$124.60
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$165
-



Campbell's Biology: Concepts & Connections (8e, custom book with code)
ISBN- 9781323650431 // University of Utah

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$120
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
-



Campbell's Biology in Focus (2e)
ISBN- 978-0321962751 // Agnes Scott College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$194.75
 - Eligible for resale Rent at bookstore (digital)- \$44.00
 - Can be retained Rent at Chegg (used)- \$21.49
-



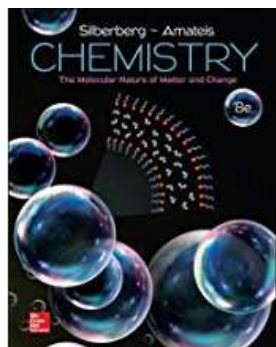
OpenStax Biology (1e)
ISBN- 9781938168130 // Greenfield Community College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (new)- \$52.00
- Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0

General Chemistry I

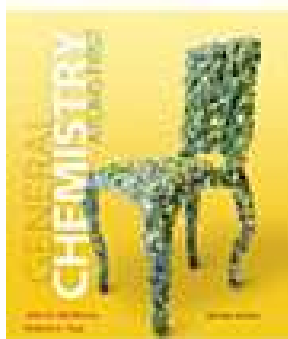
Bundle with access code: \$232 (42% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$257 new, \$97 used



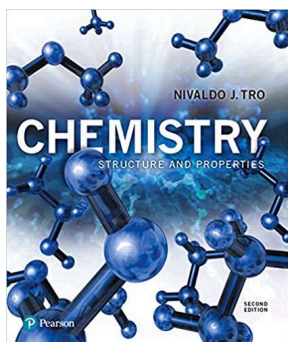
Chemistry (8e, custom book with code and e-text)
ISBN- 9781464189838 // Johns Hopkins University

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$187.50 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a |
-



General Chemistry (2e) plus code (\$95)
ISBN- 9780321809261 // Christopher Newport University

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$243.25 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at Amazon (used)- \$63.94 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Rental at Chegg (used)- \$44.99 |
-



Chemistry: Structure and Properties (2e)
ISBN- 9780134293936 // Penn State University at Altoona

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$301.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at Amazon (used)- \$87.90 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Rent at Chegg (used)- \$37.49 |
-



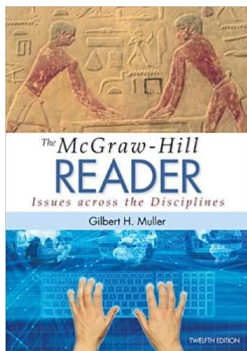
OpenStax Chemistry (1e)
ISBN- 9781938168390 // University of New Hampshire

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$55.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at Amazon (new)- \$47.57 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at website (digital)- \$0 |
-

English Composition 1

Bundle with access code: \$143 (4% use access codes)

Textbook only: \$99 new, \$50 used



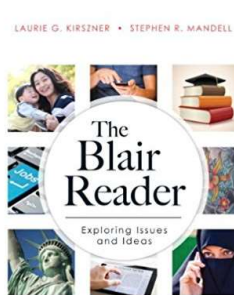
The McGraw Hill Reader- Issues Across Disciplines (12e, with code)
ISBN- 9781260014501 // East Central College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$143.30
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- \$107.50
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
-



Harbrace Essentials (3e) plus course packet (\$32.40)
ISBN- 9780321809261 // Central Washington University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$243.25
 - Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (used)- \$74.97
 - Can be retained Rental at Chegg (used)- \$44.99
-



The Blair Reader (8e)
ISBN- 9780205901845 // Community College of Beaver County

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$111.60
 - Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (used)- \$9.97
 - Can be retained Rent at Chegg (used)- \$15.49
-



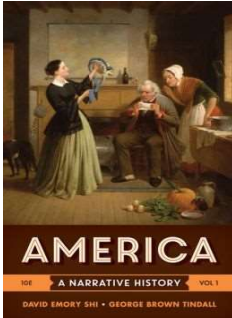
Open reader (faculty-compiled)
ISBN- n/a // Housatonic Community College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
- Can be retained Cost on Blackboard (digital)- \$0

US History I (to the Civil War or Reconstruction)

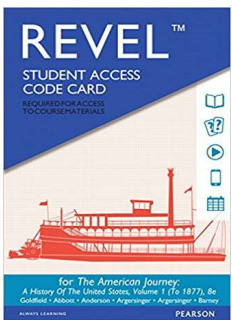
Bundle with access code: \$65 (42% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$92 new, \$63 used



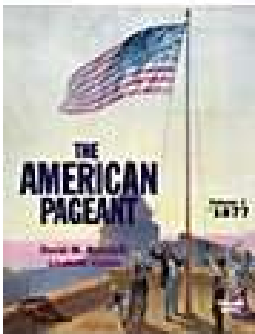
America- a Narrative History (1e, with code)
ISBN- 9780393265941 // Coastal Carolina University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$86.65
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
-



REVEL for The American Journey (8e, code only)
ISBN- 9780134104584 // East Central College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$52.55
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$47.83
-



The American Pageant (16e)
ISBN- 9781305075931 // Fairmount State University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$153.00
 - Eligible for resale Rental at bookstore (digital)- \$28.49
 - Can be retained Rent at Amazon (used)- \$18.45
-



The American Yawp
ISBN- n/a // Lansing Community College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
- Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0

US Government and Politics

Bundle with access code: \$75 (37% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$126 new, \$59 used



GOVT (9e, with code)
ISBN- 9781337099783 // West Texas A&M University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$75.00
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$75.04
-



American Gov & Politics (2e) plus 2 public domain books (\$16 used)
ISBN- 9780134104584 // Claremont McKenna College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$154.75
 - Eligible for resale Rental at bookstore (digital)- \$19.49
 - Can be retained Rental at Chegg (new)- \$22.49
-



AM GOV (2017-2018e, loose-leaf)
ISBN- 9781308195117 // Fairmount State University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$93.75
 - Eligible for resale Rental at bookstore (used)- \$37.50
 - Can be retained Buy at Amazon (used)- \$43.81
-



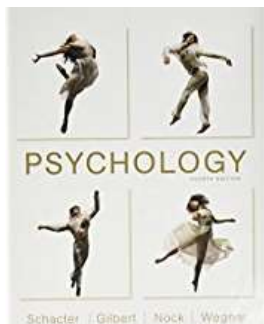
Boundless American Government
ISBN- n/a // suggested open alternative

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
- Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0

General Psychology I

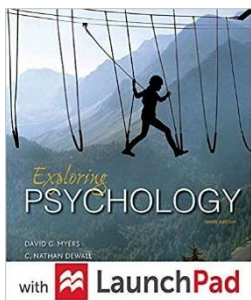
Bundle with access code: \$170 (40% of schools use codes) 11

Textbook alone: \$170 new, \$54 used



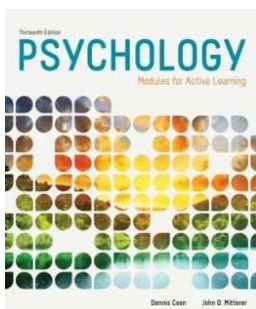
Psychology (9e, loose-leaf with code)
ISBN- 9781319123468 // Randolph-Macon College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$120.00
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- \$90.00
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$112.00
-



Exploring Psychology (10e, loose-leaf with code)
ISBN- 9781319097448 // Central Washington University

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$84.42
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- \$63.25
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$75.25
-



Psychology: Modules for Active Learning(13e, loose-leaf)
ISBN- 9781285739281 // Kent State University at Trumbull

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$240.00
 - Eligible for resale Rental at bookstore (digital)- \$27.99
 - Can be retained Buy at Amazon (used)- \$19.34
-



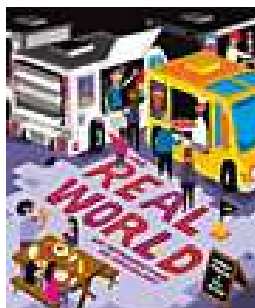
OpenStax Psychology (1e)
ISBN- 9781938168352 // Lansing Community College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$34.75
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (used)- \$26.50
- Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0

Introduction to Sociology

Bundle with access code: \$108 (42% of schools use codes)

Textbook alone: \$153 new, \$49 used



Real World- Intro to Sociology (5, with code)

ISBN- 9780393264302 // Greenfield Community College

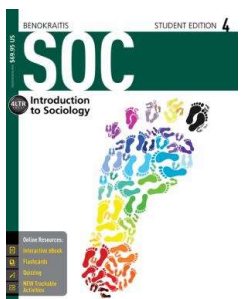
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$112.25 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Rental at bookstore (digital)- \$50.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a |
-



Sociology- A Down to Earth Approach (13e, loose-leaf)

ISBN- 9780134612959 // Rowan-Cabarrus Community College

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$113.45 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at bookstore (used)- \$85.10 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Rent at Amazon (new)- \$49.62 |
-



SOC (4e)

ISBN- 1305094557 // Southwest Oregon Community College

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- \$70.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Rental at bookstore (digital)- \$49.99 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Buy at Amazon (used)- \$3.99 |
-



OpenStax Introduction to Sociology (2e)

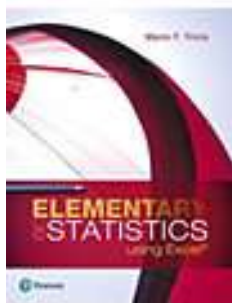
ISBN- 9781938168352 // suggested open alternative

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available unbundled | Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible for resale | Cost at Amazon (new)- \$29.00 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can be retained | Cost at website (digital)- \$0 |

Elementary Statistics

Bundle with access code: \$172 (70% of schools use codes)

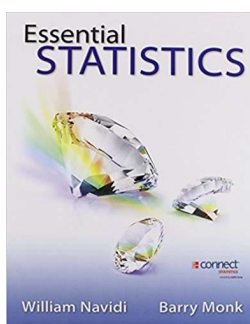
Textbook alone: \$187 new, \$99 used



Elementary Statistics with Excel (6e, with code and etext)

ISBN- 9780393264302 // Aurora University

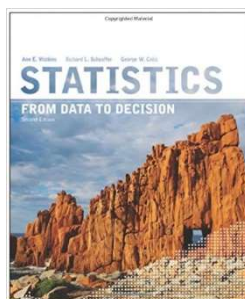
- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$240.95
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (digital)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- \$232.38
-



Essential Statistics (2e, custom book with code)

ISBN- 9780134612959 // San Jose City College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$166.75
 - Eligible for resale Cost at bookstore (used)- n/a
 - Can be retained Cost at Amazon (new)- n/a
-



Statistics: from Data to Decision (2e)

ISBN- 9780470458518 // Randolph-Macon College

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- \$225.35
 - Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (used)- \$137.34
 - Can be retained Rental at Amazon (used)- \$66.39
-



OpenIntro Statistics (3e) with MyOpenMath online courseware (\$0)

ISBN- n/a // suggested open alternative

- Available unbundled Cost at bookstore (new)- n/a
- Eligible for resale Cost at Amazon (new)- \$14.99
- Can be retained Cost at website (digital)- \$0

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the textbook marketplace for students, we make the following recommendations:

Colleges and universities

Colleges should provide leadership by giving faculty the infrastructure to support their switch to open textbooks. It requires an investment of financial and human capital to support successful OER projects. More faculty will switch to open textbooks if they have peers to talk to about their concerns and trained librarians to help them identify and adapt open materials. Colleges should gather stakeholders in a textbook affordability council to discuss OER implementation, set aside funds to support an OER grant program, or hire a dedicated staff member in the library to run programming that creates a vibrant on-campus culture supporting open education.

Faculty

When making decisions about textbooks each year, professors should add cost, retention, and the ability to resell books to their criteria. It will always be the professor's academic duty to provide the most effective materials for their class, but going open will ensure that students have materials on day one and will be able to fully participate. Check out textbooks hosted in state and institutional OER repositories like the Open Textbook Library or the OER Commons, use open or public domain supplemental content in your school's learning management software in place of an expensive code or textbook, and ask colleagues in your field what open materials they would recommend.

Students

Take action on any level you can. You don't need to be the president of your student government to work to promote more affordable textbooks. Speak directly to a professor you're close to about going open, work with student government to pass a resolution calling for an OER grant program, or get your club to advocate for affordable textbooks.

Policymakers

There are ways to promote open education at all levels of government. Making college more affordable is a larger fight, but working towards incremental change and addressing the cost of textbooks can alleviate the huge pressure that student debt puts on students and families. Push for free textbooks in addition to increasing student aid, sponsor legislation that would incentivize OER adoption or promote transparency with course designations, and use your platform to raise awareness about solutions to the broken textbook market. Most significantly, at the federal level, policymakers must examine the practice of bundling and strengthen the aspects of the law that enable students to buy their course materials in more than one venue, and as single units rather than in bundles. In addition, federal policy should tackle the restrictive expirations and single-use character of the online access code. These two factors should help to drive prices down for students.

Two new trends in the textbook marketplace deserve mention, although we lack enough information to draw conclusions and make recommendations about them at this point. One is that some colleges and universities are moving to an automatic purchasing model for textbooks; that is, they centrally bill students for digital materials that are offered in all classes, so the student is 'opted in' by the campus to purchasing all course material at the outset. Our concern is that this method of billing pushes access codes and e-texts that expire into the hands of students and completely ties their hands when it comes to consumer power. There is often hard-to-navigate opt out policies, and the ability to resell to another student is completely eliminated. Another is an announcement in October 2017 made by Cengage Learning, a textbook publisher formerly known as Thomson Learning, announcing the launch of a new platform called OpenNow, puts OER behind an access code. Indeed, it is a positive development that a major publisher recognizes that OER cannot be ignored, although we remain vigilant that the price point for students could rise in the future, and that the proprietary products behind the paywall have expiring access.

In short, when materials are switched from proprietary to open, students not only experience significant cost savings, but they understand that their academic success matters above all else, including above profits for publishers.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a sample of 40 non-profit colleges and universities, with enrollment data pulled from the National Center for Education Statistics. Schools were randomly picked within four geographic regions, with an approximately equal number of schools in each. Within each region, we randomly chose 1 flagship 4-year public institution, 3 other 4-year publics, 2 4-year private non-profit schools, and 4 2-year public community colleges. This breakdown lines up with national enrollment estimates. The full listing of our sample appears at the end of this section of the report.

Class enrollment information was pulled from each individual school's institutional research data or directly reported in class registration websites. The ten classes with the highest enrollment in Fall 2017 were listed for each college; dozens of introductory classes from Introduction to Financial Accounting to Introduction to Theology were on this list. We then chose the ten classes that made the top ten at the most institutions: college algebra, anatomy and physiology, biology, chemistry, early American history, American government, psychology, sociology, and statistics. Classes that did not count toward graduation were not included in this study, such as a zero-level math class. Frequently, the public speaking, writing, and communication classes combined elements, such as a "oral and written communication" class that made classification difficult. We left these types of classes out of our final list of ten classes. Similarly, many colleges have some sort of first year writing seminar. At some schools, like the University of New Hampshire, there are literature courses on special topics; at other schools, this intensive writing component is folded into an existing class, such as Randolph-Macon College's introductory history classes. We could

not easily differentiate between these writing intensive classes and other introductory courses, so they were not included in our final list; however, the standalone English composition course made the top ten list because of the ease of comparison.

We identified course materials from online course syllabi where available, or from the school bookstore website. When information for Fall 2017 was not available online, we called the bookstore to get the ISBN and price for a new book or bundle. As most courses were offered both semesters and by the same professor, the remaining gaps in our course list were filled by textbooks required by Spring 2018 courses.

To determine projected price savings, we multiplied the savings for our 40-school sample by the total undergraduate enrollment data from the National Center for Education Statistics.^x

LISTING OF COLLEGES IN SAMPLE

University of Central Arkansas, AR	Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, NC
Arizona Western College, AZ	Mid-Plains Community College, NE
University of California-Davis, CA	University of New Hampshire, NH
Concordia University-Irvine, CA	Hudson County Community College, NJ
Claremont McKenna College, CA	Luna Community College, NM
San Jose City College, CA	Kent State University at Trumbull, OH
Housatonic Community College, CT	Eastern Oregon University, OR
University of Florida, FL	Southwestern Oregon Community College, OR
Agnes Scott College, GA	Pennsylvania State University- Altoona, PA
Aurora University, IL	Community College of Beaver County, PA
Butler Community College, KS	Coastal Carolina University, SC
University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, MA	University of South Carolina-Union, SC
Greenfield Community College, MA	Maryville College, TN
Johns Hopkins University, MD	West Texas A & M University, TX
Ferris State University, MI	Texarkana College, TX
Lansing Community College, MI	University of Utah, UT
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, MN	Christopher Newport University, VA
East Central College, MO	Randolph-Macon College, VA
Copiah-Lincoln Community College, MS	Central Washington University, WA
Carroll College, MT	Fairmont State University, WV

CITATIONS

- ⁱ *Consumer Price Index*. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/cpi>.
- ⁱⁱ Senack, E. *Fixing the Broken Textbook Market*. Student PIRGs. (2014). <http://www.studentpirgs.org/sp/our-textbooks-research>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Senack, E. *Covering the Cost*. Student PIRGs. (2015). <http://www.studentpirgs.org/sp/our-textbooks-research>.
- ^{iv} Seaman, J. *Opening the Textbook: Educational Resources in U.S. Higher Education, 2017*. Babson Survey Research Group. (2017). <https://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/oer.html>.
- ^v *Consumer Price Index*. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/cpi>.
- ^{vi} *Consumer Price Index*. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/cpi>.
- ^{vii} *Quarterly Report on Housing and Credit*. New York Federal Reserve. (2017). https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/interactives/householdcredit/data/pdf/HHDC_2016Q4.pdf.
- ^{viii} *Students have Greater Access to Textbook Information*. U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2013) <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-13-368>.
- ^{ix} *Open Educational Resources*. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. (2018). <https://www.hewlett.org/strategy/open-educational-resources/>
- ^x IPEDS. National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Home/UseTheData>