



BE BOOK SMART

How Faculty Can Help create *Cost-Effective*
Academic Materials

USSU VP Academic Affairs - Daniel McCullough - April 15th, 2010

The *Price* of Textbooks

- According to the The Canadian Roundtable on Academic Materials (CRAM), the cost of textbooks increased at an average 280% the rate of inflation in between 1995 and 2007.
- As of 2008, textbooks made up 17.7% of the cost of a students education. Students can expect to budget an average of \$120 per course for texts and academic materials.
- It is now recommended that they set aside 24.5% of the price of their instructional fees for textbooks to counter the rising cost of these books over the length of their degree.

Why are *Prices* so High?

- Textbook publishers frequently change editions to limit the resale potential of used textbooks.
- Bundling of “free” extras, like CD’s or access to online versions of the text are bundled into the overall textbook cost.
- Unsolicited copies of texts are sent free to professors to encourage them to use that text in their class. The price of these is included in the student price.
- The ongoing economic recession in the U.S. has made the publishing of “low volume/high cost” textbooks very unprofitable. To compensate, textbook prices continue to be raised.

What Can *Instructors* Do?

- **Avoid unnecessary edition changes.**
- **Request unbundled texts if the bundle is of little value.**
- **See if the publishers offers the text in a “loose leaf” format.**
- **Look for texts that have an online format as well to let students decide if they want the hardcopy or not.**
- **Consider building a course-pack instead of using a text.**
- **Look into Open Access options that cost considerably less.**

What *is* Open Access?

- **Open Access Publishing is best explained by the BBB definition, which outlines that Open Access materials should be free distributed free of charge and that there should be no permission barriers on the use or redistribution the published material, except for attribution of the original author.**

Examples of Open Access

- **Creative Commons (CC) Licences allows for the licensing of Open Access publications in a way that protects the author's right to attribution, while still allowing and promoting the ideals of Open Access.**
- **Connexions is a CC licensed collection of Open Access Academic Material that allows users to add material of their own and/or combine the material into course-packs and even whole textbooks. Academic Materials produced in this way can be accessed as online texts on the Connexions site, or printed on demand via Espresso Printing Machine for a hardcover textbook. These texts can cost the student as little as USD\$20.00.**

Examples of Open Access

- **The Directory of Open Access Journals is a collection of 4906 Journals with, as of today, 383 952 articles, all for free access to anyone with an internet connection. A number of these journals are also CC licensed. There is no subscription cost as it is housed at Lund University Library and funded by The Open Society Institute, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resource Coalition, Swedish library IT supplier Axiell and BIBSAM, part of the National Library of Sweden.**
- **Most studies have found that journal articles published by Open Access are actually cited more often, despite a dissenting and procedurally shaky Cornell study.**

Conclusions

- **Faculty at the University of Saskatchewan can make changes and choices in textbook selection that can save students thousands of dollars.**
- **Administration and Faculty at the University of Saskatchewan should continue investigating Open Access options for both Academic Materials production and their own publication.**

Questions *or* Comments?

- For more information on the Be Book Smart Campaign please visit : <http://www.ussu.ca/bebooksmart/index.shtml>
- If you have any specific questions or comments please e-mail them to bebooksmart@ussu.ca

