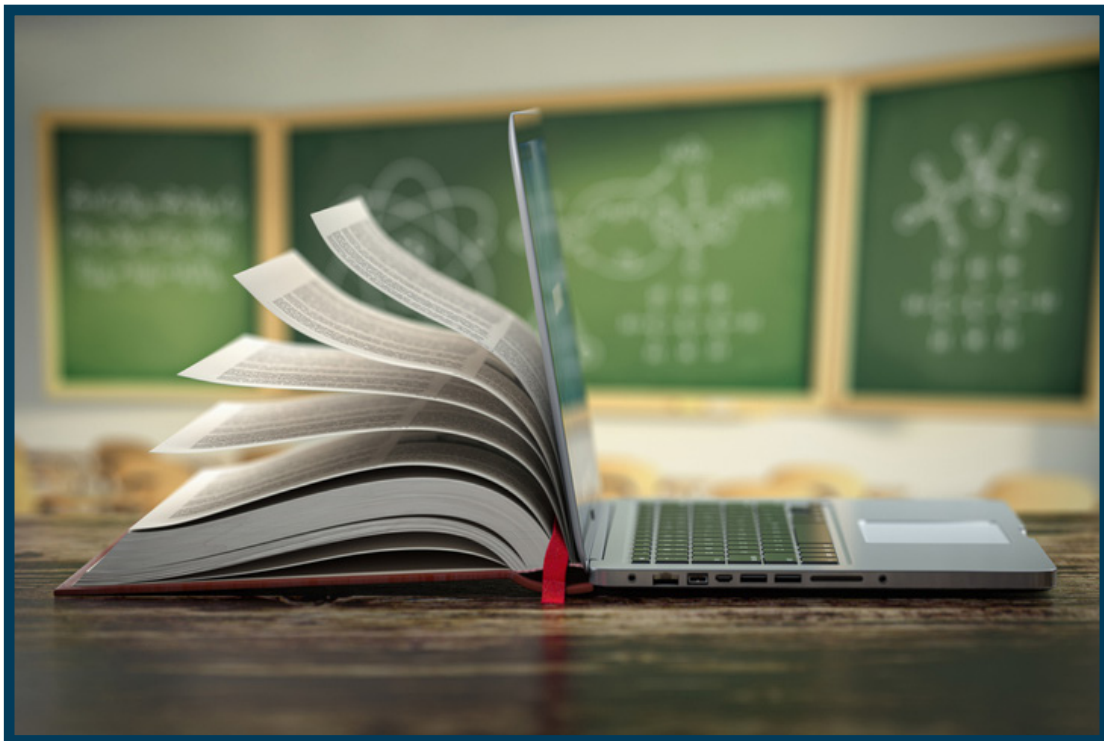




OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY

**COLLEGE COURSE MATERIALS:
AFFORDABILITY INITIATIVES ACROSS TENNESSEE**



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Introduction

Completing a postsecondary education is considered a reliable means to improve an individual’s capacity to earn a living. Bureau of Labor Statistics data over decades has consistently shown that workers with more education have lower unemployment and higher earnings than those with less education.¹ To build a stronger workforce, the Tennessee

Drive to 55 initiative aims to equip 55 percent of Tennesseans with a college degree or certificate by the year 2025. Although the cost of course materials is only one component of the cost of a postsecondary education, by the time a student obtains a degree, the total spent on course materials can equal the cost of an additional semester of tuition at some four-year institutions.²

This report uses the term **course materials**, which includes textbooks (print or digital), workbooks, audiovisual materials, online homework platforms, and other supplemental materials.

Over the last several years, news reports about the affordability of course materials seem to have conflicting narratives. On the one hand, Bureau of Labor Statistics data show a considerable rise in the cost of course materials over several years, and figures cited by the National Center for Education Statistics and the College Board estimate the cost of books and supplies for college students between \$1,200 and \$1,600 per year.³ On the other hand, surveys of students at national, state, and local levels report that students have been paying less for course materials over the last few years, in the neighborhood of \$200 to \$500 per semester (or year, depending on the survey).

This report distinguishes between various estimates of the *cost* of course materials and what students actually *pay* for them. Print textbooks are no longer the only, or even the most common, option available to college students, who may now opt for digital textbooks, e-texts, and online course materials. Students also have multiple choices for where and how they obtain materials apart from the traditional college bookstore. (See Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1: Common options for college course materials

Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook • Supplemental material • Interactive system • Customized textbook
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New print (including loose-leaf and other lower-cost options) • Used print • Digital book (including PDFs and books for e-readers)
Delivery channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus bookstore (online or physical store) • National online retailer • Other bookstore (not school-affiliated) • Open-source provider • Publisher • Library • Peer exchange
Transaction method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase • Rent • Borrow • Download free of charge

Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office, *College Textbooks: Students Have Greater Access to Textbook Information*, June 2013, p. 8, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-13-368.pdf> (accessed July 20, 2021).

More choices for students come with some advantages but concerns about the cost of course materials remain. For example, one biology textbook that is used in several Tennessee institutions of higher education ranges in price from \$54.99 (for renting the digital textbook) to \$278.80 (for purchasing a new print version), with many price options in between. Choices can also present complications. For every course they take, when presented with the list of required course materials, students have to decide their preferred way of accessing information (digital or print), whether to maintain access to the information permanently (rent or purchase), and more.

The Tennessee General Assembly addressed textbook and course material costs in a 2007 state law requiring public higher education institutions to develop policies related to textbook affordability.^A The following year, the reauthorization of the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) required institutions and publishers to disclose price and format information related to textbook and instructional materials.^B (See more information beginning on page 25.)

More recently, Tennessee higher education institutions have been surveying students to better understand their concerns about the cost of course materials. A January 2020 report published by the Postsecondary Education Research Center at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (UTK) contains results from a survey of 2,000 Tennessee community college students at 12 participating campuses on course materials and related costs.⁴ (See page 6.) Several Tennessee postsecondary institutions have begun surveying their students and faculty on these issues. (See more information beginning on page 8.)

THEC convened the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force in spring 2020 to “increase equity of opportunity by decreasing textbook costs for students through strategic use of technology and partnerships,” with much of its efforts focused on expanding access to Open Educational Resources (OER) across the state. The Tennessee Board of Regents, the University of Tennessee System, the campuses the two systems govern, the locally governed institutions, and the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association are participants of the task force. (See more information beginning on page 10.)

This report, which focuses on community colleges and four-year universities,^C explains the current landscape of the costs of course materials in higher education, efforts across Tennessee at both the state and institutional levels to provide students with more affordable course materials, and related state and federal laws.

College students are often required to access additional kinds of materials for their college courses beyond printed textbooks, including online homework systems, supplemental materials, such as workbooks, lab activities, and study guides. These are often sold together with textbooks in a “bundled” package, and some instructors may require students to obtain digital access to them using computers or e-readers in order to complete homework assignments and tests or access tutorials. (Federal law requires that these materials must also be sold separately. See p. 25.)

Faculty can also develop, modify, or adopt open educational resources for courses, which are able to be provided to students at little or no cost.

Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office, *College Textbooks: Students Have Greater Access to Textbook Information*, June 2013, p. 8, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-13-368.pdf>.

The creation of programs such as Tennessee Reconnect and Tennessee Promise help many students who want to pursue higher education, but the affordability of required course materials can be an obstacle to program completion. The Tennessee Promise scholarship covers tuition and mandatory fees but does not cover the cost of textbooks, course materials, and other fees. Depending on financial aid eligibility, Promise students may be responsible for paying hundreds of dollars for course materials each semester. As recently as the 2021 session of the Tennessee General Assembly, legislation has been proposed in attempts to address textbook costs for students participating in Tennessee Promise.

Sources: Proposed Senate Bill 1019 / House Bill 1149, 2021, <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/112/Bill/SB1019.pdf>.

^A *Tennessee Code Annotated* 49-7-141; Public Chapter 504, 2007.

^B 20 U.S. Code 1015b, Textbook Information, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2011-title20/pdf/USCODE-2011-title20-chap28-subchapI-partC-sec1015b.pdf> (accessed July 23, 2021).

^C Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology were not included in the scope of this report.

The college textbook industry is in the midst of disruption, partly the result of technological advances and a movement to provide low cost or free resources to students.

College students and faculty have relied on printed textbooks as part of a certain model for many years – instructors choose printed textbooks for the classes they teach, and students buy them around the time their classes begin then frequently re-sell them after the semester ends. For decades, five companies have accounted for more than 80 percent of the textbook publishing market, and publishers could increase prices without immediate consequences to their sales.^D The publication of a new edition of a textbook generally meant a higher price (about 12 more percent on average), with older editions then discontinued and ineligible for students to sell back at the end of the semester.⁵

Over time, advances in technology coupled with the overall rising cost of getting a college degree – and specifically the cost of course materials – has led to variations in that model. As course material format options associated with digital technology became more available, publishers responded by providing supplemental materials with textbooks to assist instructors, such as printed materials, computer disks, website access, and electronically distributed materials.⁶

Instructors could also choose to use integrated textbooks, described in federal law as “textbooks that are contractually obligated to be bundled with third-party materials or textbooks that are so interrelated with the third-party materials that if unbundled they would be rendered unusable for their intended purposes.”⁷ These “bundled” instructional materials were convenient for faculty teaching large seminar courses with hundreds of students. To access bundled content, students had to purchase online subscriptions, access codes, or CDs that expire after a limited period of time, often the end of the semester.⁸ Publishers charged more for these “bundled” instructional materials than for the textbook alone, often 10 to 50 percent more, and students were unable to sell back these materials or use them after their access expired. A 2005 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report stated that the “increasing costs associated with developing products, such as CD-ROMs and other instructional supplements, designed to accompany textbooks” were partly responsible for continuing increased costs to students.⁹

A shift to digital

Pearson, one of the largest publishers in the world, in 2019 announced a “digital first” strategy. This new model set e-books at an average cost of \$40. Students who prefer a print copy can rent one for \$60, with the option to purchase the book at the end of the term. By comparison, in 2020 the average cost of a hardcopy textbook was \$84.

In response, students began seeking out textbook rentals as alternative options to buying full price new or discounted materials from the campus bookstore. Companies began providing online textbook rentals, which in some cases were 90 percent off the purchase price of a new printed version.¹⁰ Chegg, Inc., an education technology company, began providing digital and physical textbook rentals and other student services in 2007.¹¹ Amazon began offering online textbook rentals in 2012, and many other companies have since entered the market.¹² In 2018, one state’s annual student course materials survey found that students’ digital textbook rentals increased from 10 percent in 2012 to 41 percent in 2018.¹³

To address the market changes, publishers began to shift their business models to e-texts and digital textbooks. In 2019, Pearson, one of the largest publishers of higher education textbooks, announced that it would shift to a “digital first” strategy and begin moving its 1,500 U.S. print publications to e-book format, while still making print books available to students on a rental basis. The average cost for a printed edition college textbook in 2019 was \$87 retail, while a Pearson digital edition cost about \$40.¹⁴

^D The top five textbook publishers are Cengage Learning, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, McGraw-Hill Education, Pearson Education, and Scholastic.

Over the last several years, states and institutions have realized that a shift to digital has not necessarily meant a sharp reduction in costs for students. For example, an instructor might opt for a digital textbook bundle that includes online supplemental materials, increasing the cost to a less affordable amount. Supplemental materials include pre-built tests, quizzes, and assignments, frequently built in a proprietary learning management system that students gain access to at purchase. These management systems frequently include learning analytics aimed at allowing instructors to quickly see student progress. Additionally, publishers package eBook readers with the capacity to highlight and annotate text, define words, and read text aloud, with a variety of other study tools. Other methods designed to make course materials more affordable for students continue to emerge and expand, such as zero-textbook-cost degrees, open educational resources (OER), and inclusive access purchasing programs, which are discussed later in this report.

What college students pay for course materials

Although the high cost of college course materials is widely acknowledged, it is difficult to determine what college students actually *pay* for course materials each year. This section describes national, state, and local sources that *estimate* the average cost of materials as well as sources that provide information on *actual* student spending. The most accurate sources appear to be those that survey students about what they actually pay instead of using other means to estimate costs.

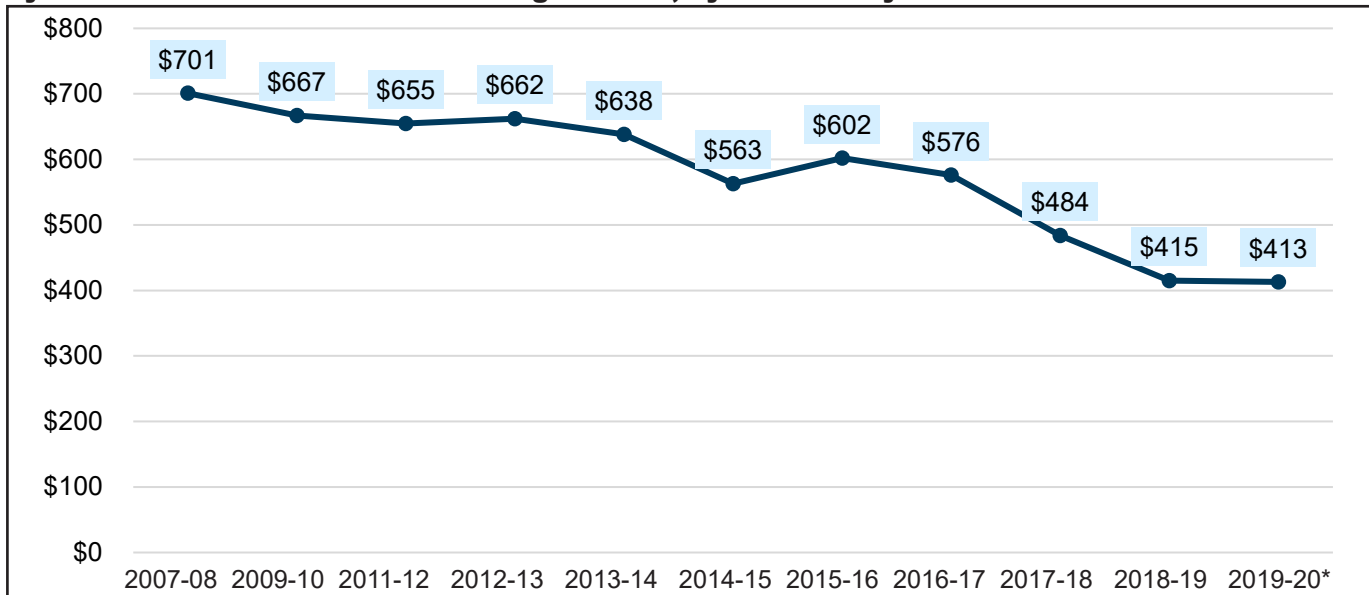
Student spending for course materials has declined in recent years, according to annual surveys by market analysts.

For the last few years, the National Association of College Stores (NACS) has reported continuing declines in the amount that four-year students spend on course materials. In its 2019-20 annual survey of students, NACS reported that four-year students spent an average of \$413 on course materials, down from \$415 the previous year and down from \$484 in 2017-18. Over a longer term, spending for course materials has dropped since 2007-08, when four-year students reported spending \$701.¹⁵ (See Exhibit 2.)

One reason for the continuing decline may be related to the increased use of digital course materials, some of which are open educational resources that cost students little or nothing. The percentage of students who purchased or rented digital materials increased from 14 percent in spring 2019 to 21 percent in spring 2020. And 26 percent indicated that they had used downloaded materials they did not pay for, a significant increase from 3 percent in fall 2015. A NACS spokesperson said that “this is likely partly due to teachers providing open educational resources and working with college libraries to find other options to help keep costs down for students.”

Another reason for the decline in student spending is more students choosing not to obtain all the course materials. According to the NACS survey, about 28 percent of students in 2019-20 said they did not obtain at least one of their required materials, an increase from 25 percent in the previous year. Of those students who did not obtain materials, some cited the high price as the reason. Others did not obtain them because they thought the materials were unnecessary. Thirty-five percent of respondents stated they were told by other students the materials were unnecessary, and 29 percent stated they were told this by their professor.¹⁶

Exhibit 2: The average cost of course materials for two- and four-year students as reported by the National Association of College Stores, by academic year



Note: * Data for the 2008-09 and 2010-11 school years was unavailable. (1) The figures are averages – actual spending per student varies based on course load, academic subjects, and grade level. (2) In its 2019-20 survey, NACS collected over 14,000 responses to its survey from students enrolled at 35 participating two- and four-year colleges.

Sources: Matthew Dembicki, “Students spending less on course materials,” *Community College Daily*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.ccdaily.com/2020/06/students-spending-less-on-course-materials/> (accessed July 12, 2021). Schaffhauser, “Report: Student Spending on Course Materials in Decline,” *Campus Technology*, July 24, 2019, <https://campustechnology.com/articles/2019/07/24/report-student-spending-on-college-course-materials-declining.aspx> (accessed May 24, 2021).

Surveys of college students at state and local levels provide information about what students pay for course materials, the choices they make in paying for the materials, and how this affects their progress toward completing a degree.

To learn what students pay for course materials, surveys of students likely yield the most accurate results. Florida and Tennessee are two states that have conducted such surveys. In the spring of 2018, the Florida Virtual Campus Office of Distance Learning and Student Services surveyed 21,000 students from Florida’s 40 public colleges and universities (including two-year and four-year institutions) concerning course material purchasing. The 2018 report is the most recent Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) survey to date, with previous surveys conducted in 2010, 2012, and 2016. The 2018 survey authors noted that “for the first time since the 2012 survey, overall course material costs trended lower.” Nearly 46 percent of students said they spent more than \$300 in 2018 (compared to 53 percent in 2016) and nearly 15 percent spent over \$500 (compared to 18 percent) in the fall of 2017. The top five answers from Florida students about the effects of the high cost of course materials were:

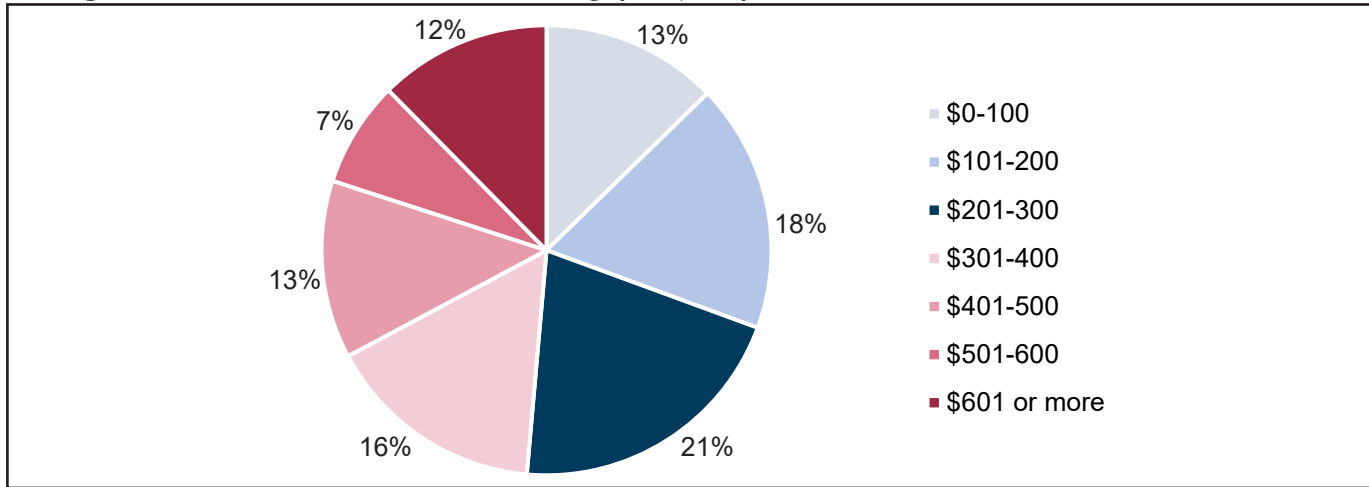
- not purchasing the required textbook (64.2 percent);
- taking fewer courses (42.8 percent);
- not registering for a specific course (40.5 percent);
- earning a poor grade (35.6 percent); and
- dropping a course (22.9 percent).¹⁷

In 2019, a survey of nearly 2,000 Tennessee community college students was conducted by the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.^{18,E} Twelve of Tennessee’s 13 community colleges participated.^F Almost half of respondents (48.6 percent) said they spent more than \$300 on course materials for the fall 2019 semester, with 20 percent spending over \$500, close to the amount spent by Florida students.¹⁹ (See Exhibit 3.)

^E The survey was similar to the FLVC surveys in terms of questions asked but the students surveyed differed. The UTK PERC survey was of community college students only and the FLVC surveys are of students in both two- and four-year postsecondary institutions.

^F Southwest Tennessee Community College did not participate in the survey.

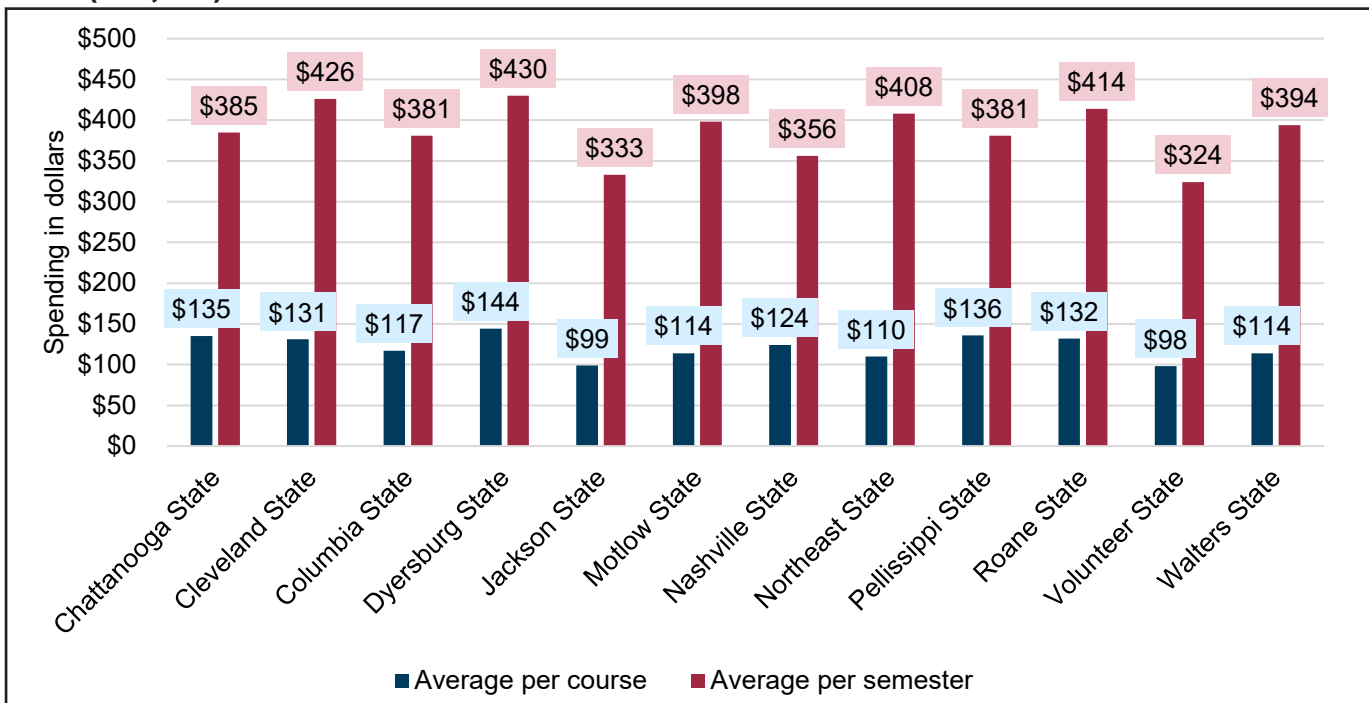
Exhibit 3: Average spending on course materials for fall 2019 | Tennessee Community College Student Course Materials Survey (n=1,886)



Source: Elizabeth Spica, 2019 Tennessee Community College Student Course Materials Survey, The University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Postsecondary Education Research Center, p. 4, <https://perc.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/2019-Community-College-Student-Course-Materials-Survey-PERC-Report.pdf>.

The Tennessee survey also found that the average cost of course materials varied by institution, ranging from \$324 at Volunteer State to \$430 at Dyersburg State. The average total spending for the semester among all survey respondents from the 12 participating community colleges was \$383.08.^G

Exhibit 4: Average spending per course and semester by Tennessee community college | Fall 2019 (n=1,875)



Note: Twelve of the state's 13 colleges participated in the survey and their results are shown in the chart. Southwest Tennessee Community College did not participate in the survey.

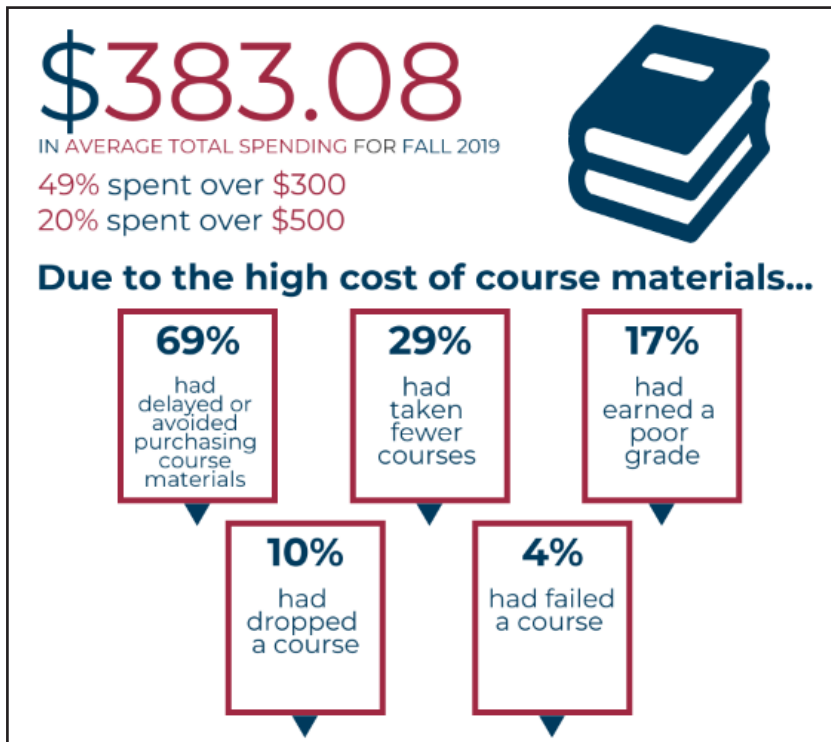
Source: Tennessee Community College Student Course Materials Survey, 2019.

^G Elizabeth Spica, 2019 Tennessee Community College Student Course Materials Survey, The University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Postsecondary Education Research Center, <https://perc.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/2019-Community-College-Student-Course-Materials-Survey-PERC-Report.pdf> (accessed April 21, 2021).

In the Tennessee survey, respondents reported that because of the high cost of course materials, at some point in their academic career:

- 69 percent had delayed or avoided purchasing required course materials (similar to Florida survey results);
- 29 percent had taken fewer courses;
- 17 percent had earned a poor grade;
- 10 percent had dropped a course; and
- 4 percent had failed a course.

Exhibit 5: Tennessee community college student spending on course materials



Source: Tennessee Community College Student Course Materials Survey, 2019.

Some Tennessee institutions of higher education have also conducted surveys of students to learn more about their course material purchasing decisions.^H

- In a 2019 survey of University of Memphis students, 21 percent of survey respondents reported they did not have enough money to cover the cost of all course materials and 12 percent did not purchase materials due to excessive cost. Almost 44 percent of respondents indicated they spent between \$300-500 on course materials during the 2019-20 school year, while 22 percent said they spent over \$750.
- A fall 2020 survey at Austin Peay State University found that about 75 percent of student survey respondents had delayed textbook purchases for a course. About 53 percent of respondents indicated delays were due to a lack of money or because of family/living expenses. Nearly 40 percent reported spending \$200-399 for course materials each semester, and a quarter of respondents reported spending \$400-599.

Over 44 percent of Tennessee community college students reported purchasing required materials that were not being used in the course.²⁰ In written comments to the APSU survey, several students had concerns that they had paid for required materials that were not used in the course. According to the 2018 Florida survey, the average respondent purchased 3.6 textbooks that were not used during their academic career, up from 2.6 unused books in the 2016 survey.

^H In addition to those institutions discussed in this report, these institutions have conducted surveys of either students, faculty, or both, and several plan to continue conducting surveys periodically: ETSU, MTSU, Pellissippi State, TTU, and UTC.

Estimates of the cost of books and supplies reported annually by colleges and universities to federal entities are not based on actual student expenditures, include items other than course materials, and are inflated compared to estimates from student surveys.

Although frequently cited in news articles as the average amount that college students pay for course materials, estimates for the cost of books published by the College Board and the National Center for Education Statistics far exceed the estimates provided through the NACS annual survey and through other surveys done by states and higher education institutions. (See next section.)

The College Board publishes average budgets for full-time undergraduate students, including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and more, based on its Annual Survey of Colleges. Data for books and supplies, as well as other components, do not reflect actual student expenditures, however. They are based on pricing information supplied by institutions of higher education that participate in Title IV federal student financial aid programs. Institutions use the figures to determine student aid and help students budget their funds.²¹

The College Board report estimates an amount that full-time undergraduate students at public four-year institutions need to budget to cover “books and supplies.” A separate estimate is generated for students at public two-year institutions.¹ As shown in Exhibit 6, in 2020 the College Board estimated that, on average, a student at a four-year public institution needed to budget \$1,240 to cover books and supplies for the 2020-21 school year.¹ The estimated budget for students at public two-year institutions for the same school year was \$1,460.^K Beginning in the 2020 report, the College Board separated the estimates for “books and supplies” into two subcategories: (1) spending on course materials and (2) other supplies, which could include, for example, a personal computer used for completing assignments and accessing online course materials.²² The estimates for “spending on course materials,” at \$410 for both two- and four-year institutions, are far less than the estimates for “other supplies.”

“Both the College Board and National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS, official data for the National Center for Education Statistics, or NCES) currently use cost of attendance data created by financial aid offices of each institution, using the category ‘Books and Supplies.’ There is no precise guidance from [US]DOE on the definition of this category, and financial aid offices use very idiosyncratic methods for this budget estimate. Some schools like to maximize the amount of financial aid available to students, so there is motivation to keep this category artificially high.”

Source: Phil Hill, “Postscript on Student Textbook Expenditures: More details on data sources,” eLiterate, March 27, 2015, <https://eliterate.us/postscript-on-student-textbook-expenditures-more-details-on-data-sources/>.

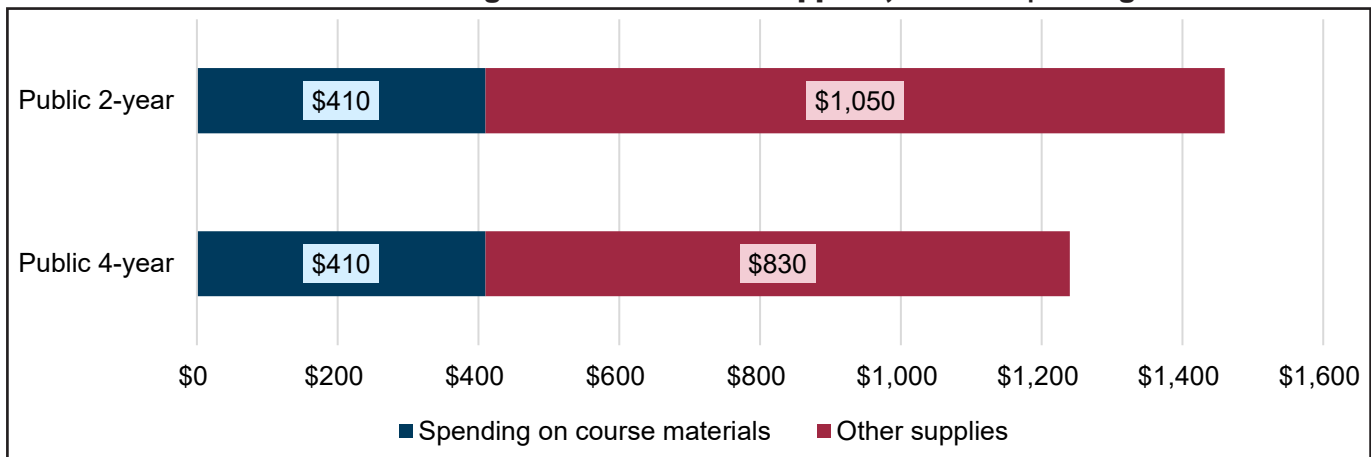
The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) also uses a “books and supplies” category for its annual cost estimations, taken from information collected from higher education institutions annually through its Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Its published average cost of books and supplies for students at four-year institutions during the 2019-20 school year was \$1,291.²³ For students at two-year institutions the average cost of books and supplies was \$1,538. NCES does not calculate the average cost of books outside of the broader books and supplies category nor does it specify what is included in “supplies.”

¹ “Prices for the public two-year, public four-year, and private nonprofit four-year sectors in this report are based on data reported to College Board in its Annual Survey of Colleges. Tuition and fee figures are based on charges to full-time first-year undergraduate students over the course of a nine-month academic year of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours.” Estimates for “Books and Supplies” are weighted by full-time undergraduate enrollment. Jennifer Ma, Matea Pender, and C.J. Libassi, *Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2020*, College Board, p. 11, <https://research.collegeboard.org/pdf/trends-college-pricing-student-aid-2020.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2021).

¹ Data for books and supplies reflects the average amounts allotted in determining the total cost of attendance and do not necessarily reflect actual student expenditures.

^K The average cost estimates for two-year students’ course materials exceeds that for four-year students because students in their third and fourth years tend to have lower materials expenses. When four-year students’ costs are averaged out over the full four years, their overall costs are lower than those of two-year students.

Exhibit 6: Estimated student budgets for books and supplies, 2020-21 | College Board



Source: Jennifer Ma, Matea Pender, and CJ Libassi, *Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2020*, College Board, p. 11, <https://research.collegeboard.org/pdf/trends-college-pricing-student-aid-2020.pdf> (accessed May 4, 2021).

Efforts to create more affordable options for students in purchasing course materials are widespread across Tennessee at the system and institution level.

Higher education institutions, students, and other stakeholders across the nation and in Tennessee have recognized the impact that costly course materials can have on student success and retention. Student demand for less expensive materials has forced the market to adjust and has changed the way students access materials for their courses. Course materials are no longer limited to printed textbooks, and students are acquiring their materials through other methods, such as buying through third-party retailers or renting. These trends have led many institutions and faculty to reconsider how they deliver course content to their students.

In the spring of 2020, THEC formed the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force to find ways for Tennessee’s public higher education institutions to decrease course material costs for students. The task force has about 50 members, representing community colleges, colleges of applied technology, universities, the University of Tennessee and Tennessee Board of Regents systems, THEC, and the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association. (See Appendix A for a list of members.) Since its inception, the task force has created a website¹ for its statewide initiatives and launched a Textbook Affordability listserv for higher education faculty and administrators to share ideas and resources, solicit advice, and stay informed about textbook affordability issues.

This section profiles efforts underway across the state to reduce course material costs. The efforts can be grouped into three areas:

- The growth and development of open educational resources (OER) as a way to provide students free access to course materials: The increased adoption of OER provides students free access to course materials that are not copyrighted to a publisher. The creation of a new statewide OER repository makes OER more accessible statewide.
- The use of inclusive access as a way to decrease student costs for course materials: Some schools are negotiating lower costs from publishers on behalf of their students through inclusive access agreements, which are partnerships between institutions, bookstores, and publishers to deliver digital course materials to students, below market rates, on or before the first day of class.

¹ See <https://www.tn.gov/the/bureaus/academic-affairs-and-student-success/textbook.html>.

- The development of zero-textbook-cost degree (z-degree) programs: Students enrolled in a z-degree program are provided with course materials at no cost. One Tennessee community college has developed a z-degree program and another community college is in the process of creating such a program.

Open Educational Resources (OER) provide a low cost or free option for course materials for students, but implementation requires an investment of faculty time – to plan, develop, and maintain quality instructional materials – and funding.

Open Education Resources (OER) are online learning content such as textbooks, software tools, and other digital resources that anyone can use to teach, learn, and research a subject at little to no cost.^M OER are copyrighted materials that are licensed by the copyright holder to permit greater use with fewer restrictions.^{24,N} It is estimated that students save \$116.94 per course when OER is adopted in place of traditional course materials.²⁵

One of the primary goals of the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force was the creation of a statewide OER repository. In May 2021, the Tennessee Board of Regents entered into a contract with OER Commons, an open-source teaching and learning network that supports and facilitates the creation, sharing, and modification of OER.^O The \$19,500 contract²⁶ allows all higher education institutions in the state to access free OER materials for their courses, explained in more detail below. In addition to funding for the repository, the task force hopes to secure state and private funding for faculty development efforts and video editing related to the OER statewide repository. (See page 14 for more details on the Tennessee OER repository.)

The task force has also studied OER-related practices in other states and on the national level, identified leading metrics for statewide comparisons, and compiled effective strategies for OER accessibility.

Higher education stakeholders note benefits from the use of OER as well as concerns, as summarized in the lists below:

OER benefits

- OER are available for use at little to no cost to teachers or students, reducing the overall cost to the student of obtaining a higher education degree.
- OER are available to students before the first day of class and after the last day of class, since they are free to access by anyone.
- OER are intended to be shared in many formats. They are licensed so that users can make them more accessible for students with disabilities without seeking further permission. They can also be downloaded and shared via flash drives or other formats for those who have unstable internet connections.
- Instructors can modify or adapt course materials based on their unique strengths and expertise to best meet the needs of their students without the copyright restrictions of commercially published resources.
- Students can be directed to modify, expand, or create OER using their own research findings, which encourages critical thinking and writing skills.
- OER can be published and disseminated rapidly compared to commercially published materials, which can take months or years to produce.

^M Students can purchase low-cost printed versions of open textbooks through various online platforms or, in some cases, through their campus bookstores, which may either print books in-house or order printed versions from an external OER publisher.

^N OER advocates often refer to the 5R activities that set OER apart from traditional course materials: Retain – users can make, own, and control copies of the content; Reuse – users can fully use content for any purpose, different mediums; Revise – the content can be adapted, adjusted, modified, or altered; Remix – users can mashup content with other material; and Redistribute – users can share original and altered versions of content.

^O See <https://www.oercommons.org/about>.

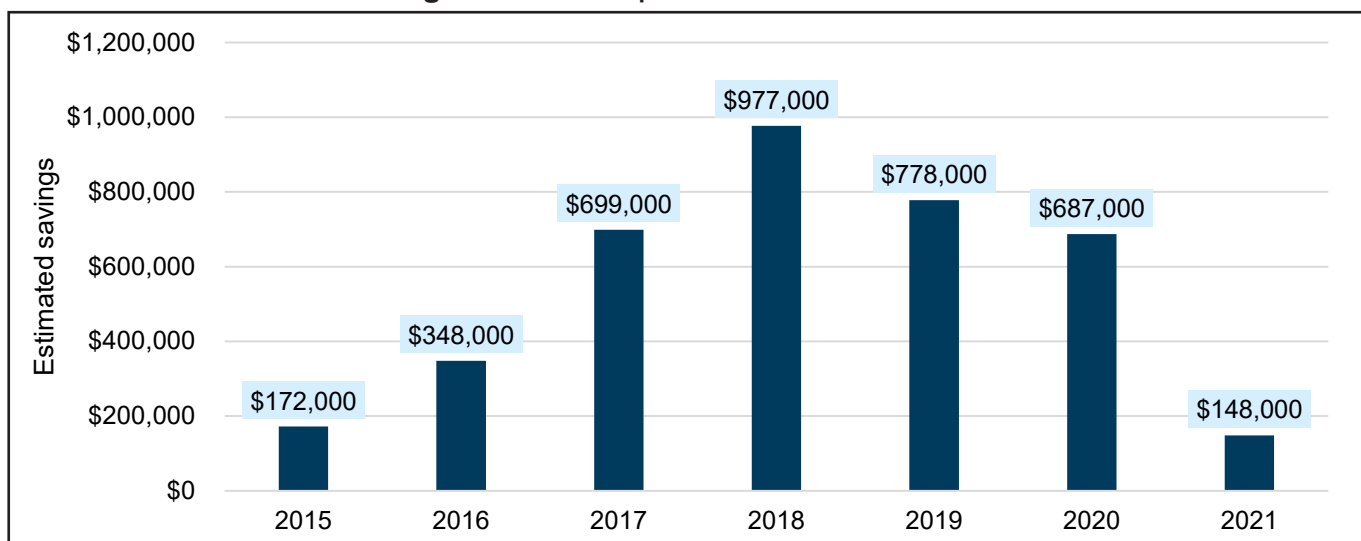
OER concerns

- Creating and curating OER requires time and energy from faculty and staff. Instructors with full course loads and large class sizes in particular may struggle to find the time necessary to create and curate OER, and financial incentives for them to do so may be unavailable.
- Some instructors are hesitant to use OER because they are unsure about the quality of materials that have not been vetted and published by a well-known publisher. Some are also concerned that the OER publication process happens outside of traditional peer review processes.
- Some students may have trouble using digital OER and other digital materials due to a slow internet connection or the inability to afford internet services or other technology required to access materials. (This concern is not confined to OER but applies to all digital instructional resources.)
- Institutions may need funding to compensate instructors for creating and curating OER as well as policies in place to recognize the creation and/or adaptation of OER as a contribution toward tenure and promotion.
- Increasing OER use may result in a loss of revenue for campus bookstores. Revenue loss may vary depending on if the store is independently operated by the college or the terms of an institution's contract with an outside company (e.g., Barnes and Noble).^{27,p}

Most public colleges and universities in Tennessee are using OER to some extent

OER are used in some capacity on most college and university campuses in Tennessee, and the cost-saving impacts have been noted at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. According to analysis conducted by the UTK Libraries, students at the university save an estimated \$700,000 each year through OER and zero-cost materials. Since 2015, UTK students are estimated to have saved \$4,093,600.

Exhibit 7: UTK student savings due to OER | 2015-2021



Note: The estimated savings amount for 2021 is incomplete.
Source: UTK Libraries.

Cost savings are greater for some courses or sections than for others, especially in classes with typically more expensive materials. As of May 2020, UTK students had saved an estimated \$515,000 on course materials since 2015 for the students enrolled in one instructor's sections of an Introductory Economics course, the highest amount for any course at the university.

^pNational nonprofit Achieving the Dream monitored the impact of OER use on bookstore revenue during its OER Degree Initiative. During the two-and-a-half-year length of the initiative, bookstores lost an estimated \$9,000 in revenue.

Exhibit 8: Top 10 UTK courses by overall student savings using OER and zero-cost materials | 2015-2020

Course	Savings	Course	Savings
Introductory Economics	\$515,000	Computer Solutions of Engineering Problems	\$249,100
General Psychology	\$480,600	Elements of Physics II	\$237,700
Physics for Engineers I	\$476,300	Organismal and Ecological Biology	\$201,000
World Geography	\$464,200	Intro to Biology I	\$199,700
Elements of Physics I	\$394,300	Intro to Biology II	\$119,000

Note: (1) Savings are for only particular sections of a course. Savings shown here do not reflect course-level adoptions but rather instructor/section-level adoptions.

(2) Savings by calendar year, spring and fall semesters only, as reported to UTK Libraries.

Source: University of Tennessee, Knoxville Libraries, Open Education Portal, <https://libguides.utk.edu/opened> (accessed July 22, 2021).

Austin Peay State University

Efforts are underway at APSU to encourage faculty to seek more affordable options for course materials. On a survey distributed by the APSU Textbook Affordability Committee in the fall of 2020, nearly 75 percent of student respondents said they had delayed textbook purchases for a course for reasons including lack of money, family/living expenses, and uncertainty whether the textbook would be used. Additionally, 41 percent of faculty respondents stated they have used OER in their courses, while 39 percent have not. (The remaining 20 percent did not provide a response.) Eighty-two percent of respondents said they had not developed OER for their courses. The committee hopes to utilize survey results “to assist faculty in the adoption of course material savings programs and the use of OER to provide affordable, high-quality materials that support students’ academic achievement.” The use of OER in general education courses has been growing at APSU.

University of Memphis

UofM has explored several ways to address textbook affordability for its students. The university provides Follett Discover Adopt software to assist faculty with the selection of course materials based on price and OER availability. The software enables faculty to see real pricing information, all publisher options, different formats that might affect cost, and provides access to an OER database.

Four faculty at UofM were awarded a TBR grant of \$100,000 to pilot the use of OER to make the curriculum more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, particularly in math and English. Additionally, the grant pays for necessary equipment for the university libraries to help faculty with converting materials to OER.

During the spring of 2021, 59 percent of UofM courses did not require a text; OER or other no cost materials were used instead. Nearly 61 percent of summer 2021 courses will not require a text. The university hopes to launch an institutional OER repository in the fall of 2021 to house material created by faculty and other contributors.

In addition, UofM offers small grants to help students pay for items like laptops, hotspots, and other course materials.

University of Tennessee–Chattanooga

UTC rewards faculty members who complete OER projects through its Affordable Course Materials Initiative (ACMI) annual grant program. Faculty work with university librarians to replace standard textbooks with existing library resources, open access scholarly materials, and/or OER authored or adapted by the faculty member. Awards of \$500 are given to faculty who prove through “before” and “after” syllabi that their courses were revised with significantly lower or no cost materials. UTC maintains an online repository called UTC Scholar to host material created by UTC faculty as part of the ACMI and other works developed by faculty. The repository also includes electronically submitted syllabi, reading lists, course schedules, and other materials for free usage.

Additionally, ACMI promotes collaboration between the UTC library, faculty, and the UTC Bookstore to increase transparency about affordable course materials, including clearer labeling and instructions.

The Tennessee Open Education Hub was launched in spring 2021, serving as a statewide repository to increase access and use of OER at all institutions of higher education in Tennessee (both public and private).

One of the goals of the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force created by THEC in spring 2020 was the creation of a statewide OER repository. The Tennessee Board of Regents signed a contract with OER Commons in March 2021 to create the statewide OER repository. The task force hopes to collect OER developed in Tennessee and host these materials in the repository, which will be housed on a cloud-based site contracted by TBR.^Q A statewide repository will give instructors access to course materials for multiple subjects and encourage collaboration across institutions. Several other states, including Texas and Georgia, have their own OER repositories.^R

Tennessee's new repository, Tennessee Open Education Hub, went live May 2021 and allows all higher education institutions in the state – public and private – to access free OER for their courses. The repository holds a collection of OER created by colleges and universities in Tennessee as well as a collection created by faculty, institutions, and organizations worldwide. Additionally, faculty members can upload any materials they have created that are free for distribution under Creative Commons, a standardized licensing system that allows content creators to choose how their materials are disseminated, revised, and credited.^S

Exhibit 9: Tennessee Open Education Hub website



The repository is intended to help faculty find OER for their courses. Faculty can search for materials used at other schools, both in Tennessee and across the world. Materials can include full textbooks, slide presentations, videos, and homework assignments that can be modified to fit the needs of individual courses. Each institution is able to maintain its own “hub” within the website that contains course materials specific to their school and classes.

^Q The cloud-based site is managed by IKSME (Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management). TBR is the contracting entity and has control over content/processes related to the Tennessee Open Education Hub.

^R See the Texas repository at <https://oertx.highered.texas.gov/> and information about Georgia's repository at <https://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/Enterprise-Systems-and-Applications/SLDS/Pages/Open-Educational-Resources.aspx> and https://www.affordablelearninggeorgia.org/about/open_educational_resources.

^S Tennessee Open Education Hub, <https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/TNopeneducation> (accessed July 23, 2021). Creative Commons, About the Licenses, What our licenses do, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/> (accessed July 23, 2021). See Appendix B for a list of Creative Commons licenses.

OER course development takes time

Development of OER courses takes instructors about 180 hours according to a recent national study. Instructors spent most of this time finding OER content, assessing its quality, and revising content. The average compensation cost of developing OER courses was \$12,600, and the average stipend provided to instructors per OER course developed was \$3,200.

The figures above are taken from the OER Degree Initiative conducted by Achieving the Dream, a national nonprofit, at 38 community colleges across 13 states from 2017-2020. The initiative's final report estimated the worth of an instructor's time spent on developing OER courses by using time logs kept by instructors at five participating colleges. The value of each instructor's time was estimated by applying each college's hourly salary and benefit cost (by academic rank) to the reported hours. Due to technology use and other factors, STEM courses in the study cost about 25 percent more to develop than non-STEM courses.

Source: R. Griffiths, J. Mislevy, S. Wang, A. Ball, L. Shear, and D. Desrochers, *OER at Scale: The Academic and Economic Outcomes of Achieving the Dream's OER Degree Initiative*, SRI International, 2020. pp. 47-48, download at <https://www.achievingthedream.org/resource/17993/oer-at-scale-the-academic-and-economic-outcomes-of-achieving-the-dream-s-oer-degree-initiative>.

Higher education institutions in Tennessee are offering financial incentives to encourage instructors to create OER content.

To increase the use of OER, higher education institutions are creating grant programs to encourage faculty to use more OER and other instructional materials that are more affordable for students in their courses. The Tennessee Board of Regents funds an Open Educational Resources Grant to be used by teams of community college, TCAT, and university faculty and staff to modify courses so that OER and other affordable materials are used instead of commercially published materials. Tennessee higher education faculty and staff may apply for a grant amount of up to \$30,000, with each participant receiving up to a \$5,000 stipend as part of the overall award.^T In the first round of grants in October 2020, grants totaling \$313,036 went to 12 teams. Nineteen teams of 72 faculty and staff from 11 colleges and universities were awarded grants ranging from \$9,894 to \$30,000 for the 2021-22 school year, a total of \$477,624.^U The purpose of the grant program is to increase equity in access to quality, low or no cost

educational materials as well as increase success rates and improve educational outcomes for traditionally underserved students.

According to TBR, OER materials will save students more than \$1.1 million compared to used textbook costs through the courses developed by 2021-22 faculty grant recipients in the first year alone. More savings will accrue as faculty continue to use the OER materials.

Federal initiatives for OER development

Federal government agencies have made some efforts to encourage the creation and use of OER. Since 2018, a U.S. Department of Education grant program called the Open Textbook Pilot (OTP) has appropriated a total of \$24 million toward the expansion of OER initiatives throughout postsecondary institutions. Tennessee has not received grants through this program to date. See Appendix E for a list of OTP grant recipients.

In 2011 the U.S. Department of Labor created a \$1.9 billion, four-year grant program for community colleges through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. Grant recipients were required to openly license all course materials developed during the grant, expanding OER use in workforce development. Though the program ended in 2016, materials developed by grantees are still available to career training providers through SkillsCommons, a repository created by TAACCCT for OER related to workforce development. During the active period of the grant, six community colleges in Tennessee received a total of \$41 million, a portion of which was used to develop OER in partnership with local industries. The OER is available for download at the Skills Commons Repository at <https://www.skillscommons.org/>.

^T Tennessee Board of Regents, 2021-2022 Open Educational Resources Grant Sample Application, <https://www.tbr.edu/sites/default/files/media/2021/02/OER%202022%20Sample%20Application.pdf> (accessed July 23, 2021). See Appendix C for a sample OER Grant application.

^U See Appendix D for a list of 2020 OER grant recipients. Tennessee Board of Regents, Press Release, Grants Awarded to college & university teams to create Open Education Resources for students, May 3, 2021, <https://www.tbr.edu/news/grants-awarded-college-university-teams-create-open-educational-resources-students-2021-05-03> (accessed July 23, 2021).

Course marking

To provide students with more information about which classes use open educational resources and other low-cost materials, some states require colleges and universities to clearly indicate on class schedules which courses use free or low-cost course materials. This process, known as course marking, is an offshoot of a provision in federal law requiring institutions of higher education to disclose the International Student Book Number (ISBN) and retail price of textbooks and course materials in the online course schedule used for student registration.²⁸ (See page 25 for more information about the federal law.)

As of May 2020,²⁹ seven states had enacted legislation regarding course marking, shown in Exhibit 10. The laws vary by scope and requirements, including the types of materials that must be marked as OER, free, or low-cost. Low cost is usually defined by the institutions (e.g., a “low-cost” materials course is one with required materials costing \$20 or less). Louisiana defines “affordable or low-cost materials” as traditionally copyrighted materials that are available to students for less than four times the federal minimum wage. In 2019, this amount was \$29.

Exhibit 10: States with course marking legislation

State – bill number	Year enacted
Oregon – HB 2871	2015
California – SB 1359	2016
Washington – HB 1375	2017
Texas – SB 810	2017
Colorado – HB 18-1331	2018
Virginia – HB 2380	2019
Louisiana – SB 117	2019
Oregon – HB 2919	2021

Source: Marking Open and Affordable Courses, 2020.

East Tennessee State University

In 2018 ETSU created the Open and Affordable Course Materials Program, which issues grants for faculty to adopt, adapt, or create affordable materials in their courses. The award, which ranges from \$500 to \$5,000 depending on fund availability and faculty proposals, is co-funded by the Student Library Fee and the Center for Teaching Excellence. Recipients are required to join a Faculty Learning Community, survey students on the experience of using open and affordable course materials, and complete a survey themselves. All materials adapted or created through the program must be published to the university’s online repository, Digital Commons @ ETSU, which is supported through a university-paid subscription with the commercial repository platform Digital Commons.

ETSU provides additional faculty awards through a \$100,000 grant allocated as Access and Diversity Funds by the state and managed by TBR. These awards focus on improving diversity, equity, and inclusion by implementing open or affordable materials in fall 2021 courses (primarily general education courses) with a high number of underrepresented students. The university hosted a month-long OER Camp in July 2021 to provide additional training to these award recipients.

The university hosts workshops each fall and spring semester to introduce faculty to using open and affordable materials in their courses. Faculty who attended the spring 2021 workshop and completed a follow-up activity received a \$250 stipend funded by the TBR grant.

University of Tennessee–Knoxville

UTK encourages the use of OER through working groups and faculty workshops as well as the UT Open Textbook/OER Grant Program, which awards instructors grants of up to \$2,500 to adopt or adapt an existing open textbook or other OER for a course. Additionally, up to three Student Government Association Open Education Awards are given per academic year to faculty and lecturers whose “use of quality OER promote and contribute to a culture of openness and knowledge sharing.” Students may nominate any instructor who uses OER and a panel of judges determines awards based on the nominees’ impact on learning, innovation in teaching, and economic impact on students.

Using inclusive access programs, higher education institutions negotiate with publishers for reduced rates on digital instructional materials for students and bundle the costs with students' tuition and fees.

Inclusive access automatic textbook billing programs are partnerships between an institution, bookstore, and publisher to deliver digital course materials to students, below market rates, on or before the first day of class.³⁰ Under an inclusive access model, students gain immediate and full access for a limited time to digital course materials for a class through the school's existing learning management system. Contracts between publishers and institutions/bookstores stipulate a percentage of students that must participate in order for the discount to be realized.³¹ Because a high number of students are expected to participate, publishers are able to offer course materials at a reduced rate, which must be below competitive market rates according to the U.S. Department of Education rule that permits this financial structure.³² The cost of course materials is typically included in students' tuition and fees, but the regulation requires that students be offered the choice to opt out if they do not want to participate.

The use of inclusive access contracts between institutions of higher education and publishers followed the 2015 revision of a U.S. Department of Education regulation permitting institutions to incorporate the cost of course materials within their tuition and fee structure if an institution:

- has an arrangement with a book publisher or other entity that enables it to make those books or supplies available to students below competitive market rates;
- provides a way for a student to obtain those books and supplies by a specific date; and
- has a policy under which the student may opt out of the way the institution provides for the student to obtain books and supplies.^{33,V}

Industry professionals indicate that publishers can offer significant discounts of as much as 70 percent with inclusive access because most students do not opt out, allowing publishers to offer volume discounts. Students who are enrolled in a course have access during an "opt-out" period at the beginning of a course; if they choose to opt out by the deadline, they lose access. If they do not opt out, they continue to have access and are automatically charged for the content.³⁴

According to market analysts, higher education institutions' use of automatic textbook billing programs has grown rapidly since 2016. Nationwide, the percent of faculty using inclusive access has nearly doubled each year since the 2016-17 academic year, from 3 percent in 2016-17 to 21 percent in 2020-21.³⁵ The growth in the use of inclusive access is likely due to the U.S. Department of Education regulatory revision, described above, and changes within the textbook publishing industry in response to students' and institutions' calls for less costly course materials.³⁶

While inclusive access programs have demonstrated cost savings for students compared to the traditional means of obtaining course materials, higher education stakeholders have identified concerns in addition to benefits.

Critics argue the inclusive access model limits pricing competition and contributes to increases in the price of textbooks. Some argue that the model "is premised on publishers controlling when, where and for how long students have access to their materials, and denying access unless they pay for it."³⁷ Several Tennessee institutions of higher education, however, have demonstrated savings under their inclusive access programs, and the task force considered inclusive access programs to be phase 1 in its plan to achieve more affordable options for students statewide. See page 19.

^V Under current state law, students awarded Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect scholarships cannot use those funds for the purchase of textbooks, including course materials purchased through inclusive access programs.

Some concerns about inclusive access programs recently resulted in lawsuits. Nine lawsuits across four states were filed in March, April, and May 2020 against major textbook companies and retailers who negotiate inclusive access agreements for higher education institutions to offer digital course materials for students.³⁸ These lawsuits were combined under one class action complaint, alleging that the inclusive access programs by three publisher defendants and three retailer defendants “amount to a conspiracy to limit competition and keep textbook prices high.”³⁹ Plaintiffs were described as “all students at colleges or graduate schools in the United States who were required to purchase course materials through Inclusive Access.”⁴⁰ In June 2021, a U.S. judge did not find sufficient evidence that the retailers and publishers operated a conspiracy to suppress competition and dismissed the lawsuits.

The list below briefly summarizes some of the benefits and concerns about inclusive access programs as described by higher education analysts and stakeholders.

Inclusive access program benefits

- Students have access to course materials on the first day of class, and faculty can assign readings and assignments from the first day.
- Course materials are generally provided at a reduced rate to students under inclusive access programs.
- Because the cost of course materials under inclusive access programs are included in the cost of tuition and fees, students may be able to use financial aid to pay for them. Without an inclusive access program, students are unable to use financial aid funds for course materials unless they have funds remaining after covering their direct costs to the institution (tuition, fees, housing, and so on).^{41,w}
- Campus stores experience lower overhead with inclusive access programs. There is no need for square footage to be devoted to textbooks or staff time to be used for repackaging unsold books to return to the publisher. Revenue streams are more predictable largely because most students do not opt out of inclusive access programs.

Inclusive access program concerns

- The cost savings for students under inclusive access programs depend on the ability of campus stores and/or faculty to negotiate with publishers.
- Opting out of inclusive access programs can pose challenges for students. For example, a national review of college procedures found that some schools forced students to go through several steps of verification if they wanted to opt out, framing the process with warnings about not being able to access assignments if they did not participate.⁴² Federal regulations require that students be given the opportunity to opt out but critics point out that if digital courseware “is the only way to complete assignments or take exams, students really have no choice” to opt out.
- Unless students have a clear understanding of the opt-out process, inclusive access programs limit consumer choice in that students no longer possess the option of comparison shopping and selecting from multiple options.
- Most inclusive access models provide only digital content, but some students prefer printed materials, or may not own a device on which to read the online content or a device compatible with the vendor/publisher’s proprietary system.
- Some students may have trouble using digital materials obtained through inclusive access due to a slow internet connection or the inability to afford internet services or other technology required to access materials.
- In most cases, students can only access digital content obtained through an inclusive access program for a specified lease period, typically until the end of the semester. If students fail the course, are required to use the same materials in a future course, or want to access the content for another reason after the original course has ended, they must repurchase the materials.

^w Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect scholarships cover tuition and mandatory fees but do not cover the cost of textbooks and other course materials or other fees. Even though inclusive access fees are added directly to a student’s bill, along with tuition and other fees, neither scholarship can be used for course materials acquired through inclusive access.

Inclusive access programs in Tennessee

Several Tennessee public higher education institutions, both two-year and four-year, have adopted inclusive access programs as one means of providing more affordable course materials to students.

Two-year institutions

In 2019, the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) launched its Digital Engagement Initiative (DEI) with the goal of “providing all students with immediate access to digital course materials on the first day of class at a reduced cost.” The overall plan was split into two phases, the first of which was the implementation of inclusive access models in community colleges across the state starting in the fall of 2019. All college, faculty, and student participation is voluntary, and as of the spring of 2021, 22 TBR campuses (including some satellite campuses) and over 59,000 students participated in the program. Phase two is a move toward open educational resources (OER), which is the ultimate goal of the initiative and is already in development throughout the state.

Community college students who elect to participate in inclusive access courses are automatically charged an e-book fee for online course materials and have access to them on the first day of class. The book fee is fully refundable if students opt out within the time frame provided, and students who initially opt out may opt back in before the deadline.

According to data collected by TBR, because of the inclusive access programs used in all 13 community colleges since 2019, students have saved over \$23 million compared to what they would have paid to purchase new digital textbooks at the standard retail price. (See Exhibit 11.)

Exhibit 11: Savings realized by Tennessee community college students through inclusive access programs

Semester	Total cost with inclusive access	Retail cost of new digital books	Total savings to students
Fall 2019	\$4,330,157.86	\$10,180,991.46	\$5,850,833.60
Spring 2020	\$4,094,935.60	\$9,575,158.98	\$5,480,223.38
Fall 2020	\$5,432,700.00	\$12,449,728.00	\$7,017,028.00
Spring 2021	\$3,835,570.00	\$8,761,949.00	\$4,926,379.00
Total	\$17,693,363.46	\$40,967,827.44	\$23,274,463.68

Note: The sum of student savings is derived by deducting what students paid under inclusive access agreements for digital materials from what they would have paid for the retail cost of new digital books. If a different comparison were used that included rentals, used books, and other options, the savings would likely be lower.

Source: Tennessee Board of Regents.

See Exhibit 12 for a comparison of costs for print textbooks and for electronic texts at Roane State Community College. The list of courses includes required and elective general education courses for a student on the Tennessee Transfer Pathway for Business Administration.^{43,X} Using electronic textbooks for all the courses listed, this student could lower course material costs from \$2,645 to \$979, saving \$1,665 on the path to obtain an associate degree.

^X Tennessee Transfer Pathways (TTP) was designed to ease the path to a four-year degree for community college students. TTP requires TBR, UT institutions, and locally governed institutions to develop transfer pathways for at least 50 undergraduate majors consisting of 60 hours of credit.

Exhibit 12: Roane State Community College, cost comparison of print and e-text for required course materials for Business Administration major

According to the Roane State Community College Academic Map, a Roane State student on the Tennessee Transfer Pathway for Business Administration in 2018 would take the following required and elective general education courses.

Course	Print	e-text	Savings
ENGL 1010 Composition I	\$121.25	\$99.95	\$21.30
MATH 1530 Introductory Statistics	\$121.25	\$99.95	\$21.30
ARTH 1030 Art Appreciation	\$230.00	\$55.59	\$174.41
ENGL 1020 Composition II	\$126.50	\$32.50	\$94.00
MATH 1630 Finite Math	\$121.25	\$99.95	\$21.30
COMM 2025 Fundamentals of Communication	\$177.00	\$39.77	\$137.23
PHIL 121 Elementary Ethics (Humanities elective)	\$105.50	\$14.53	\$90.97
ECON 2100 Principles of Macroeconomics	\$246.50	\$50.03	\$196.47
MATH 1830 Calculus for Business	\$223.00	\$45.87	\$177.13
ENGL 2210 British Literature I (Literature elective)	\$86.00	\$24.80	\$61.20
HIST 2010 Survey of U.S. History I (History elective)	\$88.50	\$33.72	\$54.78
BIOL 1110 General Biology I (Natural Science elective)	\$264.50	\$138.10	\$126.40
ECON 2200 Principles of Microeconomics	\$255.75	\$63.71	\$192.04
HIST 2020 Survey of U.S. History II (History elective)	Reuse text from section 2010		
BIOL 1120 General Biology II (Natural Science elective)	\$264.50	\$138.10	\$126.40
GEOG 2010 World Regional Geography (elective)	\$213.00	\$42.76	\$170.24
Total for Gen Ed courses in TTP A.S. (Business Admin)	\$2,644.50	\$979.33	\$1,665.17

Note: Electives are representative and differ for each student. Textbook cost varies from year to year and from section to section. This analysis was conducted using the best average data available at the time.

Source: TBR, Digital Engagement Initiative: Providing ALL Students With the Tools for Success, Biennial Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Completion October 2, 2018, p. 11, https://lib.pstcc.edu/ld.php?content_id=47914310.

Four-year institutions

Five of Tennessee’s nine public four-year institutions (APSU, MTSU, TSU, UTC, and UTK) provide inclusive access programs through their bookstores.

Since the fall of 2019, students at APSU have saved over \$617,000 on course materials through inclusive access when compared to retail prices for new digital textbooks. The institution has seen a growing number of instructors choose this option and foresees expansion into more general education classes in the future.

UTC first used the inclusive access model in five courses during the fall of 2019. As of the spring of 2021, 28 courses at UTC offered an inclusive access option for course materials, and the majority of students enrolled in these courses have opted into the program each semester. UTC students have saved over \$806,000 on textbooks over four semesters through inclusive access when compared to retail prices for new digital textbooks.

UTK has used the inclusive access model since the fall of 2015, when five courses offered it as an option to 540 students. Since then, the number of courses offering inclusive access has grown to 500. Students have saved over \$7.7 million on digital course materials compared to retail prices since 2019.

Since the inclusive access model was first implemented at TSU in 2019, students have saved over \$2.4 million compared to the retail prices of new materials, an average of over 40 percent savings per semester.^Y

^Y The new retail price comparisons used by TSU include digital and a limited amount of print textbooks.

Over two semesters of implementation, MTSU students have saved over \$144,000 on course materials using the inclusive access model. The option was offered in five courses in the fall of 2020 and 15 courses in spring 2021.

Exhibit 13: Savings realized by Tennessee students at four-year institutions through inclusive access programs

	APSU	MTSU	TSU	UTC	UTK
Fall 2019	\$109,682.45	N/A	\$463,597.00	\$35,386.00	\$2,300,872.00
Spring 2020	\$88,265.05	N/A	\$463,597.00	\$108,899.00	\$2,053,853.00
Fall 2020	\$243,319.12	\$49,868.76	\$793,637.00	\$354,775.00	\$2,015,508.00
Spring 2021	\$176,201.88	\$94,664.52	\$703,390.00	\$307,682.00	\$1,341,149.00
Total	\$617,468.50	\$144,533.28	\$2,424,221.00	\$806,745.00	\$7,711,382.00

Notes: (1) Savings resulting from inclusive access programs differ between institutions by the number of participating courses and students, which affects the overall savings at each school. (2) This table reflects cost savings at each institution calculated based on cost comparisons to the price of new digital textbooks except: UTC and UTK use a market comparison tool that compares market prices of new, used, rental, and digital. The algorithm chooses the lowest price option in any format with similar availability to course enrollment as the market rate (ensuring that comparisons are not made to options with low availability); TSU's estimate includes both printed and digital materials. (3) If a different comparison were used that included rentals, used books, and other options, the savings would likely be lower. Sources: Data provided by Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, and University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Inclusive access with Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect

Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect scholarships cover tuition and mandatory fees but do not cover the cost of textbooks and other course materials or other fees. Even though inclusive access fees are added directly to a student's bill, along with tuition and other fees, neither scholarship can be used for course materials acquired through inclusive access.^{44,Z}

Promise and Reconnect students who choose to purchase course materials through inclusive access may cover the cost through other funding sources, such as Pell Grants, the Tennessee Student Assistance Award, and personal funds, among others.

Middle Tennessee State University

MTSU has an inclusive access program through Barnes and Noble College Bookstore's FirstDay platform. Materials are charged at registration and students may opt out. Fifteen courses (with multiple sections) were included in the program in the spring of 2021, and the institute expects an increase of at least five courses by the fall of 2021.

MTSU's Walker Library developed the Library Textbook Program to assist students with the rising cost of textbooks, offering a collection of textbooks that students can check out for three-hour, in-library blocks. The collection mainly consists of materials for general education courses with a large enrollment.

A fall 2019 faculty survey showed that 37 percent of 182 respondents were using OER in their classes. A follow-up survey in the spring of 2021 showed that 55 percent of the 206 faculty respondents were using OER, 19 of whom said they use it all or most of the time. Through a series of workshops to support the development and use of OER, MTSU members of the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force learned that several faculty members were already using OER but did not know the term for it, signaling the need for a better system of recognizing OER use.

Task force members asked the campus bookstore to add "OER" as an option on the textbook request forms used by faculty. Adding the "OER" selection option will improve data on textbook usage at MTSU. In the spring semester of 2021, 3,052 courses were designated as "no textbook required."

MTSU received a \$100,000 OER grant from TBR which it used to launch Embracing Equity Through OER, an initiative that aligns with MTSU's Quest 2025 plan to improve student retention and make other enhancements. Funds will be used for individual grants to faculty who develop OER for their courses, especially those who teach general education courses that use higher-priced textbooks.

^Z Books are considered non-mandatory and thus are not covered by funds students receive from the Tennessee Promise Scholarship or a Tennessee Reconnect Grant.

Zero-textbook-cost degree programs

Several colleges across the country have started zero-textbook-cost degree programs (z-degree) in which students may earn a college credential, such as an associate degree, through courses taught exclusively with OER, eliminating all textbook costs for students.⁴⁵ Several states, including Virginia, New York, Mississippi, Arizona, and Minnesota, offer z-degree programs within their state college systems. Using OER to achieve a zero-textbook cost for students is prevalent among institutions, but zero costs may also be achieved through other methods, including using no textbook in a course; purchasing course materials through grants or other funding sources that are then provided free of charge to students; and using articles, books, and other materials made available through libraries or learning centers with enough copies to be used simultaneously by all students.

Motlow State Community College is the first Tennessee institution to offer a z-degree program, marketing it as a way to make college more affordable and in some cases completely free (e.g., for students with any source of full financial aid). Motlow State currently offers one degree through its z-degree program: an online Associate of Applied Science degree in Business with a concentration in Business Office. The courses required for this degree are completely free of course fees or material costs. Motlow State hopes to add more z-degree programs in the future.

The Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force is evaluating z-degree program capacity by taking an inventory of where OER-based courses currently exist in Tennessee higher education to improve institutions' ability to efficiently develop and market their z-degree programs.

Columbia State Community College plans to offer a z-degree program in the future. Under a \$60,000 grant awarded in 2020 by TBR's DEI Open Educational Resources program, Columbia State plans to develop OER courses for English Composition I and English Composition II. The community college will also create a set of instructional resources for English Composition II instructors, providing lessons, assignments, sample essays, and other teaching materials, which will be added to TBR's digital repository for OER materials, making them available to institutions across the state without cost.

Z-degree programs originated at Virginia's Tidewater Community College (TCC) in 2013. By the fall of 2017, the college estimated that over 10,000 TCC students had saved a collective \$1 million on course materials by taking z-courses. With the help of a privately and publicly funded grant program called the Zx23 Project, the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) offers z-Degrees at 16 of their 23 colleges with the goal of adding them at all campuses.

In the State University of New York (SUNY) system of colleges, the state's investment of \$8 million toward the development of OER has resulted in the creation of zero-textbook-cost courses and degrees as well. For example, the number of zero-textbook-cost sections offered by the City of New York University School of Professional Studies increased from 35 sections in spring 2017 to 245 sections offered in spring 2021, and the school also created two z-degree bachelor's degrees in Communication/Media and Sociology. The school plans to expand the number of zero-textbook-cost courses and develop additional z-degrees.

Tennessee State University

TSU is one of 10 historically black colleges and universities in the nation implementing an Affordable Learning Solutions Program through MERLOT, an online platform out of California State University. Through this partnership, TSU established a hub for affordable learning solutions and an OER library on a website called TSU-EXCEL4ed customized for its faculty and students. The university has received multiple grants that were used to train faculty and establish OER Classroom Pilots, increase awareness of OER among historically black colleges and universities and provide training, and transition courses online and create a special teaching and learning website in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The university currently pilots OER in the following academic departments:

- Education Leadership
- Teaching and Learning
- Education Technology
- Chemistry
- Social Work
- Public Health
- Psychology

The university encourages faculty to first consider OER when selecting course materials and makes OER-related training available to faculty each semester.

Both Tennessee and federal laws require colleges to be transparent about course material information and pricing.

The cost of course materials has been a concern for lawmakers in Tennessee for well over a decade. In 2007, a year before the federal government passed the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) with provisions related to transparency of course material pricing and affordability, the Tennessee General Assembly passed similar legislation at the state level. Public Chapter 504 (2007) requires the UT System and TBR to develop policies to minimize the cost of course materials used at public institutions of higher education. The policies must require faculty members to provide timely information to campus bookstores about the materials that are required for each of their courses, including International Student Book Numbers (ISBNs). In turn, this information must be made available to students on each school's website. Campus bookstores must disclose the cost of the required materials to students (and faculty members must acknowledge the price) before the bookstore completes an order.⁴⁶ See Exhibits 14 and 15.

Some of the requirements, such as publishing adopted course materials on each school's website, may not directly lower costs, but having this information allows students to find alternate ways of obtaining their materials, such as from a third-party seller, potentially at lower prices. Requiring faculty members to affirmatively acknowledge the price of course materials and consider the least costly option for their students prior to selecting materials⁴⁷ may help decrease costs if the requirement prompts faculty members to seek out less expensive options for students.

As required by the law, TBR developed a policy in 2007 applicable to all institutions under its governance, which at that time included the public four-year universities that were not under the UT System. TBR's policy requires each institution under its governance to develop their own policies.⁴⁸ As of 2016, these six universities are now independent of TBR and are known as locally governed institutions.⁴⁹ Technically, the 2007 law no longer applies to these six universities. Five locally governed institutions have developed their own course material policies and one is continuing to use the TBR policy while it develops its own.

As of 2021, most community colleges have adopted textbook policies as required by TBR.^{AA} The majority of policies mirror the components of the TBR policy and primarily mandate efforts instructors and bookstores should undertake to improve the affordability of required course materials.

According to UT officials, the UT System does not currently have a textbook policy but plans to develop such a policy that will comply with the 2007 law. Although the system has not yet adopted a policy, many of its current practices align with the 2007 law. Both the system and individual campuses have textbook affordability initiatives in place. For example:

- A system-wide group addressing textbook affordability was established to share information and facilitate system-wide collaboration as part of a One UT Collaboration and Innovation Grant. The group includes membership from all UT campuses and the system office.
- UT Knoxville utilizes an online price comparison tool. This allows students to compare prices with other retailers, allowing students to sort through multiple pricing options.
- UT Chattanooga has an Affordable Course Materials Initiative that “seeks to improve educational outcomes by lowering the cost of course materials for students.” The initiative awards grants to faculty who reduce or eliminate course materials costs for students. The initiative also promotes clearer labeling and instructions about affordable materials for students by increasing collaboration among the UTC Library, faculty, and the UTC Bookstore.
- UT Martin has a Textbook Affordability Leadership Team with the mission to support textbook affordability/OER development and communicate with campus faculty groups (faculty senate, curriculum committee, academic department faculty meetings, etc.), facilitate content and best practices, and develop training activities.
- UT Knoxville’s library provides a website titled “Faculty Choice: Compare Textbook Models” to ensure that instructors are aware of the choices they have when assigning course materials. The website provides a chart for faculty to compare, by type of course material, relative costs, student ownership, date of availability, and whether students can retain or resell materials, among others. It also provides contacts for faculty to consult about textbook and course materials choices. Additionally, when UTK faculty submit textbook orders, instructors are notified if their selection is available for inclusive access and asked if they want to add it as such an option, prompted to affirm their awareness of the pricing of materials they select, and permitted to request information on alternative format materials for their selection.
- Both UTK and UTC are active members of the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force and have inclusive access programs.

Among those higher education institutions with policies, some (APSU, Columbia State, and Northeast, for example) encourage departments to adopt the same materials for all sections of a specific course – for example, all sections of Psychology 101 are encouraged to adopt the same course materials. Other policies address the length of time a textbook should be used, either encouraging or requiring a minimum of two semesters or more. Northeast State, for example, requires that course materials be adopted for a minimum of two years, if appropriate by discipline area.

Some policies specify the process that faculty members must follow for adopting new textbooks for their courses. At APSU, new editions of textbooks must follow the same adoption process as the adoption of a different textbook, as new editions of textbooks typically result in higher costs for students. APSU’s policy also states that bundled materials (see more information on page 40) should be considered only if there is a cost savings to students.

At least two institutions, Dyersburg State and Northeast State, require faculty to not only affirm that they are aware of the cost of their selected materials, as required by state law, but also provide a short justification for why a specific course material was adopted or document that student costs were evaluated. Northeast

^{AA} Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology were not included in the scope of this report.

State requires that when the quality and content of different materials that could be selected for a course are equivalent, the faculty member must select the lowest cost option unless approved by the school's Vice President for Academic Affairs. See Appendix F for full copies of the policies for select institutions.

Exhibit 14: Policies required by Public Chapter 504 (2007)

According to state law, the UT system and TBR must develop policies for minimizing the cost of textbooks and course materials used at public institutions of higher education while maintaining quality of education and academic freedom.

Under these policies, faculty members are required to:

- submit lists of required textbooks and course materials, including International Student Book Numbers (ISBNs) to on-campus bookstores early enough for adequate materials to be ordered;
- consider the least costly practices in assigning textbooks and course materials, such as adopting the least expensive edition of a comparable textbook available;
- affirmatively acknowledge the price of textbooks and course materials before an order is completed; and
- work with publishers and bookstores to create bundles only if they deliver a cost savings to students.

Campus bookstores are required to:

- disclose to faculty the student cost for purchasing the required textbooks and course materials for each course;
- actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs;
- offer students the opportunity to buy bundled textbooks and study materials separately from each other, if possible; and
- complete all textbook and monitoring required by any policy adopted using existing bookstore staff.

Public institutions of higher education are required to:

- make lists of course materials available to students on each school's website, and
- make copies of textbooks available for students at no cost through the academic department or through the campus library's reserve system, so long as the publisher provided copies for that purpose at no charge.

Source: TCA 49-7-141.

Exhibit 15: Federal laws on course material affordability

In 2008, one year after Tennessee passed its own law concerning textbook affordability, the federal government passed the reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), which includes provisions related to transparency of costs for students, both for tuition and course materials. The overall purpose of the requirements pertaining to course materials is to ensure that students have access to affordable course materials by decreasing costs to students.

The law requires that institutions of higher education must give students timely information about required course materials in classes for which they register, including ISBNs and retail prices, both in online and written course schedules. With accurate and timely information about the materials required for their courses, students may be able to make more informed decisions about how and where to purchase them. Institutions must also provide certain information to college bookstores, including the course schedule, course material ISBNs and prices, and course enrollment information for the subsequent academic period. Publishers must allow sales of bundled textbooks and supplemental materials to be sold separately.

The HEOA requires each institution to post a net price calculator on its website that uses institutional data to provide estimated net price information to current and prospective students based on each student's unique circumstances. Using information supplied by the student to approximate estimated family contribution, the calculator will estimate the price a student will have to pay once any grant and scholarship aid is subtracted. The net price includes the estimated cost of attendance, tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and more.

In addition to these requirements, institutions are encouraged to provide information to students regarding textbook rental and buy-back programs, available institutional alternative content delivery programs, and other available cost-saving strategies.

Policy options

The General Assembly may wish to amend state law concerning the development of textbook policies that are applicable to all public postsecondary institutions.

In 2007, the state legislature passed a law promoting the affordability of course materials for college students. Public Chapter 504 (2007), codified as *TCA 49-7-141*, directed the University of Tennessee System and the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) to ensure that institutions under their governance would follow certain requirements to address affordability.⁵⁰ In 2016, with passage of the Focus on College and University Success (FOCUS) Act, the four-year universities that had been a part of TBR became independent locally governed institutions: Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Tech University, and the University of Memphis.

Because *TCA 49-7-141* has never been amended, the law does not refer to the locally governed institutions and is technically applicable only to postsecondary institutions under the UT System and TBR. The state legislature may wish to amend *TCA 49-7-141* to ensure that it applies to all public postsecondary institutions.

The General Assembly may wish to amend state law to encourage faculty to use OER or other innovative initiatives as a way of lowering the cost of course materials for students.

State law already encourages faculty members to consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials, such as adopting the least expensive edition of a textbook available without sacrificing content.⁵¹ Current state law lists ways institutions should address textbook affordability issues but does not explicitly mention OER as an alternative to traditional textbooks.⁵² Adding specific language to the law about OER would call attention to OER as a means of lowering the cost of course materials for students and possibly increase the use of OER by faculty across the state. Several other states have similar statutory language.

The General Assembly may also want to encourage higher education institutions to consider the creation, adaptation, and use of OER as a contribution toward tenure and promotion as a means to encourage faculty use of OER.

The General Assembly may wish to expand state support for OER development.

OER development and maintenance requires time and effort from faculty and staff, which may discourage some from undertaking the process. One report estimated OER course development to take approximately 180 hours of an instructor's time, which, if fully compensated, would cost an institution about \$12,600 per course to fund, plus additional funding for necessary resources.

Existing OER grant programs, such as those offered by TBR and individual institutions, provide funding for the development and maintenance of OER. Currently, TBR awards competitive OER grants to faculty at community colleges and the locally governed institutions with funds from the Regents Access and Diversity Fund Initiative included in the state's annual budget. A state-funded effort with legislative backing would further encourage OER course development at more institutions. Other states, including Oregon and Texas, fund statewide OER grants that are awarded through a competitive application process each year. Pennsylvania has established an OER grant program using COVID-19 relief funds. Virginia and other states fund zero-textbook-cost (z-degree) programs through grants or state funding so that students can obtain degrees without paying for course materials.

The General Assembly may wish to encourage or require institutions of higher education to mark classes as free or affordable on course schedules.

Awareness of which courses use OER or low-cost materials would help students make more informed decisions when registering for classes each semester. Some U.S. schools, including Motlow State in Tennessee, mark the courses that use OER and low-cost materials on online class schedules, and some states have enacted laws requiring schools to do this. Most states allow schools to define “affordable or low-cost materials.” Louisiana state law defines “affordable or low-cost materials” as traditionally copyrighted materials that are available to students for less than four times the federal minimum wage. In 2019, this amount was \$29.

A law passed by the California state legislature in 2016 required all California community colleges and California State University to mark the courses on their online course schedules that exclusively use free resources. The same law requested that each campus of the University of California follow the practice as well.

In 2017, Texas enacted a law requiring all public institutions of higher education to disclose all details regarding course materials on the course schedule provided for students. The schedule must include the retail price, author, publisher or provider, most recent copyright date, International Student Book Number (ISBN), any associated fee, and whether the course material is an OER.

Washington passed a law in 2020 requiring all community and technical colleges to report whether a course uses low-cost required instructional materials (defined as less than \$50). A 2021 bill expanded the requirement to four-year institutions. Oregon passed a law in 2021 that requires public higher education institutions to display online in the published course schedule, prior to student registration, the estimated costs of all required course materials and directly related course fees for courses offered that semester.

The Idaho State Board of Education in June 2021 revised its policy on instructional materials access and affordability to encourage higher education institutions to indicate the cost of instructional materials in course sections at the time of student registration, identifying courses as low cost (up to \$50), mid cost (\$51 to \$100), and/or high cost (more than \$100).

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Appendix A: Members of the Tennessee Textbook Affordability Task Force

Participant	Institution	Role
Nancy King Sanders	APSU	Vice Provost for Student Achievement
Ashley Sergiadis	ETSU	Digital Scholarship Librarian, Sherrod Library
Phillip Smith	ETSU	Teaching and Learning Specialist
Bud Fischer	MTSU	Dean, College of Basic & Applied Sciences
Cheryl Torsney	MTSU	Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
Kimberly Godwin	MTSU	Instructional Designer
Suzanne Mangrum	MTSU	Acquisitions Librarian
Amy Moreland	TBR	Director of Policy
Robert Denn	TBR	Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Kristina Krau Waymire	TBR	Director of Student Initiatives
Nicola Wayer	TBR	Director of Instructional Design & Training
Christie Hamilton	Dyersburg State	Associate Professor of Nursing
Mike Bowen	Dyersburg State	Associate Professor of Economics
Wayne Corlis	Dyersburg State	Instructor of Business
Patrick Davis	Jackson State	Dean of Academic Support
Christine Summers	Motlow State	Professor of Business
Laura Burrige	Nashville State	Associate Professor of English
Tricia Crawford	Northeast State	Associate Professor of Sociology
Kellie Mzik	Pellissippi State	Associate Professor of Speech
Larry Vincent	Pellissippi State	Associate Professor of Music
Leslie Adamczyk	Pellissippi State	Associate Professor of Chemistry
Lisa Brown	Pellissippi State	Instructor of Nursing
Mary Ellen Spencer	Pellissippi State	Dean of Library Services
Mary Monroe-Ellis	Pellissippi State	Professor of Mathematics
Susan Mosteller	Pellissippi State	Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Trish Collins	Pellissippi State	Associate Professor of English
Jennifer Townes	Southwest TN	Director, Teaching Academy
Jimmy Jones	TCAT Chattanooga	Master Instructor
Gwen Bean	TCAT Shelbyville	Master Instructor, Administrative Office Technology
Sheri Waltz	Volunteer State	Department Chair, Communications
Ashley Frazier	Walters State	Assistant Professor of Biology
Connie Earls	Walters State	Director, Office of Retention Services
Ryan Korstange	THEC	Director of Academic Affairs
Julie Roberts	THEC	Associate Chief Academic Officer
Anita McGaha	TSU	Director of Disability Services
Arlene Nicholas-Phillips	TSU	Executive Assistant to the President

Cheryl Seay	TSU	Director, Center for Extended Education
Robbie Melton	TSU	Associate Vice President, SMART Global Technology Innovation Center and Dean, Graduate & Professional Studies
Jane Jackson	TSU	Professor of Business
Karen Weddle-West	UM	Vice Provost of Student Academic Success
Leigh Cherry	UT	Coordinator for Student Success Initiatives
Rachel Fleming	UTC	Collections Initiatives Librarian
Elizabeth Spica	UTK	Doctoral student, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
Jennifer Gramling	UTK	Director of Online Programs
Rachel Caldwell	UTK	Scholarly Communication & Publishing Librarian
Randy Davis	UTK	Associate Director, VolShop
Shirley Streeter	UTK	Assistant Director, VolShop
Steve Smith	UTK	Dean of UT Libraries
Sharon Holderman	TTU	Coordinator of Public Services – Volpe Library
Diane Berty	TICUA	Vice President
Rhonda Clinard	UT Southern	
Skylar Lovvo	UT Southern	
Stella Brumit	UT Southern	

Source: Tennessee Board of Regents.

Appendix B: Creative Commons licenses (CC licenses)

CC licenses	Permissions
 CC BY	Allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, with creator attribution. Allows commercial use.
 CC BY-SA	Allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, with creator attribution. Allow for commercial use. Any modified material must be licensed under the same terms.
 CC BY-NC	Allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for noncommercial purposes only, and only with creator attribution.
 CC BY-NC-SA	Allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for noncommercial purposes only, with creator attribution. Any modified material must be licensed under the same terms.
 CC BY-ND	Allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator. Allows for commercial use.
 CC BY-NC-ND	Allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, with creator attribution.
 CC0	Public dedication tool, allowing creators to give up copyright and put their works in the worldwide public domain. Allows material modification with no conditions.

Source: Creative Commons.

Appendix C: Sample Application for Open Education Resources Grant

2021-2022 Open Educational Resources Grant

Sample Application

Applications will only be accepted via the grants portal - <https://tbrgrants.webgrantscloud.com>.

The primary purpose of the Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Project is to increase equity in access to quality, no/low cost educational materials. The Project is designed to increase success rates and improve educational outcomes for traditionally underserved students, such as but not limited to students of color, first-generation college students, and economically disadvantaged students.

The OER Grant Project will provide opportunities for teams of Community College, Technical College, and University faculty and professional staff members to transform courses currently using commercially published textbooks to courses using open educational resources and other more affordable materials.

Course(s) to transition to OER:

Teams representing all courses/programs are eligible to apply.

This field is limited to 5,000 characters, including spaces.

2020-2021 Enrollment in course(s):

For each course listed above, please include the total enrollment for 2020-2021.

This field is limited to 5,000 characters, including spaces.

Rationale:

Briefly describe why each course was selected and provide data on enrollment and success rates for the course, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and/or other underserved group.

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Texts:

List the Title, author, cost of current textbook(s)/courseware for course(s): (Include link to campus bookstore/online vendor to text(s) named above)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Participating institutions:

List the participating institutions involved in the proposal.

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Team Members

Include faculty (must be full-time) and staff who will play a major role in the course redesign and implementation.

Each participant will receive up to a \$5,000.00 stipend, which is part of the overall award.

Examples of roles could be Team Leader, Subject Matter Expert, Instructional Designer, Librarian, etc.

(List Project Leader first. Do not use prefixes or suffixes e.g., Dr., Ms., Ph.D., etc...)

Name	Title	Institution	Email	Phone	Role in Project

Narrative

Student Success

Detail the vision for how the OER-supported course will be developed or redesigned in order to produce enhanced student learning and improved student success for traditionally underrepresented students. (10 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters

Teaching

In addition to providing high-quality, low-cost textbooks for students, OER grants should provide opportunities for faculty to innovate and re-energize their teaching. How will this project accomplish this? (10 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Outline and Steps

Include the project timeline, noting major milestones. (10 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters, including spaces.

Responsibilities

Outline the activities expected for each team member related to:

- a. Identification, review/evaluation, selection, and adoption/adaptation/creation of the new course materials.
- b. Any redesign work necessary for the transformation including instructional design, curriculum alignment, accessibility, etc...

(10 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Results

All OER Grant projects must be evidence based and measure student satisfaction, student performance, and course-level success (drop/fail/withdraw rates). Teams and institutions can do this in varied ways. How will this team gather and analyze data about the impact of the project? Include quantitative or qualitative measures to be used along with a description of the methods and/or tools to gather and analyze data. Data should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and residents of distressed counties. (5 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Sustainability

OER Grants should have a lasting impact on the course for years to come. For this to happen, a sustainability plan needs to be in place after the end of the project. Please include here your plans for offering the course in the future, including but not limited to:

- Maintenance and updating of course materials
- Any possible expansion of the project to more course sections in the future
- Plans for sharing this work with others through presentations, articles, or other scholarly activities
- Scaling to other courses or sections

(5 points)

This field is limited to 5,000 characters including spaces.

Budget

	Line Item	Grant Request
1	Salaries	
2	Student Wages	
3	Benefits	
4	Honoraria	
5	Supplies	
6	Food	
7	Facilities	
8	Travel/Conferences	
9	Stipends	
10	Other	
	Total	

Open Educational Resource Grant – FY 2022

Required Signatures

Project Title Proposed Budget

Project Director Date

Diversity/Equity Officer Date

Grants/Sponsored Programs Date

Chief Academic Officer Date

Business Officer Date

Appendix D: TBR OER grant recipients

2020-21	Lead college	Project title	Amount
	Chattanooga State	BIOL 2010 A & P	\$14,692.00
	Roane State	MATH 1010	\$29,981.18
	Columbia State	ENGL 1020 English Comp II	\$29,250.00
	Columbia State	ENGL 1010 English Comp I	\$29,300.00
	Nashville State	ENGL 1010, 1020, 2310 (Humanities)	\$25,500.00
	Northeast State	HIST 2030 Tennessee History	\$21,818.24
	Pellissippi State	PSYC 1030 General Psychology	\$27,150.00
	Pellissippi State	COMM 2045 Public Speaking	\$30,000.00
	Southwest TN	COMM 2025 Fundamentals of Communication	\$29,750.00
	Southwest TN	HPER 1570 Wellness Perspectives	\$28,825.00
	Southwest TN	PSYC 1030 General Psychology	\$17,250.00
	Southwest TN	HIST 2020 Modern US History	\$29,250.00
		Total	\$156,643.21
2021-22	Lead college	Project title	Amount
	Columbia State	English 2320 – Modern World Literature	\$30,000.00
	APSU	Peay Code: Gaming the Gateway to Enhance Computer Science Programming Skills	\$28,000.00
	Chattanooga State	OER for Stars and Galaxies Astronomy ASTR 1020	\$30,000.00
	Nashville State	First Year Experience OER	\$13,000.00
	Chattanooga State	OER for History 2010 & 2020	\$29,030.00
	Cleveland State	An OER Initiative in the Honors College	\$29,158.00
	TTU	Success Through Affordable Textbooks (S.T.A.T.)	\$30,000.00
	Chattanooga State	OER for Sociology of Aging – SOCI 217 (TN eCampus)	\$9,894.00
	Columbia State	ENGL 2860 – Intro to Film	\$30,000.00
	Chattanooga State	OER for Anthropology 1130, 1230, & 1430	\$18,883.00
	Chattanooga State	OER for Latino Cultures in the United States (HUM 1110)	\$21,239.00
	Roane State	OER for MATH 1410/1420	\$21,239.00
	Pellissippi State	OER POLS 1030 American Government	\$24,600.00
	Southwest	Transitioning BIOL 1010 & 1020, Intro to Biology and Diversity of Life, to OER courses	\$29,000.00
	Volunteer State	Developing OER for Learning Support READ 0810	\$20,730.00
	Southwest	HLTH 2210 Health, First Aid, and Safety	\$30,000.00
	Southwest	2021-2022 OER Grant for ESL Curriculum	\$30,000.00
	Southwest	PSYC 1030 (Honors) with undergraduate research	\$17,000.00
	TSU	OER in General Chemistry courses	\$27,090.00
		Total	\$477,624.00

Source: Tennessee Board of Regents.

Appendix E: 2020-21 Open Textbook Pilot grant recipients

Grantee	Amount	Purpose
West Hills College Lemoore <i>Lemoore, CA</i>	\$1,999,924	<i>California Consortium for Equitable Change in Hispanic Serving Institutions OER</i>
<i>Middlesex College Edison, NJ</i>	\$1,144,068	<i>Open Textbook Collaborative Project</i>
Louisiana Board of Regents	\$1,985,881	<i>Interactive OER for Dual Enrollment</i>
University of Texas Arlington, TX	\$582,322	<i>OERTransport: Enabling Transportation Planning Professional Advancement</i>

Source: SPARC.

Appendix F: Examples of textbook policies from Tennessee institutions

APSU 2:016
Page 1

Austin Peay State
University

Adoption of Textbooks and Ancillary Course Materials

POLICIES

Issued: March 8, 2017

Responsible Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic

Official: Affairs

Responsible
Office: Academic Affairs

Policy Statement

In the Tennessee Code Annotated 49-7-141, it is required that Austin Peay State University develop a policy for minimizing the cost of textbooks and ancillary course materials to students while maintaining quality of education and academic freedom. The term “textbook”, when used hereafter, shall include all course materials that must be purchased for a particular course offering and applies to textbooks, eBooks, lab materials, and other course material.

Purpose

This policy is intended to encourage the use of textbooks for multiple, rather than single, semesters or terms, thereby creating a demand and market for used texts that result in lower costs of educational supplies for students. Because new editions of existing textbooks typically result in additional costs to students, the adoption of a new edition shall follow the same process as the adoption of a new textbook. Departments/schools are encouraged to adopt identical materials for all sections of a specific course offering. When practical, departments/schools should adopt textbooks that can be used by multiple courses.

The contracted bookstore and university are required to follow Section 133 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) as it relates to consumer disclosure information for textbooks. The university is required to post all adoptions online and the university has the option to utilize its contracted bookstore web system to comply with Section 133.

All textbooks must be adopted following the process outlined in Section I below. At times, it may be recommended that a department/school adopt a textbook written by a faculty member

or in which that faculty member (or a family member) has a potential financial interest; in these cases, Sections I and II must be followed.

Contents

Procedures

- Process for Adopting Textbooks
- Process for Selecting Faculty-Authored Textbooks or Textbooks in which the Faculty or Family Member has a Financial Interest
- University Interests in Faculty-Authored Textbooks

Links

- APSU Policy 1:001
- APSU Policy 2:047

Procedures

Process for Adopting Textbooks

The Provost shall develop and disseminate a calendar of deadlines for the submission of textbook adoptions approved pursuant to this policy for each semester or term in a given academic year at the university.

1. The chair/director of each academic department/school shall review and act upon faculty requests to adopt textbooks for the department's/school's courses and faculty requests for faculty-authored textbook adoptions (Also see Section II, Process for Selecting Faculty-Authored Textbooks). Chairs/directors may choose to form a Textbook Selection Committee(s) to oversee textbook adoptions for the department's/school's courses prior to submission to the chair/director for action.
2. Faculty members must submit requests for all textbook adoptions to the appropriate chair/director (or department/school Textbook Selection Committee) in an adequate timeframe for consideration as provided in (1) and (2) above.
3. Reviews, if conducted by the department/school Textbook Selection Committee(s), shall include recommendations based upon majority vote. Reviews, whether conducted by chairs/directors or by department/school Textbook Selection Committees, should include input from affected adjunct instructors.

The chair/director (or Textbook Selection Committee) shall review recommended textbooks using the following criteria as guidelines:

Criteria for Textbook Selection

The proposed textbook should:

- a. match the learning objectives outlined in each course syllabus;
 - b. provide a reasonable cost to students. As a way of ensuring reasonable cost, faculty members should consider practices that reduce the cost of course materials, such as recommending the adoption of the least expensive option from the available products that meet the requirements of the course. Bundled materials (a group of objects joined together by packaging or required to be purchased as an indivisible unit) only should be considered if there is a cost savings to students;
 - c. provide all information in a manner that accommodates the needs of hearing- and visually-impaired learners in accordance with state and federal regulations;
 - d. contain current copyright dates and revision cycles; and,
 - e. be printed by a reputable publisher.
1. If a department/school does not submit a textbook adoption request for a particular course by the deadline established in the calendar disseminated by the Provost, the university bookstore may order the same textbook as used in the most immediate prior semester/term or a new edition (if the previous edition is no longer available in sufficient quantities).
 2. Once approved, textbooks for a particular semester or term must be entered into the textbook adoption system of the contracted bookstore by individual faculty members or a representative of the department.
 3. The contracted bookstore shall provide to individual faculty members (or chairs/directors to disseminate to faculty members) on a per course basis the costs to students of purchasing the required textbooks and course materials. Faculty members (or the chair/director on

behalf of the faculty member) must confirm to the bookstore representative the total cost of textbooks for each course offering before an order is completed.

4. The contracted bookstore should periodically provide a list of adopted textbooks to the university in a format acceptable to comply with public records inquiries for each semester or term. The list of adopted textbooks also must be made available to students and other interested parties through links on the university's website (or in the university's library or other convenient location) and must minimally include the textbook's International Standard Book Number (ISBN) to comply with Section 133 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.
5. The contracted bookstore must, to the fullest extent possible, provide students the option of purchasing the textbooks and other study products separately from each other when not prohibited by the publisher.
6. The contracted bookstore shall actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs and the availability (whenever possible) of used textbooks.
7. When textbooks have been furnished at no charge by the publisher for student use, these copies shall be made available to students, at no cost, through the academic department or the institution's library. Faculty members are encouraged to donate desk and review copies of adopted textbooks for this purpose.
8. The contracted bookstore should use existing staff to comply with the textbook inventory and monitoring processes.

Process for Selecting Faculty-Authored Textbooks or Textbooks in which the Faculty or Family Member has a Financial Interest

The use of faculty-authored materials in teaching activities is defined as a form of self-dealing. Materials in which a faculty member (or any family member) have a financial interest may be approved institutionally if the appropriate disclosures are filed and the faculty member demonstrates that the recommended material is best suited to the course being offered. The following steps apply whether or not the faculty member expects an immediate financial gain. These steps also apply to requests for replacing existing faculty-authored materials with new faculty-authored materials (e.g., a new edition of a currently adopted textbook).

1. If a faculty member desires to use faculty-authored textbooks from which s/he, or any person or business associated with the faculty member's family, obtains direct financial gain, the faculty member shall submit this recommendation to the chair/director (or Textbook Selection Committee) well before the material is expected to be used in the classroom. The textbook must be approved by both the department, reviewed by the Conflict of Interest Committee and authorized by the President before an order is placed by the university bookstore.
2. Any recommendation to adopt a faculty-authored textbook should include justification regarding the reason the required textbook(s) is uniquely suited for use in the author's course; an estimation of the total number of students who will be required to purchase the textbook(s); the estimated cost of the textbook(s) related to other appropriate textbook(s); and the estimated profit of the textbook(s), if any, to the faculty member and/or his/her family.
3. The Textbook Selection Committee shall review the recommendation to adopt a faculty-authored textbook and consider the appropriateness of the textbook(s), according to the criteria set forth in Section I. The faculty member must demonstrate why the recommended material is better suited for adoption than other published materials.
4. If the chair/director or Textbook Selection Committee recommends the adoption of the faculty-authored textbook(s), notification of that initial recommendation shall be provided to the faculty member.
5. If the textbook is formally adopted, the faculty member and/or his/her family may donate the royalties/profits (subject to the following section *University Interests in Faculty-Authored Textbooks*) from sales to APSU students, to the faculty member's desired non-profit charity, professional association, or APSU Foundation scholarship fund.
6. The faculty member shall disclose all personal relationships to the adopted textbook(s) that s/he has requested on the *Statement of Interest Form*, required by APSU Policy 1:001—Conflict of Interest

**University Interests in
Faculty-Authored
Textbooks**

1. If a department chair receives a recommendation from a faculty member or the Textbook Selection Committee, s/he may request modification or reconsideration of the recommended materials based upon the potential costs to students.
2. The faculty member shall forward all documents regarding suitable substitute materials and student needs to the Conflict of Interest Committee. The Committee will review the conflict of interest disclosure and provide a recommendation to the President specific to the following questions:
 - Should the material, if not yet produced, be permitted for student use?
 - Is the conflict of interest manageable given other textbook options?
 - Should the university claim an interest in the material (per APSU Policy 2:047)?
 - How will any royalties/profits be distributed (per APSU Policy 2:047)?
3. The President will consider the Conflict of Interest Committee's recommendation, and, after deciding whether to approve, modify or reject the recommendation, will notify the Provost, Committee, the appropriate dean, the appropriate chair/director, and the faculty member regarding her/his decision.

Links

APSU Policy 1:001

<https://www.apsu.edu/policy/conflict-interest-1001>

APSU Policy 2:047

<https://www.apsu.edu/policy/intellectual-property-patents-and-copyrights-2047>

Revision Dates

APSU Policy 2:016 (previously 2:017) – Revised: March 8, 2017
APSU Policy 2:016 – Issued: June 19, 2008

Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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Revision Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Responsible Executive Officer: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Source/Reference: [TBR Policy 2:07:00:00](#)
[TCA § 49:7:141](#)

PURPOSE

To assign responsibility for the selection of textbooks and supplementary course materials, establish requirements relative to their use, and minimize costs while maintaining quality of education and academic freedom.

POLICY

- I. Selection of textbooks and supplementary materials that students are required to purchase for a course is determined by a collaborative decision-making process of the full-time faculty teaching that course.
- II. Cost to students in accordance with institutional policy on accessibility will be a major consideration in the selection of textbooks and supplementary materials. In general, the lowest cost alternative that meets the instructional needs and quality standards of the course will be selected. Supplementary materials will be required only if essential to meeting the student learning objectives of the course. Bundled materials will be considered only if the supplementary materials are essential to the course and/or they deliver cost savings to the students.

NOTE: Some supplemental materials packaged with the textbook or other purchased materials may prevent students from selling the textbook back to the Columbia State bookstore, may require students to buy new books, or pay more for a used book(s) in addition to other supplementary materials.

- III. Textbooks selected will generally be used a minimum of two years and throughout an entire academic year, whenever possible. New editions are not considered a new textbook selection. Courses taught in an alternative delivery format (e.g., hybrid, online.) may necessitate the use of different textbooks or additional supplementary materials. When this is the case, the Columbia State bookstore and students must be informed.
- IV. All faculty teaching the same course will use the same textbook and discipline specified materials as approved by the discipline full-time faculty.
- V. The vice president for academic affairs will work closely with division deans and Columbia State's bookstore contractor to ensure that the requirements and procedures set forth in this policy and [TBR Policy 2:07:00:00](#) are adhered to.

PROCEDURES

- I. Full-time faculty teaching the course or a committee selected from those faculty by the division dean will review possible textbooks/supplementary materials and recommend new selections, if warranted. In disciplines with no full-time faculty, the division dean, in consultation with the part-time faculty teaching the course, will select the textbooks/supplementary materials.
- II. The approval process for adoption of the recommended textbooks/supplementary materials will involve all full-time discipline-specific faculty. Prior to approval, the faculty will obtain from the Columbia State bookstore the cost of the textbook and supplementary materials. These costs, in accordance to institutional policy on accessibility, will be considered in determining which textbooks/supplementary materials to adopt. After approval, the full-time faculty will inform the division dean in writing, at least six weeks prior to the semester in which the new selections will be used. The following information about the new selection will be provided to the division dean: (a) title, (b) author(s), (c) edition, (d) publisher, (e) cost, and (f) corresponding course(s) in which the textbooks/supplementary materials will be used.
- III. The division dean or designated faculty will report the new adoptions to the Columbia State bookstore manager at least five weeks prior to the beginning of the semester.
- IV. The Columbia State bookstore will disclose to the division dean on a per course basis the costs to students of purchasing the required textbooks and course materials. If there has been a substantial cost increase over the cost when first adopted, the division dean will obtain an acknowledgement of the new cost from the faculty members teaching the course prior to the order being placed. In those instances where the price remains within 10 percent of the existing price at adoption, it will be assumed that notification of adoption constitutes positive affirmation by the faculty of the price of the textbooks and materials.
- V. The Columbia State bookstore contractor must provide the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) for all required textbooks and supplementary course materials. If the ISBN is not available, the Columbia State bookstore will provide the author, title, publisher, and copyright date. This information will be posted on the College's webpage.
- VI. As part of doing business, the Columbia State bookstore contractor will:
 - A. Comply with Procedure IV above.
 - B. When possible, provide students with the option of purchasing the textbooks and other study products in bundled packages or separately.
 - C. Actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs.
 - D. Execute and complete all textbook inventory and monitoring as set forth in this policy with existing bookstore staff.

Textbook and Ancillary Course Materials

03: Faculty/Academic

03:05:03:00

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Dyersburg State Community College (DSCC) faculty members are cognizant of the expense incurred by their students when purchasing course materials.

Scope:

This policy applies to all full-time faculty members who use course materials that students must purchase for use in their classes and to those persons managing the college bookstore.

Policy:

In adherence to *Tennessee Code Annotated*, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1 and the Tennessee Board of Regents Policy 2:07:00:00, DSCC shall minimize the cost of textbooks and ancillary course materials, while maintaining quality of education and academic freedom, by the following means:

1. Faculty members shall submit lists of required textbooks and course materials to their appropriate Discipline Coordinator or Dean according to the schedule below to ensure that the bookstore has the textbooks and other course materials available for students when classes begin:

October 15 – spring semester

March 15 – summer term

April 15 – fall semester

2. Students shall have access to information regarding required and supplementary course materials through the link to the bookstore on the DSCC website. Information on the bookstore's website includes the course name, section number, book title, author, publisher and the International Standard Book Number (ISBN).
3. Within two weeks of receiving textbook orders, the bookstore shall disclose to faculty members on a per course basis the costs to students of purchasing the required textbooks and course materials, and DSCC faculty members shall affirmatively acknowledge the price of the textbooks and materials before an order is completed. Discipline Coordinators responsible for courses with multiple sections that are taught by adjuncts will receive the costs of the course materials for these sections.
4. Full-time faculty members will sign a statement each semester acknowledging the cost of their respective textbook(s) and provide a short justification concerning book adoption (**Textbook Cost Acknowledgement Form attached**).
5. DSCC faculty members shall consider practices to reduce the cost of course materials, such as adopting the least expensive option for the available products that meet the requirements of the course. Bundled materials should only be considered **if** they deliver cost savings to the students.
6. The Division Dean will inform the bookstore each semester that bundled materials must be made available as separate purchases.
7. The bookstore shall actively promote and publicize book buy-back programs. Promoting book buyback will include table tents for tables in vending areas, signs in all buildings, and emails to students.
8. Copies of textbooks will be made available for student use at no cost through the academic department or through the DSCC Learning Resource Center provided that such textbooks have been furnished at no charge by the publisher for this purpose. The LRC Dean will send an email to faculty each semester to request a copy of books that are furnished by the publisher for use by students, the LRC Dean will contact the publishers to request free copies, and the LRC Dean will use donated funds from the bookstore to purchase textbooks

Textbook and Ancillary Course Materials

Published on www.dsc.edu (<https://intweb.dsc.edu>)

to place on reserve for student use.

Compliance:

The bookstore and all full-time faculty members must adhere to this policy.

Definitions:

Bundled - A group of objects joined together by packaging or which are required to be purchased as an indivisible unit.

Revision History:

Policy written February, 2008. Policy revised October 2012; approved by Administrative Council on 02/22/13.

Attachments:  [03 05 03 01 Textbook Cost Acknowledgement Form.pdf](#)



Policies and Procedures Manual

Chapter 2: Academics

02:10:00 Textbook Selection

It is the responsibility of faculty to review, select, and adopt appropriate textbooks and ancillary course materials to support course and program learning outcomes. Evaluation of learning materials, including textbooks, shall be included in annual curriculum and course evaluation processes. The adoption and/or revision of textbook and ancillary course materials shall be requested by the appropriate faculty member(s) and must be approved by the academic dean. Records of textbook and ancillary course materials adoption and revisions shall be maintained in the academic division office. The following must be considered in the adoption/revision process:

1. Common textbooks and ancillary course materials must be selected for courses with multiple sections and multiple faculty members teaching the courses.
2. Textbook and ancillary course materials shall be adopted for a minimum of two years, if appropriate by discipline area.
3. In addition to consideration of content, appropriateness, and quality of learning materials, faculty members must document that student costs were evaluated. When factors such as quality and content are equivalent, then the lowest cost textbook and ancillary course materials shall be selected, unless approved by the vice president for Academic Affairs.
4. Faculty members and academic deans shall consider alternative learning materials, such as online resources, as part of the textbook and ancillary course materials selection process.
5. Faculty members and academic deans shall consider the method of ordering, bundling, and selling textbooks and ancillary course materials as part of the adoption/selection process.
6. Faculty members and academic deans shall adhere to the textbook and ancillary course materials ordering procedures as adopted by the on-campus bookstore.
7. Faculty members may place textbooks and ancillary course materials in the library for student use provided that these materials were supplied at no cost by the publisher.

The on-campus bookstore shall include the following as part of any contractual agreements for providing bookstore services to the college:

1. The on-campus bookstore shall publish information regarding required and supplementary course materials through viable channels, including the college's website, before classes begin each semester. The information shall include the International Standard Book Number (ISBN).
2. The on-campus bookstore shall provide the student the option of purchasing textbooks and ancillary course materials in a non-bundled" format, if possible.
3. The on-campus bookstore shall promote and publicize book buy-back programs.
4. The on-campus bookstore shall disclose to faculty members on a per course basis the costs to students of purchasing the required textbooks and materials. Faculty members must acknowledge costs disclosures as part of the ordering process.
5. The on-campus bookstore shall provide information to faculty concerning changes to textbook and ancillary course materials orders as appropriate, including the change of editions of an adopted text by the publisher.

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Divisional Review Responsibilities Checklist: Academic Affairs

Revision History: Nov. 2007; July 2011; May 2012

II:01:08 TEXTBOOK COST REDUCTION

I. Materials Selection and Submission of Adoptions

- (1) Each appointed textbook selection committee will research cost-effective alternative delivery formats for selected materials, including but not limited to digital formats (such as "e-books") available to students at reduced cost, where appropriate. Notification of any selected alternative formats should be included in course syllabi or other relevant course documents distributed to students.
- (2) When considered feasible and potentially beneficial to students, and when no infringement upon academic freedom is perceived, textbook selection committees will weigh custom publishing options against standard selections. Such options may dramatically reduce publishing costs, effectively offering aggregate cost savings to students.
- (3) Upon final selection of materials, each department chair will submit a list of adoptions to the campus bookstore, as usual. Previously accepted adoption deadlines set forth by the bookstore must be stringently met in order to facilitate cost reporting.

II. Campus Bookstore Reporting of Required Materials and Associated Costs

- (1) Within a twenty-one (21) day period following each deadline for submission of adoptions, the campus bookstore will provide each department chair with a comprehensive, itemized cost report on a per-course basis, explicitly stating student costs for all required materials.
- (2) Department chairs will forward cost information to teaching faculty, who will affirmatively acknowledge materials costs before final placement of a materials order. Final orders should be submitted within fourteen (14) days of receipt of cost reports.
- (3) Upon completion of final bookstore orders, campus bookstore will provide a public, per-course report of required student materials and associated costs on its Web site. This report will be prominently referenced on Volunteer State's home Web page. Minimum required information should include each textbook's author(s), edition, publisher, publication date and International Standard Book Number (ISBN). Students must be granted access to this information before courses begin each semester.
- (4) All textbook inventory, monitoring, and cost reporting shall be accomplished by existing bookstore staff, i.e., at no additional cost to the institution or its students.

III. VSCC-Campus Bookstore Textbook Rental Initiative

- (1) The campus bookstore will offer students the option of renting most or all of their required textbooks. Students will continue to be allowed to purchase texts at new or used prices if textbook rental does not satisfy their needs.
- (2) Textbooks considered by the campus bookstore as eligible for student rental will be available

on a semester basis at the fixed rate of 55% of shelf sale price. Most titles and editions will be considered eligible for rental.

- ◆ For a given title or edition to be considered eligible for rental, textbook selection faculty and department chairs must provide the campus bookstore with a stated minimum period during which the department will commit to the use of the requested title and edition. This period should generally coincide with the title's usual publication cycle, which is typically two or three years. This minimum required commitment period may vary, at the campus bookstore's discretion, from title to title or from edition to edition.
 - ◆ Bundled materials will not be considered eligible for rental, including the textbook comprising the chief component of a materials bundle. Textbook selection committees must consider potential student cost repercussions when deciding whether to order bundled packages.
 - ◆ Students choosing to rent some or all of their textbooks will be allowed to pay for their rentals using cash, personal check or credit card. However, in all cases the renting student must provide the campus bookstore with a valid credit card number and authorization to subsequently debit that card's account upon failure to return rented materials on time.
 - ◆ Should a student fail to return rented materials to the campus bookstore at the end of the rental period, the campus bookstore will invoke its rights, per the student's prior authorization, to charge the student for the difference in purchase cost and rental cost. As an example, a student renting a textbook which would have sold for \$100 and was rented for \$55 will be charged \$45 upon failure to return the rented item.
- (3) Rentable textbooks will be prominently displayed in the campus bookstore. Students will also be given the option to buy or rent their required textbooks, when eligible, upon transaction at bookstore cash registers.
- (4) Under certain, limited conditions, textbook rental may not provide the individual student with cost savings. As an example, textbooks which will be used throughout a multi-semester course sequence may be best suited for purchase. Faculty and bookstore staff should notify students of these possibilities as they arise.
- (5) The textbook rental initiative is designed to provide aggregate cost savings on student purchases of textbooks. It is understood that this initiative will not achieve the goal of providing each individual student with savings on materials costs every semester.
- (6) Pending timely amendment of VSCC's contract with the campus bookstore and approval by all appropriate VSCC and TBR personnel, the textbook rental initiative is expected to begin with the Spring 2008 semester.

IV. Additional Cost Reduction Strategies

- (1) When possible, at least one copy of each adopted text should be made available for onsite student use in the campus library. Such materials should be made available through this channel only when materials have been provided by the publisher, at no additional charge to the institution or its students.

- ◆ Textbooks provided by the publisher for the purpose of library reserve will be available to students on a first-come, first-served basis, on library grounds only and for a maximum period of time "per sitting" as determined by appropriate library staff.
 - ◆ Textbook selection faculty and/or department chairs shall be responsible for the task of ensuring that the campus library's reserves inventory remains current upon transition to a new title or edition.
 - ◆ In order to facilitate cataloguing and monitoring of inventory, the campus library will require receipt of textbook reserve materials at least fourteen (14) days prior to requested availability dates.
- (2) The VSCC campus bookstore will continue to actively promote and publicize book buyback programs, according to its current policy.

TBR Source: TBR Meeting, September 27, 2007

VSCC Source: October 15, 2007 President's Cabinet

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