State University System

Textbook & Instructional Materials Affordability Report

Fall 2020

Summary of State University System of Florida
Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Reports
Fall 2020

Section 1004.085, Florida Statutes, establishes requirements regarding the textbook and instructional materials adoption process at public colleges and institutions in Florida. The law requires each institution's board of trustees in the State University System to submit an annual report by September 30 of each year, beginning in 2016, to the Chancellor of the State University System. Each institution's report is required to address four components.

- The selection process for textbooks and instructional materials for general education courses identified with high enrollments.
- Specific initiatives of each institution designed to reduce the costs of textbook and instructional materials.
- Institution policies implemented for the posting of textbook and instructional materials information for students.
- The number of courses and course sections that did not meet the textbook and instructional materials posting deadline in the previous academic year.

The following is a summary of the 2020 institutions' reports.

Textbook and Instructional Materials Selection Process for General Education Courses with High Enrollments

For general education courses identified with high enrollments, the institutions reported that the selection of materials for course assignments is completed by individual faculty members or collective faculty within a department. One institution reported that department chairs collaborate with faculty to select common course materials for all sections of each general education course with high enrollments.

Specific Initiatives Designed to Reduce Costs

Institutions reported a variety of initiatives to reduce the cost of textbooks and instructional materials. Examples of faculty, student, and bookstore initiatives that are common across multiple institutions are outlined below, and more detail is available in the individual reports.

Faculty-Focused Initiatives
- ✓ Improving the course materials adoption process to include options and pricing information resulting in greater efficiency and compliance
- ✓ Incentivizing faculty to adopt, adapt, or author free or low-cost course materials
- ✓ Expanding the use of common materials

- ✓ Developing instructional materials in the departments and assisting faculty in locating open-access and alternative materials
- ✓ Providing faculty members and administrators a timeline for actions and reminders

Student-Focused Initiatives
- ✓ Providing information on textbook and instructional materials before or during registration
- ✓ Providing the opt-in provision for the purchase of course materials
- ✓ Establishing textbook loan programs and lending libraries
- ✓ Providing no-cost instructional materials on reserve in the library

Institution Bookstore Student Assistance Programs
- ✓ Offering a variety of options including new and used print and digital
- ✓ Providing textbook rental programs for print and digital versions
- ✓ Allowing a line of credit or book vouchers for students awaiting financial aid
- ✓ Offering bookstore price-match guarantee programs

Institution-Wide Programs

All institutions also have specific institutional initiatives related to textbook affordability. Additional information on these can be found in the individual reports, but select examples are provided below.

- ✓ Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) purchased course materials for students enrolled in Freshman Communicative Skills II (ENC 1102) as part of the student success initiatives, which resulted in a cost savings of $74,060. The institution is exploring this cost-savings initiative for incoming first-time-in-college students enrolled in Freshman Communicative Skills I (ENC 1101).

- ✓ Florida State University (FSU) libraries continue to offer support and promote the use of Open Educational Resources (OER). Faculty have been awarded grant funds to support the development of open or library-licensed course materials that are freely available to students. FSU libraries have continued to promote the use of OER through training and outreach with the Capital City Virtual Series on Open Educational Resources, a monthly instructional series. This professional development opportunity for faculty, administrators, and students in the Tallahassee community included participants from FAMU and Tallahassee Community College.

- ✓ Florida International University's (FIU) Affordability Counts Initiative lowers the cost of course materials to $20 or less per credit. In 2019, FIU Online partnered with five universities to create a statewide searchable database of courses that use OER and low-cost materials for faculty across the state to contribute to and use as a resource in their own content curation process. In just one year, all faculty at Florida state colleges and universities gained access to a statewide repository of model courses and their low-cost materials. As of June 2020, over 444 faculty have participated in the Affordability Counts Initiative, with 596 courses designated as "affordable

courses." This is a 55% increase since the AY 2018-2019. Since the inception of the program, FIU courses awarded the Affordability Counts medallion have saved students over $1.9 million. FIU also hosts the Affordability Counts Initiative for the System. To date, FAMU, FAU, UCF, UNF, and USF, and Lake Sumter State College have partnered with FIU on the Affordability Counts Initiative.

✓ University of Central Florida (UCF) librarians actively search for textbooks that are available as e-books with unlimited use. Once these e-books are identified and purchased, faculty are informed of the availability for student use in their courses. Since fall 2018, UCF reported that 140 courses and a total of 324 sections have used a library e-book as a replacement for the course text, with a savings to students of over $1 million.

✓ The University of Florida (UF) has established the Affordable UF Initiative, which includes multiple components designed to reduce textbook and instructional material costs to students. One component of the initiative is Xronos, an open-source interactive textbook and instructional materials platform that allows faculty to create content and interactive assignments and make them available at no cost. Total Xronos savings for AY 2019-2020 was $357,750. A second component is Affordable UF Badges that identifies courses with materials and fees costing less than $20 per credit hour. UF also continues to invest in the George A. Smathers Library Collections by increasing the collections of textbooks for general education and high enrollment STEM courses and providing access to various electronic materials in support of online teaching and learning.

✓ The Textbook Affordability Project (TAP) at the University of South Florida (USF) is the university's official source for student support on textbook affordability. The TAP website serves as a central access point for all textbook affordability initiatives such as the TAP Toolbox, Textbook Recommendation Service, Ebooks in the Classroom +, TAP Course Reserves, Affordability Counts, and Open Access Textbooks. In spring 2020, TAP Takeover social media campaign was launched to raise awareness about textbook affordability and the success stories at USF. USF reported that the savings to students since TAP's inception in 2010 is over $27 million.

✓ The University of West Florida's (UWF) Pace Library and Provost's Office Textbook Affordability Program provides one print copy of each textbook required for all undergraduate courses to borrow through the library. When UWF moved to remote business operations in March 2020 due to COVID-19, library staff scanned 299 chapters (1,653 pages), supporting 60 classes in place of circulating the physical items at the library. During the 2019-2020 academic year, students had access to 2,679 textbooks and borrowed them 13,459 times. UWF reported that the program saved students over $1 million.

✓ Six institutions reported offering the opt-in provision for the purchase of course materials, which provides electronic textbooks and course materials by the first day of class at a significant discount. Savings across the six institutions for AY 2019-2020 totaled more than $8 million.

System-Wide Initiative

The Board of Governors approved a system-wide Action Plan for the Pricing of Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials at its August 29, 2019, meeting. The goal of this initiative is to provide students with access to quality and affordable textbooks and instructional materials. The initiative will also help ensure that students throughout the System will be paying consistent prices for the same materials.

Components of the initiative include the following.

- Student cost of course materials, including pricing mark-ups by university bookstore vendors, is (a) $20 or less per credit hour or (b) more than $20 per credit hour, but at a noticeably lower retail cost than students would otherwise pay.
- The format of materials that meet the pricing described are identified as either print, digital, or both.
- Students have access to materials on the first day of class and continue to have access to digital materials beyond the end of the course.
- Students have the option for print-on-demand for digital materials.
- Accessibility for students with disabilities is available.
- Bookstore vendors develop mechanisms for capturing and reporting faculty use of open education resources and other no-cost resources.
- Institutions have access to data for reporting purposes.

By January 20 of each year beginning in 2020, publishers will have available for faculty review and consideration the list of materials that meet the components of the initiative. Each institution will be required to report the number of course sections that met the pricing goal of $20 or less per credit hour for required course materials in the annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report due to the Chancellor by September 30, beginning with the 2021 report.

Institution Policies and Processes for Posting Information for Students

Institutions reported various policies and processes for ensuring the textbook and instructional materials posting requirement is met and includes the following.

- Requiring the textbook and instructional materials adoption information prior to the required 45-day posting deadline.
- Providing faculty with a list of courses without adopted course materials in advance of the posting deadline.
- Monitoring compliance of the posting of information for required course materials on the institution's websites.

Course Sections Meeting and Not Meeting the 45-Day Posting Requirement

Florida statute requires institutions to post a hyperlink to lists of the required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials for at least 95% of all courses and course sections at least 45 days prior to the start of classes for each term. For the 2020 report, 11 of the 12 institutions met the 95% threshold for the fall 2019 semester, and 11 of the 12 institutions met the 95% threshold for the spring 2020 semester. Table 1 summarizes the percentage of course sections meeting and not meeting the 45-day posting requirement.

Table 1: Course Sections Meeting the 45-Day Posting Requirement for Academic Year 2019-2020

SUS Institution	Fall 2019			Spring 2020		
	Total Courses	Met	Not Met	Total Courses	Met	Not Met
FAMU	1,362	99%	1%	1,564	95%	5%
FAU	6,025	98%	2%	5,925	98%	2%
FGCU[1]	2,260	77%	23%	2,242	97%	3%
FIU[2]	5,529	97%	3%	5,095	97%	3%
FL POLY	289	97%	3%	259	97%	3%
FSU	11,161	97%	3%	11,121	98%	2%
NCF	220	99%	1%	218	99%	<1%
UCF	6,423	97%	3%	6,140	99%	1%
UF	13,951	97%	3%	13,045	98%	2%
UNF[3]	2,650	96%	4%	2,491	93%	7%
USF	9,114	96%	4%	8,385	97%	3%
UWF	2,367	100%	0%	3,012	100%	0%

Source: Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report provided by each SUS institution, September 2020.

[1]FGCU did not meet the 95% threshold for fall 2019 and is therefore non-compliant with Section 1004.085, Florida Statutes. FGCU reported that the untimely adoptions were due to technical issues with the university bookstore vendor's system and late submissions by faculty.

[2]FIU submitted the annual report to the BOT and the Board office using a methodology based on recommendations from a 2017 university audit conducted by the Florida Auditor General's office, which included courses identified as exceptions as compliant. Using the Florida Auditor General's recommended approach, FIU reported to the BOT that the fall 2019 term met the 95% threshold and that the spring 2020 term was just below the threshold. However, the System methodology does not include exceptions in the compliance calculation, so FIU staff were asked to provide information as required for the System report. According to the System methodology, FIU is slightly above the 95% threshold for both semesters.

[3]UNF was slightly below the 95% threshold and is therefore non-compliant with Section 1004.085, Florida Statutes.

Changes to Adopted Course Materials After the 45-Day Posting Deadline

As an update to the 2020 report, institutions must report instances of faculty changes to adopted course materials after the 45-day posting deadline. Institutions reported that changes to the timely textbook and instructional materials adoptions occur for a variety of reasons. Some reasons reported include faculty finding a less expensive resource, a change in the course instructor, faculty errors with the submission of adoption information, publisher delays, and university bookstore vendor errors. Table 2 summarizes the number and percentage of course sections that changed materials after the deadline. Given that the percentage of courses changing materials after the posting date varies across the System, Board staff plans to monitor this issue and work with the

institutions to develop criteria to ensure consistent implementation of Section 1004.085, Florida Statutes.

Table 2: Course Sections Changing Materials to Timely Adoptions after the 45-Day Posting Requirement for Academic Year 2019-2020

SUS Institution	Fall 2019			Spring 2020		
	Total Courses with Timely Adoptions	# Course Sections that Changed Materials after the Deadline	% Course Sections that Changed Materials after the Deadline	Total Courses with Timely Adoptions	# Course Sections that Changed Materials after the Deadline	% Course Sections that Changed Materials after the Deadline
FAMU	1,342	0	0%	1,485	0	0%
FAU	5,924	134	2%	5,785	29	<1%
FGCU[1]	1,742	670	38%	2,185	128	6%
FIU[2]	5,378	205	4%	4,923	260	5%
FL POLY	280	0	0%	251	0	0%
FSU	10,834	51	<1%	10,890	39	<1%
NCF	218	0	0%	217	0	0%
UCF	6,199	25	<1%	6,066	105	2%
UF	13,579	381	3%	12,768	210	2%
UNF[3]	2,554	235	9%	2,306	496	22%
USF	8,717	160	2%	8,119	154	2%
UWF[4]	2,367	832	35%	3,012	309	10%

Source: Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report provided by each SUS institution September 2020.

[1]FGCU reported the most common reasons for changes included finding a newer edition published, changing the instructional format, and the instructor adding or removing what was listed as required materials.

[2]FIU reported changes to adoptions were due to the addition of a course section to the schedule, a change of the instructor of record, or the merging of course sections 44 days or less prior to the first day of class.

[3]UNF reported faculty modifications to adoptions were due to sourcing materials that offered greater savings to students, the availability of additional formats, materials that were no longer available from the publisher, a change in material usage code by faculty, a change in the instructor of record, assignment of an instructor to an existing course, duplicate adoptions submitted by faculty, and the addition of supporting course materials suggested by the bookstore.

[4]UWF reported changes to adopted materials were due to the addition of new courses and course sections after the posting deadline, offering student choice in content format, and a reduction in the cost of materials from publishers after the posting deadline.

Next Steps

In reviewing the 2020 Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability institution reports, Board of Governors staff identified inconsistencies in data reporting across the System. As a result, the Chancellor will reconvene the System Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Workgroup to work with Board staff in addressing the following topics and issues to ensure consistency going forward.

- Defining acceptable course exceptions
- Identifying appropriate reasons or justifications for changing course materials after the reporting deadline
- Developing criteria for reporting course changes and exceptions relative to compliance with the reporting deadline

Based on input from the workgroup, Board staff will revise the reporting template for the 2021 report as appropriate.