

# Course Material Practices to Reduce Student Costs

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## Why course material costs matter:



*The **cost of textbooks** has increased **812%** since 1978 – more than tuition, room, or board and three times greater than the rise of the consumer price index over the same period.<sup>1</sup>*

***Students pay an average of \$1200 per year on books and supplies.**<sup>2</sup>*

***7 out of 10 students** reported they did not previously purchase a textbook because of its cost.<sup>3</sup>*

## How to save students money:

### 1. Order on-time

October 15<sup>th</sup> for spring – April 1<sup>st</sup> for summer – April 15<sup>th</sup> for the fall academic term.

### 2. Rent-A-Text program

Contact the bookstore and ask how to include your course materials in the rental program. Rentals saved NAU students \$775,000 in the 2011-2012 academic year.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Adopt a textbook

Commit to use a textbook for multiple semesters and tell the bookstore. This strategy provides used books for students and helps the environment by reducing the fossil fuels spent in shipping books.

### 4. Free course material options

Consider e-books and digital sources from Cline Library and explore other digital course material options through the e-Learning Center.

### 5. Open source textbooks

Consider using open source textbooks. These are peer-reviewed textbooks that are available for free online and have creative commons copyright licenses. Search online for free course materials through open source textbook repositories or work with your peers to produce an open source textbook.<sup>5</sup>

### 6. Departmental efforts

Promote the above strategies within your department. Encourage your peers to order on time and implement cost-cutting strategies for courses with high enrollment.

### 7. Don't sacrifice educational quality for affordability

Students value their education and respect your ability to provide a rich learning experience. We are not asking you to sacrifice quality in your attempts to provide us affordable course materials.

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<sup>1</sup> American Enterprise Institute 2012; College Board 2013, *Trends in College Pricing 2013*

<sup>2</sup> College Board 2013, *Trends in College Pricing 2013*

<sup>3</sup> Students PIRGs 2011

<sup>4</sup> Arizona Board of Regents 2012, *NAU: Annual Report on Implementation of Textbook Recommendations*

<sup>5</sup> See the University of Minnesota's Open Textbook Library, Open SUNY, MERLOT, and College Open Textbooks for some examples. SPARC provides additional resources and support in creating open source textbooks and repositories. Creative Commons copyright licenses allow for the sharing and editing of content.