

USF System USF USFSP USFSM

Number: USF3.029
Title: Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability
Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

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I. PURPOSE AND INTENT:

The University of South Florida System will adhere to the USF Board of Governor Regulation and continue to work to manage the escalation of costs of textbooks and instructional materials.

II. APPLICABILITY AND/OR AUTHORITY:

Section 1004.085, Florida Statute on Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability and [Board of Governors Regulation 8.003](#), on Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability, establish required procedures for the USF System to minimize the cost of required or recommended textbooks and instructional materials to students while maintaining the quality of their educational experience and continuing to ensure academic freedom.

III. PROCESS STEPS/SPECIFIC PROVISIONS:

In accordance with the Authority set forth in Section (II) above, the Board of Trustees of the University of South Florida System (USF System) establishes the following procedures for the USF System to minimize the cost of required or recommended textbooks and instructional materials to students while maintaining the quality of their educational experience and continuing to ensure academic freedom:

A. The University academic units and offices responsible for reviewing textbook and instructional materials for courses continue to work toward maximizing cost affordability by considering cost-benefit analyses that enable students to obtain the highest-quality products at the lowest available price by considering initiatives including but not limited to the following:

1. Purchasing digital textbooks in bulk;
2. Expanding the use of open-access textbooks and instructional materials;
3. Providing rental options for textbooks and instructional materials;

4. Increasing the availability and use of affordable digital textbooks and learning objects;
 5. Developing mechanisms to assist in buying, renting, selling and sharing textbooks and instructional materials;
 6. Determining the feasibility of extending the length of time that textbooks and instructional materials remain in use recognizing the variance in disciplinary demands and pace of currency changes; and
 7. Evaluating the cost savings for textbooks and instructional materials, which may be realized by opt-in provisions for the purchase of materials.
- B.** The University academic units and/or offices responsible for determining pricing of textbooks and instructional materials will remain cognizant of, and will implement when feasible, innovative pricing techniques and payment options to include an opt-in provision for students in consultation with providers including bookstores.
1. Each Academic Unit (department or college as defined by the individual institution within the USF System) shall notify its faculty of the requirements of the USF System Regulation on Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability;
 2. Textbook and instructional material selection deadlines for each term shall normally be set in agreement with the posting of the course schedule for that term, but no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the first day of classes for each term. Any request for an exception to the textbook and instructional material selection deadline shall be submitted in writing to the office of the Dean of the College where the exception is proposed prior to the deadline and shall provide a reasonable justification for the exception. A course or section added after the notification deadline is exempt from this notification requirement;
 3. Textbook order forms will incorporate a statement about the intent of the course instructor or the academic unit offering the course to use all items ordered, including each individual item sold as part of a bundled package;
 4. Textbook order forms will incorporate a statement by the course instructor or academic unit offering the course of the extent to which a new edition differs significantly and substantively from earlier versions and the value to the student of changing to a new edition or the extent to which an open-access textbook or instructional material is available;
 5. Lists of required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials for at least 95% of all courses and course sections offered at USF during the upcoming term can be found at:

<http://sftampa.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TBWizardView?catalogId=10001&langId=-1&storeId=15056>, which is also posted in the USF course registration system and on the USF website, at least forty-five (45) days before the first day of class for each term;

6. The posted textbook and instructional materials list shall include the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) for each required and recommended textbook and instructional material, or other identifying information, such as the name(s) of the author(s) or editor(s), the title, the publisher, the edition number, the copyright and publication dates, or other relevant information that will identify the specific textbook or instructional materials required and recommended for each course. Other items than books shall be appropriately described to clarify what the students are required to purchase;
 7. Academic unit heads will monitor the posted textbook and instructional materials listings, ensuring that each instructor complies with the requirements for timely submission of the information required by students and the designated bookstore;
 8. Determination of student ability to pay for textbooks and instructional materials will be made through standard student financial aid eligibility assessment;
 9. Students with confirmed financial aid eligibility may opt into the advance purchase program to purchase textbooks and instructional materials up to the approved purchase limit at the designated bookstore prior to receipt of their financial aid distribution, when necessary;
 10. Students who cannot afford textbooks or instructional materials should access the Textbook Affordability Project website (<http://tap.usf.edu>) for options to make the textbook or instructional material accessible. Course instructors will be made aware of this resource prior to each semester and be encouraged, where appropriate and feasible, to contribute to the options available (i.e., utilizing e-texts or open access textbooks, or contributing to the library's textbooks on reserve);
 11. Recognizing that several of the legal provisions regarding reporting related to textbooks may expire or be established, the University will comply with current law with regard to cost and accessibility comparisons between courses and the required reporting to the Chancellor of the State University System; and
 12. All the provisions of this Policy shall apply to dual enrollment courses and related textbooks and instructional materials.
- C. No employee of the USF System may demand or receive any payment, loan subscription, advance, deposit of money, service, or anything of value, present or promised, in exchange for requiring students to purchase a specific textbook or instructional material for

coursework or instruction. However, subject to the requirements of the Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees and both the outside activity requirements and conflict of interest restrictions set forth in USF System regulations and in collective bargaining agreements, an employee may receive:

1. Sample or instructor copies of textbooks or other instructional resources that cannot be sold if they are identified as samples and not for sale;
 2. Royalties or other compensation from the sales of textbooks or instructional materials of which he or she is the author or creator;
 3. Honoraria for academic peer review of course materials;
 4. Fees resulting from activities such as reviewing, critiquing, or preparing support materials for textbooks or instructional materials; and
 5. Training in the use of course materials and learning technologies.
- D.** The USF Board of Trustees shall provide to the Chancellor of the State University System any required reports including the report due on September 30 of each year, which must include:
1. The selection process for general education courses with a wide cost variance and high enrollment courses;
 2. Specific initiatives of the institution designed to reduce the costs of textbooks and instructional materials;
 3. Policies implemented regarding the posting of textbook and instructional materials for at least 95% of all courses and course sections forty-five (45) days before the first day of class;
 4. The number of courses and course sections that were not able to meet the posting deadline for the previous academic year; and
 5. Any additional information determined by the Chancellor.

Authority: Art. IX, Sec. 7, Fla. Constitution, Florida Board of Governors Regulations 1.001, 8.003; 1004.085 F.S.

History: New (BOT approval) 12-15-09, Amended 5-16-16 (technical), 8-18-16 (technical), 12-23-16 (technical), 3-9-17.

Certification: The USF System certifies that it has followed the Florida Board of Governors Regulation Development Procedure and has a record of written notices, comments, summaries and responses as required.