

Course Materials – FAQs for Instructors

You play the most critical role in students' education. When you're not available, however, course materials can supplement and enhance your classroom instruction, provide students with additional references and points of view, and serve as excellent tools to advance students' academic success. It takes a lot of people, working together, to ensure that the right course materials arrive in the right quantities, and in time for classes. Actively partnering with the Bookstore and publishers can boost your ability to support the academic mission of your class with exactly the right learning materials in the right quantity at the right time.

On our website, in the faculty resource section, you will also find

- Bookstore/Faculty Partnership – *what we can do for you, what you can do for us!*
- a publisher rep list for ordering desk copies etc.
- blank course materials requisition forms
- copyright clearance forms
- tips on producing custom course packages through the Printshop

The FAQs below include

1) Why are course materials so expensive? How can I enhance my students' satisfaction with the course materials?

2) Why are the lineups so long at the beginning of term?

3) Why does the Bookstore require course material requisition forms so early?

4) How does the Bookstore determine what quantities to order for each Course Materials requisition?

5) How do I get in touch with publishers to find out more about their textbooks and course materials?

6) What are 'desk copies', 'complimentary' copies, and 'examination' copies?

7) How can I obtain a desk copy?

8) What should I do with 'comp', 'desk', or 'examination' copies after I'm finished using them?

FAQs

1) Why are course materials so expensive? How can I enhance my students' satisfaction with the course materials?

We understand that students can find their course materials expensive. On our website we've produced an FAQ for students, which includes concerns about pricing

Price vs Value

A \$125 textbook may represent a high price, but terrific value; on the other hand, a \$30 text may represent a good price, but not good value. All our anecdotal and survey data tell us that students equate value with usage more than price.

The key question is: how much of the material will the student be using in order to be successful in the course? If the course materials that the student is 'required' to buy are not used in full, the student may feel the materials are 'expensive', or 'not good value'. How you use the materials is pivotal in determining how your students feel about the price; students rarely complain about pricing when the materials are in constant use and have a direct impact on testing and final results. Please distinguish carefully between course materials that are '**Required**' or '**Optional**'. To us, 'required' means every student should purchase; 'optional' means very few (10-15%) will purchase. We advise students to buy their 'required' materials before the beginning of term but to go to class first before purchasing optional texts.

For textbooks, the **prices** are largely set by the publishers. Some of the costs associated with texts are 'hidden' from the student, i.e. copies for readers at the 'research and development' stage, complimentary copies, desk copies, ancillary materials (test banks, overheads, software, etc.). If you're not sure of the price that students will pay in the Bookstore, please check with us!

Margin We sell our texts based on a 25% margin; for texts over \$100 at cost, we sell based on 20%. These margins are among the lowest in B. C., even though we pay higher freight costs to the Island.

Alternatives We will work with you to see if less expensive materials are available, whether sourced from other publishers, used book suppliers or via coursepacks.

For **coursepacks**, the prices are set by the Printshop; we also have to add copyright charges and royalties (if applicable) which further increase the costs to students. However, students are generally satisfied with coursepacks because of the high usage of the material; again, value vs price.

We will try to maximize our **used book selection** to help students purchase. Students who are concerned about the price of a text are considerably less concerned when they know they have an opportunity to sell the text back for 50% of its current new price.

You can help the process by getting us your course materials requisition forms on time and by reusing the previous texts; this will allow us to access more used books earlier in the process, with better results for both old and new students.

Packages (or 'Bundles') Some packages are produced by the publisher working with you, the instructor, to tailor a package specifically for the needs of your course. These can greatly enhance the student's learning experience. Other packages are produced by the publisher and may contain additional components that you do not require your students to purchase. We will check with you to see if there are alternatives to the package so that students may both buy and sell used texts. Sometimes a package represents good value for the student; at other times the student is paying for material they do not need. Check with us to see what the options are!

Custom Textbooks Are they good value for your students? Custom texts produced by publishers can represent good value; some publishers can even include readings from other publishers in their custom texts. However, custom texts are not a 'cheap' option; they tend to be expensive given their quality of printing and binding, and are most effective when used from term to term, thus allowing students to sell back and to buy used.

Beware: custom publications take a long time to be produced. 6-8 weeks is generally a minimum. Also they have limited returns, usually only 10%; *please see our "Guaranteed Sales" section in the Course Materials Adoption Partnership concerning possible cost to your Department.*

2) Why are the lineups so long at the beginning of term? We have increased the number of cashiers and registers and have expanded our evening hours at the beginning of term.

We have committed to having all course materials on the shelf 1 month in advance of each of the two major terms (and two weeks in advance of all other terms) thus encouraging students to come into the Bookstore before the beginning of term, to avoid the lineups. In that process, you play the major part by getting us your course requisitions on time!

3) Why does the Bookstore require course material requisition forms so early?

Logistically we have over 1000 titles per term to process; the process includes initial research, communication of any problems (titles out of stock, going into new edition, big price increase, available only in packages now, etc.), purchasing from students at 'buyback', locating used books from wholesalers, processing custom and hybrid print/multimedia requests, obtaining copyright release for coursepacks, and finally getting the course materials on our shelves one month before the start of classes so that students can purchase their books early and avoid long lineups at the beginning of term.

Shipping times Most of our textbook publishers and distributors are based in Eastern Canada, so that shipping times are longer, even when freight is expedited. In addition, most of our publishers and distributors do not keep substantial stock in Canada; stock is freighted in from the U.S. directly to the Canadian distributor before it can be shipped out West to us, adding up to 2 weeks to the shipping time; occasionally the stock needs to come from further afield, i.e. Europe or the Far East, in which case the timelines for delivery are considerably longer

Sources of supply All of the College and University bookstores in North America buy their texts from the same sources; if we are late in getting our orders in, the texts may be out of stock, reprinting, etc. with predictable results for your students

Availability Likewise some texts go out of print, or move into a new edition; the earlier we have your text requisitions, the quicker we can let you know of such problems, so that we can find a solution that works for you (such as choosing a different edition or a different text, getting permission from the publisher or Access Copyright to reprint an out-of-print book, or getting enough used copies of the previous edition, etc.)

Coursepacks from the Printshop take time to get on the shelves; copyright clearances have to be obtained and the appropriate fees paid *before* we can sell your coursepack, and these can sometimes take a considerable time. The earlier we get your requisition, the more likely we can get the coursepack on the shelf 1 month before the first day of classes

Price increases The later you send us your text requisition, the more likely the student will pay more for their texts, as it is more likely that the price may have been increased the later we order

Used Text supply from students Also, the later we receive your requisition, the more likely that we won't be able to buy back as many used texts as possible from current students or to get as many used texts for next term's students; by submitting your requisitions early, we can work to ensure

that your current students are able to sell their texts back, and we have as many used texts as possible for your new students, to save them money and encourage text ownership

Used text wholesale supply We also purchase used books from used book wholesalers; again, all the other bookstores are looking for many of the same books; if we have our information early, we have more chance of getting extra used books for our students

On the shelf! The later we receive your requisition, the less likely the materials will be ready 1 month before the first day of classes; in turn, this may mean that students will not be able to get all their materials from the Bookstore before classes start, resulting in longer lineups at the beginning of term, frustration etc.

Help your students prepare! In addition, if we have your requisitions in time, the books will be on the shelves early, ready for those students who like to read their materials in advance!

4) How does the Bookstore determine what quantities to order for each Course Materials requisition?

We generally order for expected enrollment and we would prefer to have too many copies rather than too few. Where we have historical data that shows some materials only selling through a percentage of enrollment, we will work with you to determine the solution. In some cases, we know historically that students may purchase from each other, or elsewhere, so we are not anticipating a 100% sell-through and would therefore order accordingly.

5) How do I get in touch with publishers to find out more about their textbooks and course materials?

The Bookstore is your link with the publishers. Contact information is included on another link in this faculty information section, or, if they're not on the list, please contact us for more information. If you're looking for a new text, we can help! Let us know as much (or as little) information as you like, and we'll send your request out to all the publisher's representatives, who in turn can send you desk copies, chapter summaries, or web-based material for you to choose from.

6) What are 'desk copies', 'complimentary' copies, and 'examination' copies?

A desk copy is a textbook sent to a faculty member after it has been adopted for class use. Before requesting a desk copy from a publisher, check with your own department who may already own a complimentary ('comp') copy of the book.

A 'comp', or 'examination copy' is a textbook sent to a faculty member who is or may be considering adopting the text for a course. 'Comp' copies can be requested by faculty, or sent to you by a publisher at the request of your publisher sales rep. The Bookstore can help facilitate as requested.

7) How can I obtain a desk copy?

To obtain a desk copy of a title you have adopted for a course, write to the publisher on institution letterhead. Some of the major textbook publishers allow you to log onto their web site and submit your request directly online. The directory of publishers located in another link from the bookstore webpage lists the publisher's direct web link.

When requesting a desk copy, you will need to include the following information: ISBN, title of the textbook, the title of the course, the term it will be used, the estimated enrollment, and your name and campus address.

If your desk copy is delayed and you need a copy to start your class, the Bookstore can arrange to lend you one, if we have it in stock. The Bookstore will need your departmental cost center or credit card information as a deposit. Check with the Course Materials Buyer for details.

8) What should I do with 'comp', 'desk', or 'examination' copies after I'm finished using them?

The practice of selling "comp" copies as used books is an ethical issue of concern to the academic, bookstore, and publishing communities. Here are a few ideas for ethically disposing of "comp" copies you no longer need:

- 1) Sell them at buyback and donate the proceeds to the Camosun College Foundation.
- 2) Donate them, through the Camosun College Bookstore, to the Better World Books Program which assists students in emerging countries.
- 3) Give them to a colleague who may teach the course.

More questions? Just ask!

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