

## **Instructional Materials Affordability and Accessibility Guidelines 2013 – A Renewal**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of these guidelines is to fully inform all College employees of the instructional materials affordability legislative requirements with which the College must comply, and related Best Practices which the College supports, in order to positively impact the affordability and accessibility of instructional materials for students. It is the intent of the renewed 2013 *Instructional Materials Affordability and Accessibility Guidelines* to encourage all stakeholders, including faculty, students, administrators, bookstores, and publishers, to work together to identify ways to decrease the cost of college textbooks and supplemental materials for students, while supporting academic freedom of faculty members to select high quality course materials. These guidelines are also designed to enhance transparency and disclosure with respect to the selection, purchase, sale, and use of course materials.

### **Compliance Assurance**

*The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008* and *Maryland Senate Bill 183 of 2009* have been enacted to respond to affordability and accessibility issues. The following responsibilities are incumbent in these laws:

#### **Faculty/ Departmental Responsibilities:**

Acknowledging in writing within the adoption process when changing instructional materials:

- A. That the use of any new edition is appropriate due to a change in substantial content;
- B. The difference in price between the current and previous editions;
- C. The change in cost if selecting a different book;
- D. Whether previous editions will also suffice;
- E. That supplemental material included in a bundle is intended for use in the course.

#### **Campus Bookstores Responsibilities:**

- A. Making available to the public on the college website, course material ISBN number, title, author, publisher, and edition for all required or optional course material within three weeks of bookstore buyers having finalized the textbook adoption with publishers.
- B. Informing the public who access the college website if the selection is not finalized.
- C. Making both bundled and unbundled versions of the materials available for purchase and clarifying that intent on the bookstore's website.
- D. Providing for sale all course material in the same format as selected by faculty members to the extent practicable.
- E. Selling, with the permission of a faculty member, course materials in a different format than selected by faculty members for the purpose of providing students with lower cost options.

### Administrators' Responsibilities:

- A. Providing information for periodic reports on the impact and effectiveness of efforts to lower the cost of instructional materials in accordance with regulatory requirements and timelines.
- B. Consulting with Maryland Higher Education Commission regarding the feasibility of textbook rental programs and the establishment and accessibility of the digital marketplace.
- C. Evaluating requests for extension of time for adoptions submission prior to the adoption due date, granting extension requests when appropriate, and forwarding the information to the bookstore for posting.
- D. Ensuring the adoption of accessible instructional material whenever possible.

### Publishers' Responsibilities

- A. Making faculty aware of the differences in content between previous and new editions.
- B. Informing faculty of the difference in price between previous and new editions.
- C. Making available to faculty all information related to cost and ordering of the individual components of any bundled materials, including ISBN.

### **Montgomery College Best Practices**

The following strategies support the intent of federal and state legislation to help maximize the value of adopted course materials:

#### Faculty/Departmental

1. Complete adoptions on time. Notify appropriate personnel (chairs, deans) when adoptions will be delayed.
2. Order new editions only if necessary. Consider long-term adoptions to promote rentals.
3. Indicate within the adoption process whether previous editions are acceptable.
4. Order instructional material bundles only if all components are necessary and will be used.
5. Be aware of the current price of required course materials.
6. Allow students to purchase course materials in electronic format as appropriate.
7. Use free online alternatives, "open source" materials, whenever possible.
8. Provide ISBN's for individual unbundled materials to the bookstore.
9. Inquire with publisher about the availability of electronic formats accessible to students with disabilities and adopt whenever possible.
10. Inform the bookstore of any price negotiated with the publisher.

#### Campus Bookstore

1. Post adoption information to the website in a timely fashion.
2. Provide faculty members with information about the retail price of the current edition and that of the previous edition of instructional materials.
3. Make both bundled and unbundled versions available for purchase.

4. Meet with campus library staff to discuss and explore new areas of collaboration for providing alternate/additional methods of access to course materials.
5. Begin buyback as close to the start of finals as possible.
6. Advise departments and faculty whenever book prices go above any negotiated price.

Administrator

1. Ensure that faculty and departments are aware of affordability and accessibility best practices.
2. Seek ways to lessen student financial hardship related to purchasing instructional materials.
3. Ensure that all course materials, either adopted or distributed, are available in an accessible format.
4. Notify the bookstore when adoption extensions are granted.