

2022

Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey

Results and Findings



Office of Distance Learning
& Student Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From March through May 2022, more than 13,000 students from Florida’s public colleges and universities participated in the 2022 Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey (“2022 survey”) conducted by Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC). Previous surveys were conducted in 2018, 2016, 2012, and 2010. As in those past surveys, students were asked how the cost of textbooks and instructional materials affects their educational experience. They were also asked about purchasing behaviors, study aids, fee-based inclusive access programs, and online educational resources.

The survey collected data from March 14 to May 13, 2022.

The purpose of the 2022 survey was to identify:

1. The amount of money that Florida’s public college and university students spent on textbooks and instructional materials in the fall 2021 and spring 2022 terms.
2. The frequency with which students buy textbooks that are never used.
3. How students are affected by the cost of textbooks.
4. Which study aids do students perceive to be most beneficial to their learning?
5. Whether students are familiar with fee-based inclusive access programs, and if so, are they receiving benefits from participating in such programs.
6. If students are being provided with any open educational resources (OERs).
7. Changes in student responses from previous surveys.

Following requests for participation from the Florida College System (FCS) and the Board of Governors (BOG) office for the State University System (SUS), thirty institutions agreed to participate in the 2022 survey. Those requests for participation contained information about the survey, its purpose, and a request for an institutional point of contact. Links to the survey and all subsequent communication were handled by FLVC staff, while the points of contact at participating institutions directed the process of sending the links to their students.

The survey form included 17 multiple-choice, multiple-select, and free-text response items that were drawn from previous surveys, as well as some new questions for the 2022 survey. The goals, research questions, and survey items were developed in consultation with the FCS, BOG, and SUS, as well as with industry professionals from commercial publishers. The estimated time to complete the survey was ten minutes. Demographics such as degree type, institution, and area of study were also collected.

This report is intended to assist FLVC, the Florida Legislature, and higher education institutions in better understanding the significant impact that high textbook and course materials costs have on the state’s public college and university students. It is also intended to support the development of recommendations, best practices, and legislative changes that result in an effective, statewide approach to textbook and course materials affordability.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Key Finding 1:

Textbook costs continue to decrease but remain a substantial problem for students. This downward trend was first reflected in the 2018 survey and continued with the 2022 survey.

Results of the 2022 survey indicate a continued downward trend in the cost of student textbooks. However, high textbook costs remain a substantial problem for many students. Across both semesters surveyed, a majority of students spent \$300 or less on textbooks.

Across the board, the percentages of students spending less are increasing while those spending higher amounts are decreasing. This mirrors the findings of the 2018 survey and represents a positive trend in the study population.

Key Finding 2:

Florida's students are utilizing a variety of strategies to reduce costs, though some numbers have shifted.

Although the percentage has dropped since the 2016 and 2018 surveys, a majority (50.6%) of surveyed students in 2022 indicated they are buying books from a source other than their on-campus bookstore. Additionally, a similar number of them (50.5%) are renting digital textbooks. Students are buying used textbooks from their campus bookstores (40.4%) and renting printed textbooks (29.1%) as strategies to reduce their overall costs.

Key Finding 3:

The average number of textbooks required, but not used, has declined.

After spiking to 3.6 in the 2018 survey (up from 2.3 in 2016), the average number of textbooks that students were required to purchase – but did not use – dropped to 2.6 in the 2022 survey. This survey item incorporates the entire academic career of the respondents.

Key Finding 4:

A significant percentage of students continue to be impacted by high textbook costs. However, we do see some improvement in some places over previous years.

Despite some overall improvement over previous surveys, the cost of textbooks and instructional materials remains a burden for many students. In the 2022 survey, more than half (53.5%) of all respondents indicated that they simply did not purchase a required textbook due to its cost. Other impacts of high textbook costs included students taking fewer courses (43.7%), not registering for a specific course (38.5%), earning a poor grade due to not being able to afford the textbook (32.4%), and dropping out of a course (24.2%). The results are mixed across the categories. While the 2022 survey's data reflected a decrease in the percentage of students who did not purchase a required textbook, data in the other categories increased slightly, or worsened. Overall, the issue of textbook costs and their negative impact on students continues to be a substantial problem.

Key Finding 5:

Interactive practice questions continue to be the most popular digital study aid for students in their learning.

Two-thirds (65.9%) of students in the 2022 survey indicated that they are using interactive practice questions online as a study aid. Videos (59.7%), PowerPoint slide shows (50.9%), and flashcards (44.3%) are popular as well.

Key Finding 6:

Students seeking a bachelor's degree tend to spend more on textbooks than associate degree seekers, graduate students, and those not seeking a degree.

Based on the 2022 survey's findings, students working towards their bachelor's degree were the most likely to spend more than \$300 per term on textbooks. Master's degree seekers, as well as those not pursuing a degree, were the least likely to spend that much money. Students working towards an associate degree or doctorate fell in between.

Key Finding 7:

Students in some areas of study are spending more on textbooks than others.

Students majoring in some areas of study – particularly those studying medical-related fields – are more likely to be spending more than \$300 per semester than other students. In looking at the top ten areas of study, across both semesters in the study period, 43.3% of Medical Science students, 42.4% of Health Professions and Related Programs students, and 38.7% of Biological and Biomedical Sciences students indicated that they are spending more than \$300 per semester on books. Within those top ten areas of study, only 24.8% of History students, 26.4% of Education students, and 28.5% of Computer Science students are spending that much.

Key Finding 8:

Students are not well-informed about some cost savings programs.

Since the 2018 survey, commercial textbook companies have developed a range of new initiatives, many of which have been designed around digital delivery at a reduced cost when compared to traditional hard-copy sales models. Some cost savings programs are subscription based, where a student might pay a fee each semester, or annually, for digital access to a range of content resources. In some cases, that range of content can be quite large. In other models, certain textbooks are included in an umbrella program that provides lower pricing levels. These models are frequently referred to as “inclusive access programs.”

A majority of survey respondents (54.8%) are not sure if cost savings programs exist at their college or university.

Key Finding 9:

Access to physical or paper textbook copies is still very important to students.

Though the delivery of textbooks and instructional materials in digital format has increased since the 2018 survey, having a physical or paper textbook copy is still very important to students surveyed in 2022. A very strong majority of students (82.4%) wanted to have the option to purchase a paper copy at a lower cost.

Key Finding 10:

The use of open educational resources (OERs) is making progress, but there is more that can be done.

The movement to develop and utilize open educational resources has been slowly growing for years. In the 2022 survey, most students (55.6%) did not have OERs available for their courses, while 44.4% of students surveyed were provided at least one OER. Increasing the availability of OERs is crucial to reducing some of the burden that high textbook and materials costs places on students pursuing higher education in Florida.

Key Findings: Conclusion

Overall, student responses to the 2022 survey indicate that the amount of money they are spending on textbooks has decreased. Since FLVC's last survey in 2018, new initiatives to help mitigate the cost of commercial textbooks and instructional materials have included system- and institution-level efforts to negotiate lower pricing from commercial publishers, legislation designed to better inform and empower students in their search for lower cost options, and an increase in the use of open educational resources in place of commercial content for courses and programs.

During this same period, the continued shift toward digital sales and delivery of textbooks and instructional materials by commercial publishers has also offered lower pricing for students. While such digital sales programs have provided benefits to students in terms of pricing and convenience, consequently they have reduced the availability of physical textbooks and resources. Survey data reflects a decline in all the previously mentioned cost mitigation methods involving a physical textbook. It is likely that the growth of digital sales and distribution models will continue to significantly reduce, or eliminate, those options for students in the future. The ability to purchase, sell, share, and borrow used or new physical copies from the library has been a major source of savings for students in the past.

Results of the 2022 survey suggest that while more work remains to significantly reduce the impact of textbook costs on students, the proliferation of open educational resources – with 44% of survey respondents benefiting from one or more courses where OERs were utilized – is encouraging. Replacing commercial content with OERs or other already licensed content requires support from college and university faculty to do the work necessary to curate or develop such resources. However, such efforts, combined with better-negotiated pricing for commercial content, represent a solid approach to making higher education more affordable for Florida's public postsecondary students.

Introduction

The 2022 Florida Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey (“2022 survey”) was administered from March through May 2022 to identify changes in students’ experiences with college textbook costs since the last such survey in 2018. The 2022 survey focused on textbook and instructional materials costs, the impact of those costs, and students’ exposure to some of the new textbook and instructional material delivery models available. Prior to this, Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) has administered the survey four times since 2010. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, four years had elapsed between the last survey in 2018 and the 2022 survey.

The high cost of textbooks remains a significant concern for college students. According to the Education Data Initiative, the average postsecondary student spends between \$628 and \$1,471 annually for books and supplies, as of the 2021-2022 academic year. Hard copy books can cost as much as \$400, with an average price between \$80 and \$150. The price of textbooks increases by an average of 12% with each new edition (Hanson, 2022).

Since the last Florida survey in 2018, several new factors have emerged that are impacting the textbook and instructional materials discussion and market:

- In addition to traditional factors such as used book sales, library lending programs, and informal student-sharing activities, a number of new textbook and instructional materials acquisition models have emerged. Low-cost initiatives, inclusive access (subscription) models, increased rental or used-rental programs, and digital downloads have grown.
- Efforts to promote the development and distribution of open educational resources (OERs) to support learning have expanded among colleges and universities. While OER continues to gain traction and the larger OER community continues to grow – there have been national and state conferences dedicated to the development and expansion of such freely available resources as a substitute for commercial textbooks – there is more work to do.
- Finally, after years of steady increases, the price of textbooks and instructional materials appears to have plateaued, or declined, beginning in 2016. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index data shows that the price of new textbooks, beginning in 2016, stopped increasing (Hill, 2020). Similarly, IPEDS data from 2020-21 indicates that book and supplies costs have declined approximately 5 to 8 percent in public and non-profit sector 2- and 4-year institutions since the previous survey year (NCES, 2022). It is possible that the increased pressure on the publishing industry to reduce textbook pricing, which was advancing significantly faster than the

overall CPI, as well as the steady move toward a digital publishing and distribution model, have combined to allow such a pricing plateau or decline.

High textbook costs have been shown to have a negative impact on college students, their progression, and overall academic success. The 2018 survey indicated that 64% of students decided not to purchase a required textbook because of its high cost. Students also reported that they occasionally or frequently took fewer courses (43%), did not register for a course (41%), or dropped a course (23%) because of textbook costs. Such adverse impacts have negative implications for colleges and universities. Assuming that at least some of those courses that students failed to enroll in, or finish were required for the completion of a degree, the students' time to degree would be extended at least one semester. Extending time to degree negatively impacts a college or university's performance funding, while also increasing the amount of money the state provides to underwrite the cost of a student's degree. In short, extending time to degree increases costs for the student, the institution, and the state of Florida.

Methodology

The 2022 Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey was conducted to help education leaders and policymakers better understand how textbook and course material costs are impacting student perceptions, academic decisions, progress, and perceived value of educational resources.

Thirty public postsecondary institutions in Florida invited their students to take part in the online survey, which was a follow-up to the surveys conducted in 2010, 2012, 2016, and 2018.

A. Purpose

The purpose of the 2022 Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey was to identify:

1. The amount of money that Florida's public college and university students spent on textbooks and instructional materials in the fall 2021 and spring 2022 terms.
2. The frequency with which students buy textbooks that are never used.
3. How students are affected by the cost of textbooks.
4. Which study aids students perceive to be most beneficial to their learning.
5. How students have been affected by more recent initiatives to reduce textbook costs.
6. Changes in student responses from previous surveys.

B. Participants

Thirty of Florida’s public postsecondary institutions agreed to participate in the survey. The Florida College System (FCS) sent requests for participation and reminder emails to college Chief Academic Officers. The Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida (SUS) sent requests to university Provosts to solicit participation. Participants were provided with a link to the questionnaire, purpose, and request that the questionnaire be administered between March 14 and May 13, 2022. Institutions were asked to use their campus communication channels to request students participate in a short survey.

A total of 13,831 responses were submitted during the survey period. Of those, 9,844 (71.2%) were from FCS institutions, and 3,987 (28.8%) were SUS institutions.

A strong majority of survey respondents (86.1%) were undergraduates. A slim plurality (43.1%) of survey respondents were working on their associate degrees, though a nearly equal amount (43.0% combined) were working towards bachelor’s degrees regardless of the number of credit hours they have completed.

FLORIDA INSTITUTIONS WHO AGREED TO PARTICIPATE

Institutions	Institutions
Broward College	Polk State College
Chipola College	Seminole State College of Florida
College of The Florida Keys	St. Petersburg College
Eastern Florida State College	State College of Florida, Manatee Sarasota
Florida SouthWestern State College	Tallahassee Community College
Florida State College at Jacksonville	Florida Atlantic University
Gulf Coast State College	Florida Gulf Coast University
Hillsborough Community College	Florida International University
Indian River State College	Florida Polytechnic University
Lake-Sumter State College	Florida State University
Miami Dade College	New College of Florida
Northwest Florida State College	University of Central Florida
Palm Beach State College	University of North Florida
Pasco-Hernando State College	University of South Florida
Pensacola State College	University of West Florida

C. Survey

The questionnaire included 17 multiple-choice, multiple-select, and open-ended response items drawn from cost-related questions on the 2018 survey, as well as additional response items that reflected the current legislative status and concerns in Florida. The goals, research questions, and questionnaire items were developed in consultation with the BOG and FCS. In addition, college and university representatives, along with representatives from several commercial textbook publishers, were consulted to ensure clarity of the wording of questions.

The estimated time to complete the questionnaire was ten minutes. The first few items addressed basic demographics (e.g., degree, institution, area of study). The remainder of the questionnaire addressed money spent on textbooks, textbook use, academic impact of textbook costs, perceived value of different study aids, and participation in certain initiatives to reduce textbook costs. Students were asked about their expenses, experiences, and preferences based on enrollment during the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters.

D. Research Questions

- Question 1:** For fall 2021 and spring 2022, how much do students spend on textbooks and other instructional materials?
- Question 2:** How many textbooks do students buy that are not used?
- Question 3:** How are students affected by the cost of textbooks?
- Question 4:** What digital study aids do students perceive to be most beneficial to their grades?
- Question 5:** Compared to the results of the 2018 Student Textbook Survey, what are the differences in the money spent on textbooks?
- Question 6:** Compared to the results of the 2018 Student Textbook Survey, what are the differences in factors affected by the cost of textbooks?
- Question 7:** Compared to the results of the 2018 Student Textbook Survey, what are the differences in student actions taken to reduce the cost of textbooks?
- Question 8:** Compared to the results of the 2018 Student Textbook Survey, what are the differences in student willingness to rent textbooks?
- Question 9:** Comparing university students and college students, what are the differences in the money spent on textbooks?

Question 10: What are the differences in the money spent on textbooks for students in different degree levels?

Question 11: What are the differences in the money spent on textbooks for students in different major areas of study?

Question 12: How have cost savings programs impacted textbook costs overall and student attitudes towards costs (if at all)?

Question 13: What has been the impact of OERs, and how widely are they used?

E. Data Analyses

Descriptive statistics were used to calculate all survey items. Means and standard deviations were used to calculate all continuous variables and Likert-type scales. Frequencies and percentages were presented for nominal and ordinal-scaled variables. For some items involving textbook costs for fall and spring semesters, responses were filtered to ensure that only those students enrolled were counted so as not to artificially skew the data.

For research questions, frequencies and percentages were calculated for each category listed in the survey questions. Chi-square tests were used to test the statistical differences where appropriate.

Findings and Results

Key Finding 1:

Textbook costs continue to decrease but remain a substantial problem for students. This downward trend was first reflected in the 2018 survey and continued with the 2022 survey.

Based on the survey results, students are spending less than in previous surveys, though many are still spending a lot on textbooks. Across both semesters, nearly a third of students are spending more than \$300 on textbooks (35.7% in fall 2021, and 32.0% in spring 2022). Within that group, 10% of students in the fall and 9% in the spring are spending more than \$500 on required textbooks.

2021-2022 STUDENT TEXTBOOK COSTS

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	532	5.1%	813	6.9%
\$1-100	1,231	11.8%	1,774	15.0%
\$101-200	2,514	24.2%	2,912	24.6%
\$201-300	2,413	23.2%	2,550	21.5%
\$301-400	1,722	16.5%	1,731	14.6%
\$401-500	958	9.2%	989	8.4%
\$501-600	483	4.6%	482	4.1%
\$601 or more	555	5.3%	589	5.0%
Total	10,408	100.0%	11,840	100.0%

The costs are not as stark for other instructional materials. Just under 9% of students are spending more than \$300 per term on other instructional materials (fall 2021 8.5%, and 8.9% in spring 2022).

2021-2022 OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS COSTS

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	2,770	26.6%	3,240	27.4%
\$1-100	3,838	36.9%	4,363	36.9%
\$101-200	1,964	18.9%	2,184	18.5%
\$201-300	948	9.1%	999	8.4%
\$301-400	375	3.6%	458	3.9%
\$401-500	205	2.0%	231	2.0%
\$501-600	118	1.1%	135	1.1%
\$601 or more	190	1.8%	230	1.9%
Total	10,408	100.0%	11,840	100.0%

Compared to Past Surveys

In 2022, reported spending on textbooks continues to decrease compared to the results of the previous surveys. Across the board, the percentages of students spending less are increasing while those spending higher amounts are decreasing.

Comparing the spring terms across the previous surveys, spending at the 0-\$200 level has continued to trend upward year after year, while spending at the highest amounts has consistently trended downward.

SPRING SEMESTER TEXTBOOK COSTS

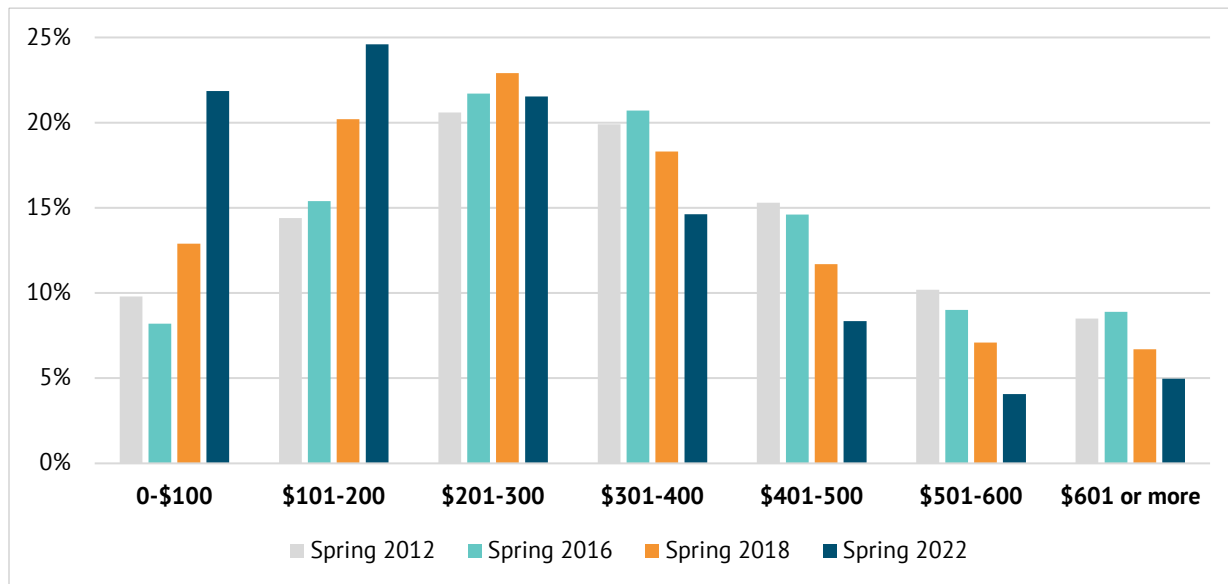
Longitudinal Comparison

	Spring 2022		Spring 2018		Spring 2016		Spring 2012	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0-\$100	↑ 2,587	21.9%	2,774	12.9%	1,688	8.2%	1,915	9.8%
\$101-200	↑ 2,912	24.6%	4,337	20.2%	3,174	15.4%	2,830	14.4%
\$201-300	2,550	21.5%	4,903	22.9%	4,465	21.7%	4,034	20.6%
\$301-400	↓ 1,731	14.6%	3,925	18.3%	4,258	20.7%	3,894	19.9%
\$401-500	↓ 989	8.4%	2,518	11.7%	2,993	14.6%	3,004	15.3%
\$501-600	↓ 482	4.1%	1,532	7.1%	1,844	9.0%	2,007	10.2%
\$601 or more	↓ 589	5.0%	1,441	6.7%	1,830	8.9%	1,668	8.5%
Total	11,840	100.0%	21,430	100.0%	20,252	98.5%*	19,352	98.7%*

*2016 and 2012 surveys had an "other" choice



SPRING SEMESTER TEXTBOOK COSTS Longitudinal Comparison



Combining categories, the effect is more pronounced. Those spending less than or equal to \$300 have increased dramatically from the previous three surveys. Similarly, those spending more than \$300 have dropped off. See the table below:

SPRING SEMESTER TEXTBOOK COSTS – COMBINED Longitudinal Comparison

	Spring 2022		Spring 2018		Spring 2016		Spring 2012	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0-\$100	2,587	21.9%	2,774	12.9%	1,688	8.2%	1,915	9.8%
\$101-200	2,912	24.6%	4,337	20.2%	3,174	15.4%	2,830	14.4%
\$201-300	2,550	21.5%	4,903	22.9%	4,465	21.7%	4,034	20.6%
<= \$300	8,049	68.0%	12,014	56.0%	9,327	45.3%	8,779	44.8%
\$301-400	1,731	14.6%	3,925	18.3%	4,258	20.7%	3,894	19.9%
\$401-500	989	8.4%	2,518	11.7%	2,993	14.6%	3,004	15.3%
\$501-600	482	4.1%	1,532	7.1%	1,844	9.0%	2,007	10.2%
\$601 or more	589	5.0%	1,441	6.7%	1,830	8.9%	1,668	8.5%
>\$300	3,791	32.0%	9,416	43.8%	10,925	53.2%	10,573	53.9%
Total	11,840	100.0%	21,430	100.0%	20,252	98.5%	19,352	98.7%



College and University

The survey results do not reflect large differences in spending between university and college students. Across the terms and comparing university and college, spending equal to or under \$300 is clustering between 62.4% and 68.5%, while spending above \$300 is clustering between 31.5% and 37.6%.

TEXTBOOK COST COMPARISON

College and University

	University				College			
	Fall 2021		Spring 2022		Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0-\$100	572	17.0%	817	22.7%	1,191	16.9%	1,770	21.5%
\$101-200	732	21.7%	802	22.3%	1,782	25.3%	2,110	25.6%
\$201-300	801	23.8%	787	21.9%	1,612	22.9%	1,763	21.4%
<=\$300	2,105	62.4%	2,406	66.9%	4,585	65.2%	5,643	68.5%
\$301-400	612	18.2%	559	15.5%	1,110	15.8%	1,172	14.2%
\$401-500	331	9.8%	332	9.2%	627	8.9%	657	8.0%
\$501-600	150	4.5%	143	4.0%	333	4.7%	339	4.1%
\$601 or more	174	5.2%	159	4.4%	381	5.4%	430	5.2%
>\$300	1,267	37.6%	1,193	33.1%	2,451	34.8%	2,598	31.5%
Total	3,372	100.0%	3,599	100.0%	7,036	100.0%	8,241	100.0%

Key Finding 2:

How are students reducing textbook costs? Similar to past surveys, Florida students are utilizing a variety of strategies to reduce costs. Though some numbers have shifted.

Consistent with the rise of new digital sales models, students are moving more toward digital products. Survey results reflect an increase in the number of students opting to rent digital textbooks, which climbed to nearly one-half of the respondents in the 2022 survey.

Additionally, fully one-half of the students surveyed buy books from a source other than a campus bookstore, though that statistic has dropped notably compared to the 2016 and 2018 surveys.

COST REDUCTION STRATEGIES

	2022	2018	2016
Buy books from a source other than the campus bookstore	50.6%	66.0%	63.8%
Rent digital textbooks	50.5%	41.4%	29.6%
Buy used copies from the campus bookstore	40.4%	53.0%	48.8%
Rent printed textbooks	29.1%	47.8%	47.0%
Sell used books	19.0%	37.4%	39.0%
Share books with classmates	17.0%	27.1%	23.7%
I do not attempt to reduce textbook costs	12.2%	4.4%	3.2%
Other (please specify)	9.2%	10.0%	95.0%
Rent only the digital textbook chapters needed for the course	8.6%	7.7%	5.4%
Buy lifetime access to a digital version of a textbook	6.9%	5.6%	3.1%
Use a reserve copy from the campus library	6.4%	11.7%	10.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Key Finding 3:

The average number of textbooks required, but not used, has declined.

In looking at the number of textbooks purchased by students in their academic career which were never used, there is a drop-off from the 2018 survey. This is important, as in each of the previous three surveys the average number of books purchased but not used had steadily increased. In the 2012 survey, that number was 1.6. This statistic peaked in the 2018 survey but has now dropped back down closer to the 2016 level.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF BOOKS BOUGHT BUT NOT USED

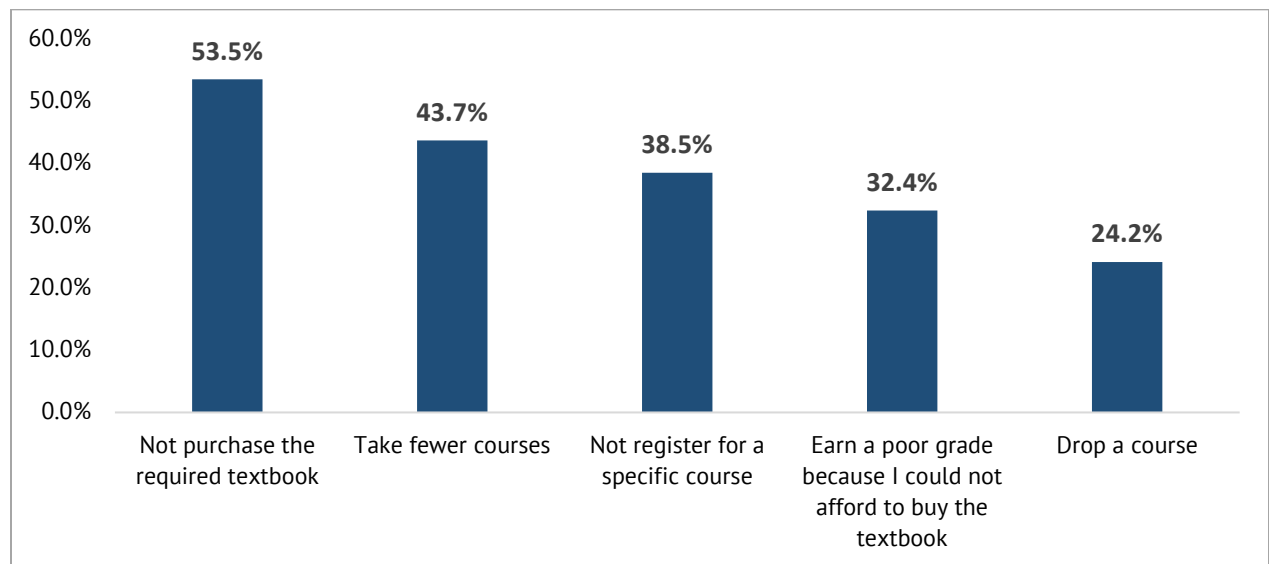
2022	2.6
2018	3.6
2016	2.3
2012	1.6

Key Finding 4:

A significant percentage of students continue to be impacted by high textbook costs. However, we do see some improvement in some places over previous years.

The number one impact of textbook costs is students choosing not to purchase a *required* textbook. In the 2022 survey, more than half (53.5%) of all respondents indicated that they have foregone purchasing a required course textbook due to its cost. The next top four impacts of textbook costs are: taking fewer courses (43.7%), not registering for a specific course (38.5%), earning a poor grade (32.4%), and dropping out of a course (24.2%).

IMPACT OF TEXTBOOK COSTS



Compared to Past Surveys

Comparing the 2022 survey to those from 2016 and 2018, there have been some improvements. However, the results are mixed. Across some of the listed impacts, the percentage of students reporting each impact has dropped in each successive year. The exceptions are dropping a course, withdrawing from a course, and failing a course, each of which ticked up a bit over the 2018

survey. These last three categories, depending on the circumstance, can have a negative effect on a student's grade point average and academic standing.

IMPACT OF TEXTBOOK COSTS Longitudinal Comparison

	2022	2018	2016
Not purchase the required textbook	53.5%	64.2%	66.6%
Take fewer courses	43.7%	42.8%	47.6%
Not register for a specific course	38.5%	40.5%	45.5%
Earn a poor grade because I could not afford to buy the textbook	32.4%	35.6%	37.6%
Drop a course	24.2%	22.9%	26.1%
Withdraw from a course	20.7%	18.1%	20.7%
Fail a course because I could not afford to buy the textbook	19.2%	17.2%	19.8%

Key Finding 5:

Interactive practice questions continue to be the most popular digital study aid for students in their learning.

When asked to rank their top three preferences for study aids, interactive practice questions were favored by nearly two-thirds of respondents, with 65.9% of students indicating that it is the preferred study aid in their learning. Video (59.7%), PowerPoint slide shows (50.9%), and flashcards (44.3%) were the next most popular aids.

MOST POPULAR STUDY AIDS

	2022	2018	2016
Interactive practice questions	65.9%	57.2%	73.9%
Flashcards	44.3%	36.9%	46.9%
PowerPoint slide shows	50.9%	44.8%	58.4%
Video	59.7%	44.2%	57.3%
Audio	20.1%	12.9%	16.9%
Animations	21.5%	18.0%	22.7%
Interactive "try it now" activities	35.7%	32.2%	41.6%
Online study groups	12.9%	7.7%	8.8%
Online tutoring system provided by the college	18.5%	11.8%	13.9%
Other (please specify below)	4.2%	N/A	N/A



Key Finding 6:

Students seeking a bachelor's degree tend to spend more on textbooks than associate degree seekers, graduate students, and those not seeking a degree.

Degree Comparison

Based on this survey, students working towards their bachelor's degree tend to be more likely to spend more than \$300 per term on textbooks. Master's degree seekers, as well as those not pursuing a degree, were the least likely to spend that much money, while those working towards an associate degree or doctorate fell in between.

TEXTBOOK COST COMPARISON

Degree Level
Fall 2021

	Associate	Bachelor's 0-60 Cr.	Bachelor's 61+ Cr.	Master's	Doctorate	Non- Degree Seeking	Other
\$0-100	32.9%	25.0%	19.2%	34.4%	41.2%	59.5%	45.3%
\$101-200	20.4%	20.1%	20.4%	26.2%	17.0%	18.4%	17.5%
\$201-300	18.6%	20.7%	22.8%	21.1%	14.4%	10.0%	12.3%
\$301-400	12.6%	16.7%	17.4%	10.2%	11.3%	6.1%	8.4%
\$401-500	6.8%	8.8%	10.7%	4.2%	6.2%	3.4%	3.9%
\$501-600	3.9%	4.7%	4.5%	1.8%	2.1%	1.6%	3.9%
\$601 or more	4.7%	4.1%	5.0%	2.1%	7.7%	1.1%	8.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Associate	Bachelor's 0-60 Cr.	Bachelor's 61+ Cr.	Master's	Doctorate	Non- Degree Seeking	Other
0-\$300	72.0%	65.7%	62.4%	81.6%	72.7%	87.9%	75.1%
>\$300	28.0%	34.3%	37.6%	18.4%	27.3%	12.1%	24.9%

Spring 2022

	Associate	Bachelor's 0-60 Cr.	Bachelor's 61+ Cr.	Master's	Doctorate	Non- Degree Seeking	Other
\$0-100	25.3%	18.5%	20.2%	34.0%	38.1%	51.1%	33.7%
\$101-200	23.6%	24.5%	22.8%	27.8%	20.1%	22.9%	21.4%
\$201-300	20.8%	21.2%	22.6%	20.2%	15.5%	10.5%	15.9%
\$301-400	13.6%	16.7%	15.9%	9.6%	8.8%	7.6%	9.1%
\$401-500	7.4%	9.8%	9.6%	3.6%	7.2%	4.5%	5.8%
\$501-600	3.8%	5.0%	4.4%	1.9%	2.1%	1.8%	4.2%
\$601 or more	5.5%	4.2%	4.4%	2.8%	8.2%	1.6%	10.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Associate	Bachelor's 0-60 Cr.	Bachelor's 61+ Cr.	Master's	Doctorate	Non- Degree Seeking	Other
0-\$300	69.7%	64.3%	65.6%	82.0%	73.7%	84.5%	70.9%
>\$300	30.3%	35.7%	34.4%	18.0%	26.3%	15.5%	29.1%

In looking at 2016 and 2018, this is a trend year after year: those seeking baccalaureate degrees tend to be more likely to spend over \$300 on textbooks and materials than those pursuing graduate degrees, or even those at the associate level.

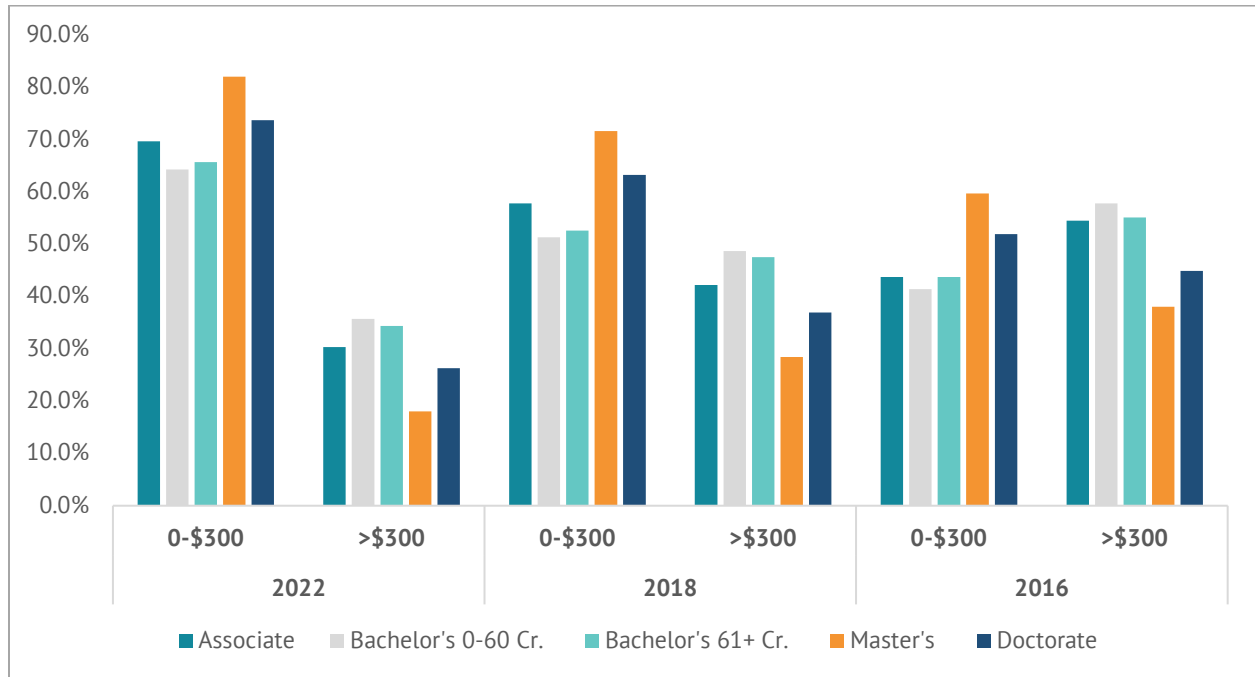
TEXTBOOK COST BY DEGREE LEVEL Longitudinal Comparison

	Associate	Bachelor's 0-60 Cr.	Bachelor's 61+ Cr.	Master's	Doctorate
Spring 2022 0-\$300	69.7%	64.3%	65.6%	82.0%	73.7%
Spring 2022 >\$300	30.3%	35.7%	34.4%	18.0%	26.3%
Spring 2018 0-\$300	57.8%	51.3%	52.6%	71.6%	63.2%
Spring 2018 >\$300	42.2%	48.7%	47.5%	28.4%	36.9%
Spring 2016 0-\$300	43.7%	41.4%	43.7%	59.7%	51.9%
Spring 2016 >\$300	54.5%	57.8%	55.1%	38.0%	44.9%



However, it is a good sign that overall spending continues to drop across the study periods. Those figures were greater than 50% in the 2016 survey and between 40% and 50% in the 2018 survey. But by 2022, undergraduates spending more than \$300 dropped to around 30% to 35%.

SPENDING BY DEGREE TYPE



Key Finding 7:

Students in some areas of study are spending more on textbooks than others.

Students majoring in some areas of study are more likely to spend more than \$300 per semester than others, particularly those in medical-related fields.

Of the top 10 major areas of study, these five were more likely to spend more than \$300 on textbooks: Medical Science; Health Professions and Related Programs; Biological and Biomedical Sciences; Business Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services; and Psychology.

TEXTBOOK COST COMPARISON
Areas of Study with Higher Spending
Fall 2021

	Medical Science	Health Professions	Biological & Biomedical Sciences	Business	Psychology
\$0-\$100	13.1%	12.1%	17.3%	13.6%	16.3%
\$101-200	20.8%	20.2%	19.8%	24.8%	23.0%
\$201-300	20.7%	23.5%	22.0%	23.9%	22.1%
≤ \$300	54.7%	55.7%	59.2%	62.3%	61.4%
\$301-400	18.6%	17.0%	17.1%	17.7%	19.9%
\$401-500	10.5%	10.8%	10.7%	11.2%	9.4%
\$501-600	7.0%	6.6%	5.6%	4.9%	4.9%
\$601 or more	9.2%	9.9%	7.5%	3.8%	4.4%
> \$300	45.3%	44.3%	40.8%	37.7%	38.6%

Spring 2022

	Medical Science	Health Professions	Biological Sciences	Business	Psychology
\$0-\$100	17.2%	16.9%	21.1%	16.8%	19.7%
\$101-200	19.6%	21.0%	21.1%	26.6%	23.4%
\$201-300	21.9%	21.7%	21.1%	21.9%	23.5%
≤ \$300	58.7%	59.6%	63.4%	65.4%	66.7%
\$301-400	15.0%	15.6%	15.4%	16.7%	15.6%
\$401-500	9.6%	9.3%	9.9%	10.4%	8.5%
\$501-600	6.3%	5.5%	5.4%	4.3%	5.4%
\$601 or more	10.5%	10.0%	6.0%	3.2%	3.9%
> \$300	41.3%	40.4%	36.6%	34.6%	33.3%

		Medical Science	Health Professions	Biological Sciences	Business	Psychology
Fall 2021	≤ \$300	54.7%	55.7%	59.2%	62.3%	61.4%
	> \$300	45.3%	44.3%	40.8%	37.7%	38.6%
Spring 2022	≤ \$300	58.7%	59.6%	63.4%	65.4%	66.7%
	> \$300	41.3%	40.4%	36.6%	34.6%	33.3%
Average	≤ \$300	56.7%	57.6%	61.3%	63.8%	64.0%
	> \$300	43.3%	42.4%	38.7%	36.2%	36.0%



Within those top 10 areas of study, these five were less likely to spend more than \$300 on textbooks: Education, Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services, Social Sciences, Engineering, and Public Administration and Social Service Profession.

TEXTBOOK COST COMPARISON
 Areas of Study with Lower Spending
 Fall 2021

	Education	Computer Sciences	Social Sciences	Engineering	Public Administration & Social Service
\$0-\$100	20.8%	18.3%	17.4%	22.5%	15.4%
\$101-200	27.8%	26.3%	21.0%	21.1%	27.9%
\$201-300	22.7%	25.5%	29.6%	18.9%	20.8%
< \$300	71.3%	70.1%	68.0%	62.4%	64.2%
\$301-400	14.9%	13.5%	18.8%	16.0%	15.4%
\$401-500	7.4%	8.7%	6.1%	9.1%	10.4%
\$501-600	4.0%	3.8%	4.4%	5.7%	5.0%
\$601 or more	2.4%	3.8%	2.8%	6.7%	5.0%
>\$300	28.7%	29.9%	32.0%	37.6%	35.8%

Spring 2022

	Education	Computer Sciences	Social Sciences	Engineering	Public Administration and Social Service
\$0-\$100	29.4%	24.9%	21.9%	28.1%	26.1%
\$101-200	25.8%	26.1%	23.4%	23.9%	27.2%
\$201-300	20.7%	21.9%	20.6%	18.4%	17.6%
< \$300	75.9%	72.9%	65.8%	70.4%	70.9%
\$301-400	13.1%	13.2%	18.8%	12.7%	11.9%
\$401-500	6.1%	7.0%	9.3%	8.6%	8.8%
\$501-600	2.5%	3.7%	3.5%	3.9%	3.8%
\$601 or more	2.5%	3.2%	2.5%	4.4%	4.6%
>\$300	24.1%	27.1%	34.2%	29.6%	29.1%



		Education	Computer Sciences	Social Sciences	Engineering	Public Administration and Social Service
Fall 2021	≤ \$300	71.3%	70.1%	68.0%	62.4%	64.2%
	\$301-\$600+	28.7%	29.9%	32.0%	37.6%	35.8%
Spring 2022	≤ \$300	75.9%	72.9%	65.8%	70.4%	70.9%
	\$301-\$600+	24.1%	27.1%	34.2%	29.6%	29.1%
	≤ \$300	73.6%	71.5%	66.9%	66.4%	67.5%
Average	\$301-\$600+	26.4%	28.5%	33.1%	33.6%	32.5%

Key Finding 8:

Students are not well-informed about some cost savings programs.

Since the 2018 survey, commercial textbook companies have developed a range of new initiatives, many of which have been designed around digital delivery at a reduced cost when compared to traditional hard-copy sales models. Some cost savings programs are subscription based, where a student might pay a fee each semester, or annually, for digital access to a range of content resources. In some cases, that range of content can be quite large. In other models, certain textbooks are included in an umbrella program that provides lower pricing levels. These models are frequently referred to as “inclusive access programs.”

To ask students about their experiences with such programs, the survey item specifically avoided using any specific program name. Instead, a general question that sought to describe how the program worked through a reduced fee charge in exchange for access to content was used. The question was vetted with institution representatives and several commercial publishers that offer such programs. Such vetting was done to accurately describe the programs in such a way that students would understand and connect their experience with what was being asked.

When asked about such programs, 54.8% of students indicated that they were not sure whether such programs were available at their college or university, and 14.3% indicated that no such programs were available to them. Of those responding, 18.8 % had participated in such programs, while 12.1% specifically opted not to participate.

For those students who did participate, 53.2% indicated that they did not feel that the program reduced their overall textbook costs. When those who opted not to participate were asked why they made such a decision, they provided a number of reasons that suggest both a lack of awareness or understanding about the program and a desire to explore more cost-effective options. Of these respondents, comments indicated that a large majority believed it was either about the same cost or ended up being more expensive. Some other respondents mentioned that

textbooks and materials are expensive, and/or it seems like a way for textbook industries to profit while students bear the burden of unrealistically high costs. A few responded that it was a convenient process, while some lamented that purchased textbooks often were not used in class. A minority were unsure if there had been any savings with the plan.

Of the smaller group of respondents who believed there were savings, about one-third commented that it was a convenient process that may have saved some money or streamlined the book-purchasing process for them in some way. Often, the ease was due to the funds coming directly from their financial aid without them needing to pay out-of-pocket upfront. A few were unsure or thought it was about the same price. A handful mentioned it was a complicated process.

IF YOU OPTED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A FEE-BASED PROGRAM, WHY NOT?

	Frequency	Percent
I was not aware of the program	372	28.1%
I wanted to shop to try find materials at a lower rate	291	22.0%
I did not like the idea	241	18.2%
I could not afford it	142	10.7%
The program was not convenient for me	117	8.8%
I did not understand how to participate	99	7.5%
Other (please specify)	63	4.8%
Total	1,325	100.0%

Key Finding 9:

Access to physical or paper textbook copies is still very important to students.

Since the 2018 survey, the delivery of textbooks and instructional materials in digital form has grown. In some cases, students may only be offered a digital version of the textbook with the option to print pages on their own. When asked if having the option to purchase a low-cost paper copy of a textbook, in addition to digital access, was important, students overwhelmingly responded positively. Of those responding to the survey, 82.4% wanted the option to purchase a paper copy at a lower cost.

Key Finding 10:

The use of open educational resources (OER) is making progress but there is more that can be done.

The movement to develop and utilize open educational resources for use in courses and degree programs has been growing slowly for many years. The movement has been in existence before the beginning of this survey and previous surveys. In the 2022 survey, students were asked specifically about their exposure to open educational resources. A majority (55.6%) of students indicated that of the courses they enrolled in during the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022, they did not have any OERs provided to them. However, the data show there is some progress, in that 44.4% did have at least one or more course(s) that provided OER textbooks or instructional materials to them at no cost. This is a promising finding and worth tracking in future versions of this survey.

Of the number of courses that you took in the fall and spring, how many textbook(s) or other instructional materials (sometimes called open educational resources, or OERs) were provided for you at no cost?

	Frequency	Percent
0	6,130	55.6%
1	1,950	17.7%
2	1,356	12.3%
3	587	5.3%
4	360	3.3%
5	190	1.7%
6	122	1.1%
7	48	0.4%
8	53	0.5%
9	29	0.3%
10+	197	1.8%

Observations and Implications for Further Study

Since the first Florida Student Textbook and Instructional Materials Survey in 2010, students have reported spending increasing amounts in support of their learning. In addition, concern has been expressed by policymakers, education leaders, faculty, and the students themselves over the reported impact of those costs on student learning and progress toward degree attainment.

With this 2022 survey, there appears to be some good news. For the first time – after years of regular increases – students have reported that they are spending less on textbooks and instructional materials compared to previous years, albeit for a myriad of possible reasons.

While the 2022 survey also saw a slight decline in some of the reported negative impacts textbook costs have on student learning and progression, slight increases were reported in the number of students indicating that they take fewer classes or withdraw from a course because of the cost of textbooks. Despite the overall decline in textbook costs reported by students, textbook costs and their negative impacts on learning and progression continue to be a substantial problem for many students. There are many complex factors at play that have likely impacted textbook and instructional materials costs.

First, since the 2018 survey, Florida policymakers, education leaders, and faculty have devoted considerable attention to education affordability and the problem of textbook and instructional materials costs. Colleges and universities have negotiated pricing and explored some of the new low-cost digital sales models presented by commercial textbook companies. The State University System has engaged in direct discussions with commercial textbook publishers to encourage lower-cost pricing of \$20 per credit hour or less and support efforts to recognize and market courses that meet an established definition of low-cost pricing for textbooks and instructional materials. The Florida Legislature has held committee meetings to learn about and support reductions in the cost of textbooks and instructional materials. Florida's textbook affordability statute includes specific measures designed to empower and inform students about textbook requirements and pricing, as well as encourage the use of open educational resources where possible. And finally, education leaders and faculty have leveraged the value of open education resources to increase the number of courses that do not require students to purchase any additional learning resources beyond those already provided within the normal tuition and fees paid for enrollment. All of these efforts appear to have combined to produce the observed declines in cost reported by students this year.

Since the 2018 survey, there has also been a shift away from traditional, physical textbooks and related materials to digital learning products. In theory, the marginal cost of providing a student with a physical textbook or other hard copy learning materials should be higher than providing student access to digital content. In almost all cases, commercial hard copy textbooks and instructional materials exist in digital form first before they are printed, bound, and shipped directly to students, bookstores, or other outlets for sale. This digital model has undoubtedly offered publishers the opportunity to reduce production costs and enabled some of the new digital

subscription models now present in the marketplace. The decline in overall costs reported by students can likely be, at least, partially attributed to some of these new, lower-priced sales models. Yet, while this digital shift has provided some benefits to both commercial publishers and students, that progress may have come with a downside. Digital textbooks and instructional materials also place more pressure on students to have access to sufficient technology and a reliable internet connection. As the pandemic has demonstrated, such access is still problematic for some students.

Responses to this and previous surveys clearly indicate that students use multiple strategies to reduce their costs for textbooks and instructional materials. Yet, the range of options often used by students appears to be narrowing. When asked how they were reducing their textbook costs, students responded to a range of options including buying books from sources other than the campus bookstore, renting books, buying used copies, selling used books, sharing books with classmates, using reserve copies from the campus library, and a variety of other means. Most of the often-used strategies involve a physical textbook or resource. The 2022 survey data shows a decline in the use of strategies involving a physical resource. Interestingly, when asked about their desire for a physical book, students indicated overwhelmingly (82.4%) that they would like the option of having access to a low-cost paper copy of their textbook. Similarly, a recent survey of approximately 1,700 faculty members conducted by the National Association of College Stores indicates that about two-thirds of faculty are using print materials for their courses (On Campus Research, 2021). The shift to commercial digital textbooks and instructional materials eliminates, or significantly reduces, the option of using the used textbook market, where 40.4% of students purchase copies or 19% of students sell copies, as reported this year. That represents a decline of 13% and 18.4% respectively from 2018. There is no “used” market for digital materials. Similarly, the number of students reporting that they purchased books from a source other than the campus bookstore declined from 66.0% to 50.1% between 2018 and 2022. Digital textbooks and instructional materials typically are not available from any source other than the campus bookstore or directly through the publisher, thus eliminating some competition in the market. Students also reported some increases in their rental of digital textbooks, rental of textbook chapters, and purchase of lifetime access to a digital version of the textbook which is consistent with the growth of the digital sales model.

While the shift to digital textbooks and materials may have positively affected the cost of those materials for students, the digital paradigm has also reduced the options available to students to manage their costs and placed more control back in the hands of commercial publishers and campus bookstores as the only source for those resources. Further, concern has been expressed about the student data being collected by commercial content providers through digital delivery and courseware platforms, how it is being used, and how it could be monetized. Additional research as to the progress and impact of the digital shift, the narrowing of student options to mitigate textbook and instructional materials costs, data collection practices, and various licensing/sales programs on students would be useful going forward.

Since 2018, Florida’s colleges and universities have worked to utilize more open educational resources, instead of commercial textbooks and materials for courses and programs, to help reduce students’ costs. Florida Virtual Campus has held five annual summit meetings on the topic of textbook costs and utilizing OER for courses and programs. In addition, with the support of Florida

colleges and universities, FLVC has added a Zero Textbook Cost indicator to its online course catalog to help students identify courses that do not have any required additional costs of textbooks. The 2022 survey data suggest that, while there is more work to do, open educational resources are beginning to spread. Just over 44% of the respondents had encountered one or more courses where OER was used. Data from the survey of college and university faculty cited earlier indicates that 67% of participating faculty were very or moderately familiar with open educational resources (On Campus Research, 2021). Considering the large amount of licensed digital content available in college and university library collections that can be used in support of student learning, the growing awareness among faculty about open educational resources, and the increasing amount of open educational resources available from a wide range of sources, a renewed focus on reducing student textbook and instructional materials costs seems well-timed. While replacing commercial content with open educational resources or other library-licensed content can sometimes require support from a college or university for faculty to do the work needed to curate or develop such resources, such efforts, combined with better-negotiated pricing for commercial content, represents a solid approach to make higher education more affordable for students. Support for the use of open educational resources has traditionally focused on the significant cost savings enjoyed by students through these initiatives. However, additional research on how such an investment in developing OER can pay off for an institution or system in terms of better retention, improved time to degree, degree attainment, lower student debt, or improved student success, would seem to be a logical and valuable next step.

Appendix A: Full Results of the 2022 Survey

Section 1: Participating Institutions

A total of 13,831 responses were submitted during the survey period. Of those, 9,844 (71.2%) were from the Florida College System (FCS) and 3,987 (28.8%) were from the State University System (SUS). Of the 40 public institutions of higher education in Florida, 30 agreed to participate.

These tables include all responses received during the survey period, including from institutions that did not complete a participation agreement with FLVC. It is possible that those responses are user-error from the dropdown selection on the survey form, but all responses are presented as received in the software.

Additionally, student comments are included from the qualitative responses. These comments appear as they were submitted by the survey respondents, they have not been edited for grammar, spelling, or perspective. It is important to note that comments may seem out of context, or they may appear to disagree with the findings presented from time to time. The comments provided represent a range of responses since there were many qualitative replies in the survey. It is worth noting that what one student may believe is helpful, another student may dislike or find unfair. Please keep this in mind when reviewing the statements.

PARTICIPATING FLORIDA UNIVERSITIES

Institution	Frequency	Percent
Florida Atlantic University	639	16.0%
Florida Gulf Coast University	233	5.8%
Florida International University	323	8.1%
Florida Polytechnic University	143	3.6%
Florida State University	667	16.7%
New College of Florida	62	1.6%
University of Central Florida	165	4.1%
University of Florida	5	0.1%
University of North Florida	635	15.9%
University of South Florida	11	0.3%
University of West Florida	1,104	27.7%
Total	3,987	100.0%

PARTICIPATING FLORIDA COLLEGES

Institution	Frequency	Percent
Broward College	1,480	15.0%
Chipola College	89	0.9%
College of Central Florida	4	0.0%
Daytona State College	1	0.0%
Eastern Florida State College	387	3.9%
Florida Gateway College	1	0.0%
Florida Keys Community College	45	0.5%
Florida South Western State College	780	7.9%
Florida State College at Jacksonville	382	3.9%
Gulf Coast State College	2	0.0%
Hillsborough Community College	600	6.1%
Indian River State College	761	7.7%
Lake-Sumter State College	3	0.0%
Miami Dade College	1,779	18.1%
North Florida Community College	2	0.0%
Northwest Florida State College	70	0.7%
Palm Beach State College	1,003	10.2%
Pasco-Hernando State College	112	1.1%
Pensacola State College	3	0.0%
Santa Fe College	1	0.0%
Seminole State College of Florida	179	1.8%
South Florida State College	10	0.1%
St. Petersburg College	1,318	13.4%
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	740	7.5%
Tallahassee Community College	90	0.9%
Valencia College	2	0.0%
Total	9,844	100.0%

Section 2: Degree Level and Area of Study

Which degree are you seeking?

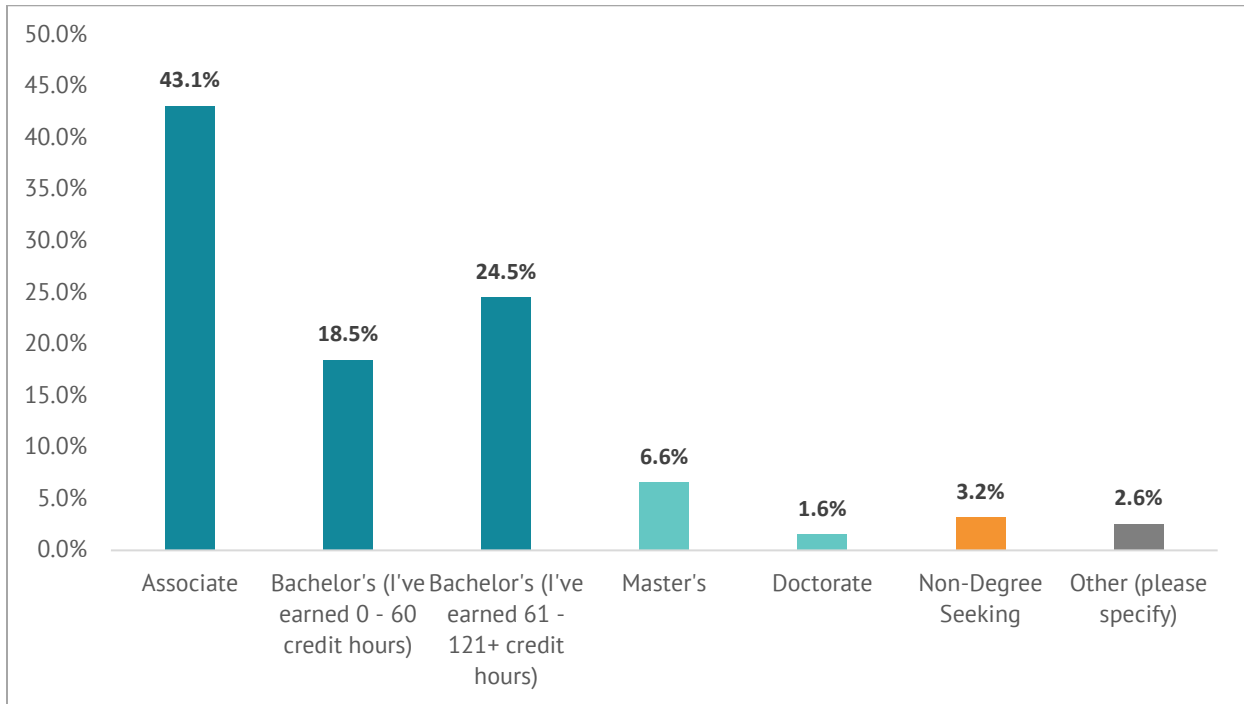
A plurality (43.1%) of students in the 2022 survey indicated that they are pursuing their associate degree. A combined 43.0% of students are working towards bachelor's degrees at either up to 60 credit hours (18.5%) or over 60 (24.5%). Taken together, the undergraduates in the 2022 survey account for 86.1% of the study population. Graduate students were also represented, with 6.6 % of the respondents working towards a master's degree, and 1.6% working towards their doctorate. Further, 3.2% were non-degree seeking, and 2.6% were "other."

For respondents who selected "other," the vast majority were seeking a variety of certificates or certifications. Additionally, many were seeking nursing degrees, followed by a fair number of students who were dual enrolled.

DEGREE LEVEL

	Frequency	Percent
Associate	5,961	43.1%
Bachelor's (I've earned 0 – 60 credit hours)	2,554	18.5%
Bachelor's (I've earned 61 – 121+ credit hours)	3,391	24.5%
Master's	912	6.6%
Doctorate	219	1.6%
Non-Degree Seeking	440	3.2%
Other (please specify)	354	2.6%
Total	13,831	100%

DEGREE LEVEL



The large plurality of associate degree students is an increase over 2016 and 2018, which each saw lower percentages of associate students, and higher percentages of bachelor's students, especially those with 61+ credit hours.

DEGREE LEVEL

Longitudinal Comparison

	2022	2018	2016
Associate	43.1%	24.3%	28.1%
Bachelor's (I've earned 0 – 60 credit hours)	18.5%	20.3%	21.3%
Bachelor's (I've earned 61 – 121+ credit hours)	24.5%	40.7%	37.4%
Master's	6.6%	8.7%	8.0%
Doctorate	1.6%	3.9%	2.9%

What area of study?

Once again, students are engaged in a wide variety of areas of study, though some areas are more prevalent than others. Responses less than 1% are excluded from this table. Healthcare, Business, Education, and Sciences of a wide variety are all well represented. For those who selected “other,” a majority were some type of associate degree or General Studies. This was followed by Veterinary Sciences, an almost equal amount of Undecided, then a few additional small clusters including Funeral Sciences, Dental Care, Forensics, and Marine Sciences.

AREAS OF STUDY

	Frequency	Percent
Health Professions and Related Programs	2,923	17.2%
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support services	2,612	15.4%
Education	1,302	7.7%
Computer and Information Sciences and Support services	1,116	6.6%
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	1,051	6.2%
Medical Science	1,003	5.9%
Psychology	890	5.2%
Engineering	534	3.1%
Social Sciences	517	3.0%
Other (please specify below)	509	3.0%
Public Administration and Social Service Profession	434	2.6%
Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Services	415	2.4%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	371	2.2%
Visual and Performing Arts	369	2.2%
Legal Professions and Studies	365	2.1%
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	285	1.7%
English Language and Literature/Letters	224	1.3%
Mathematics and Statistics	223	1.3%
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-Related Fields	222	1.3%
Technology Education/Industrial Arts	209	1.2%
Physical Sciences	195	1.1%

Section 3: Course Load

How many courses did you take?

Students were asked to indicate their course load for the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. This information enables us to understand their overall course loads for those terms and, for subsequent survey items where such information is pertinent, students who took no courses in a given semester are filtered out.

More than 50% of respondents were enrolled in between three and five courses. If expanded to two to six courses, more than 80% are represented.

COURSE LOAD

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	2,363	17.1%	798	5.8%
1	937	6.8%	1,421	10.3%
2	2,360	17.1%	2,837	20.5%
3	2,125	15.4%	2,499	18.1%
4	3,480	25.2%	3,432	24.8%
5	1,707	12.3%	1,879	13.6%
6	564	4.1%	616	4.5%
7	75	0.5%	127	0.9%
8	38	0.3%	41	0.3%
9	31	0.2%	29	0.2%
10	27	0.2%	25	0.2%
>10	124	0.9%	127	0.9%
Total	13,831	100.0%	13,831	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“I wanted to do 5 courses in Spring, after realizing the cost of the texts books I did three.”*
- *“I’m a single mom and I can only afford to take classes part time because at times the cost of books are just as much as my classes. I do not receive financial aid because I can not afford to have any loans. Instead of completing a degree that would normally take 2 yrs, it will take me 3-4 years. The cost for books are too high!”*

- “I’m from below the poverty line and taking a standard twelve credits for full time status in order to maintain financial aid only occasionally covers book costs fully. This can be a huge burden depending on what’s going on...”

How many of the courses required you to purchase textbooks or instructional materials?

Students were also asked how many courses they took that required purchasing a textbook or other instructional materials. For the fall term, there is a similar pattern to course load, overall, while the numbers of required books or instructional materials dipped slightly, overall, for the spring.

COURSES WITH REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	519	4.5%	797	6.1%
1	1,594	13.9%	2,417	18.6%
2	3,138	27.4%	3,599	27.6%
3	2,743	23.9%	2,813	21.6%
4	,2445	21.3%	2,261	17.4%
5	716	6.2%	812	6.2%
6	201	1.8%	209	1.6%
7	30	0.3%	42	0.3%
8	23	0.2%	18	0.1%
9	8	0.1%	11	0.1%
10	14	0.1%	15	0.1%
>10	37	0.3%	39	0.3%
Total	11,468	100.0%	13,033	100.0%

Student Comments:

- “When I was pursuing my RN degree...we had to purchase books and materials. At times one class would require more than one book, study guides and materials. It was very expensive and a hardship at times. I had to check with the Professor at times to find out what was absolutely necessary to afford the purchases.”
- “Lab fees were based off materials used in the lab which were mostly recycled. Fees still went up.”
- “Just this semester I could not afford the calculator, a HP CASIO 50G, for my BASIC AC/DC course, as well as the Introductory to Circuit Analysis 13th edition GLOBAL book. I had to borrow the money from an outside sourcing...”



Section 4: Spending Per Term

How much did your textbooks cost for the term?

(Note: Please consider all textbooks, both physical and e-books)

These tables exclude anyone who reported they took zero courses for each term. As noted in the body of the report, the amounts that students reported spending in 2022 are down, overall, compared to previous surveys.

TEXTBOOK COST PER TERM

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
\$0	532	5.1%	813	6.9%
\$1-100	1,231	11.8%	1,774	15.0%
\$101-200	2,514	24.2%	2,912	24.6%
\$201-300	2,413	23.2%	2,550	21.5%
\$301-400	1,722	16.5%	1,731	14.6%
\$401-500	958	9.2%	989	8.4%
\$501-600	483	4.6%	482	4.1%
\$601 or more	555	5.3%	589	5.0%
Total	10,408	100.0%	11,840	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“Man, the cost of my books each semester is equal to or above the cost of my tuition w/financial aid. That’s so backwards. Pearson, TI, etc. are leeches and abuse the system to screw money out of college students who can barely afford to attend in the first place. Financial aid doesn’t cover it...”*
- *“If I buy a textbook, it should include the cost of digital, I should not have to buy both. In some classes I bought the book, the only way to pass the open book test was to buy the digital book, then I had to buy 2 textbooks otherwise I would not pass the class. This does not make any sense.”*
- *“As a Dual Enrolled student, my textbooks were paid for by the School District...”*

Excluding textbooks, how much did you spend on required instructional materials for the term?

(including handbooks, guides, course packets, and other print or digital learning materials)

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS COST PER TERM

(Excluding Textbooks)

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
\$0	2,770	26.6%	3,240	27.4%
\$1-100	3,838	36.9%	4,363	36.9%
\$101-200	1,964	18.9%	2,184	18.5%
\$201-300	948	9.1%	999	8.4%
\$301-400	375	3.6%	458	3.9%
\$401-500	205	2.0%	231	2.0%
\$501-600	118	1.1%	135	1.1%
\$601 or more	190	1.8%	230	1.9%
Total	10,408	100.0%	11,840	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *"I spent over \$400.00 this Spring Term for a required membership with a healthcare organization to access their coding lab. I almost dropped the course because of this requirement."*
- *"For my classes, Adobe products are required. While I did get lucky with a discount provided by Adobe at the time of purchasing, it would be helpful to have a free or discounted option through the school as well. These products are essential to my success in almost every class I take and I have to pay for the Adobe products out of pocket."*
- *"I was almost not able to attend the nursing program because the first semester I was required to purchase the \$1800 "package" as well as pay \$1600 for my classes, hundreds more for other supplies and online access, physical, TB test, titers, and over \$100 for a background check and drug test."*
- *"In addition to textbook expense, my expenses also included art supplies for art classes. This was more expensive than my single textbook cost. \$200 for jewelry supplies and few hundred dollars each term for various art supplies."*
- *"I think spending 920 dollars for a SMALL packet of books for a 11 month nursing bridge program is borderline criminal. I find it very hard to believe there is any way possible to justify such an outrageous price. For someone who works full time and is trying to better himself for his own life as well as his daughter, 920 dollars for a book smaller than the Bible is a very difficult purchase to make."*

Section 5: Financial Aid

For each term, what percentage of your textbook costs is covered by financial aid? (of any kind)

Students were asked what percentage of textbook costs were covered by financial aid of any kind. More than one-half indicated that they do not receive financial aid or that none of those costs are covered. Approximately one-quarter of respondents have all such costs covered.

PERCENTAGE OF TEXTBOOK COSTS COVERED BY FINANCIAL AID

	Fall 2021		Spring 2022	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
I do not receive financial aid	3,342	32.1%	4,044	34.2%
None	2,525	24.3%	2,842	24.0%
Less than 25%	623	6.0%	648	5.5%
26% to 50%	523	5.0%	584	4.9%
51% to 75%	367	3.5%	420	3.6%
76% to 99%	402	3.9%	420	3.6%
All of my textbook costs	2,626	25.2%	2,882	24.3%
Total	10,408	100.0%	11,840	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“Without my GI Bill, I would not have been able to afford the textbooks necessary and these online programs that require you to buy a subscription for the course is ridiculous. They have individualized textbooks to the extent that without the subscription the textbook is pretty useless.”*
- *“It would be great if the PELL funding provided the book money to the student directly so they can choose where they buy the book.”*
- *“Since now textbook costs are not covered by my financial aid, I am more broke than before and textbooks are getting more expensive and harder to find cheaper versions of as I advance through my educational career.”*
- *“Since my textbooks are covered by grants and scholarships I am able to get them. If it were not for the grants I would only be able to purchase a fraction for the course material I need.”*
- *“All books costs are covered by VA funding but only if ordered through the bookstore. The bookstore is consistently slower and more expensive than amazon or off-campus bookstores.”*
- *“I have not been able to buy any textbooks this semester at all and I am struggling because of it. Last semester I rented a single textbook. I failed my nonparametric statistics class twice because of this as well. I can't get FAFSA because my parents make too much even though they don't offer financial contribution to my education. I work full time and go to school part to full time as well to even afford tuition and gas.”*

Section 6: Steps to Reduce Costs

In your academic career, what measures have you taken to reduce your required textbook costs?

When asked what measures they have taken to reduce required textbook costs, buying books from sources other than the campus bookstore and renting digital versions of textbooks are nearly tied as the top two steps students are taking. Many students are also buying used copies of their books on campus. Renting printed textbooks is another popular strategy.

For those who said “other,” the largest group of respondents said they seek out free copies of the books and materials. Many students said they do not buy the books or materials needed, followed closely by a group who shop around for the best prices. Slightly fewer students do not feel like they have any other options to reduce costs because there are required codes or components to allow them to submit homework. A few mentioned they receive financial aid which covers the costs, or that they were dual enrolled. A few use library resources and some said they do without classes either by selectively choosing courses that do not require textbooks or having to drop classes because the materials are too expensive.

STEPS STUDENTS TAKE TO REDUCE COSTS

	Frequency	Percent
Buy books from a source other than the campus bookstore	6,239	50.6%
Rent digital textbooks	6,221	50.5%
Buy used copies from the campus bookstore	4,973	40.4%
Rent printed textbooks	3,587	29.1%
Sell used books	2,347	19.0%
Share books with classmates	2,089	17.0%
I do not attempt to reduce textbook costs	1,506	12.2%
Other (please specify below)	1,132	9.2%
Rent only the digital textbook chapters needed for the course	1055	8.6%
Buy lifetime access to a digital version of a textbook	845	6.9%
Use a reserved copy from the campus library	784	6.4%
Total	30,778	100.0%



Student Comments:

- *“Find books at other libraries such as public or other universities.”*
- *“I’d like to rent more and sell back others but the books have (useless) scratch off codes or are wrapped in plastic and therefore can’t be sold back or used again. Other books are being used one semester and then outdated the next semester. It’s a scam- a racket.”*
- *“I buy the physical book in whatever platform it’s cheaper; Amazon, online bookstores, or the schools bookstore.”*
- *“Find older versions of the textbook online for free.”*
- *“My daughter and I are in college she is a semester behind me and we try to coordinate our classes so that the books are the same to save money.”*
- *“If I share a class with a roommate, we split the bill for the req. textbook.”*

Section 7: Textbook Acquisition

Where do you acquire most of your textbooks?

Fully one-half of students are purchasing textbooks from their campus bookstores. Unsurprisingly, Amazon is the second most common source. Smaller amounts of students acquire books directly from the publishers’ websites or borrow their books.

For those that selected “other,” a preponderance of students indicated they use online sites and sellers other than Amazon (e.g., Chegg, Abebooks, Thriftbooks.com, and eBay). Several students noted they shop around for the best price, which may include online or physical stores. Many go to bookstores near campus that are not the institution’s bookstore. Some said they locate free resources, or that instructors provide materials, or that they use libraries (campus and/or public). Finally, a few noted they are dual enrolled, and a few said they simply do not buy the textbooks.

WHERE STUDENTS ACQUIRE TEXTBOOKS

	Frequency	Percent
Campus bookstore or campus bookstore website	6,236	50.6%
Amazon	3,436	27.9%
Other (please specify below)	1,242	10.1%
Publisher website	1,052	8.5%
Borrowed from friends or colleagues	357	2.9%
Total	12,323	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“The trashcan after the final exam of a course one semester before I took it. Found over 8 books this way.”*
- *“Used my sister’s book she bought previously when she was at this college.”*
- *“Don’t buy the book/code because it’s too expensive and hope for the best.”*
- *“I have learned to pirate textbook and ebooks. and have successfully pirated many textbooks for myself and fellow students. If the textbooks were reasonably priced (no more than \$50 if it’s a hardcover, maybe even \$60 if it includes an online copy since I would be able to use a search function) and I actually got to keep the text then I would not have to resort to such means.”*
- *“Either Amazon, Chegg, or Bigwords.com”*
- *“I acquire my textbooks from campus bookstore or campus bookstore website as well as borrow from friends or colleagues.”*

Section 8: Textbook Purchased But Not Used

Of all the textbooks you have been required to purchase in your academic career, approximately how many were NOT used during your classes?

As noted in this report, the average number of textbooks purchased, but not used, during students’ academic careers dropped from 3.6 in 2018 to 2.6 in 2022.

TEXTBOOKS PURCHASED BUT NOT USED (Year Over Year)

2022	2.6
2018	3.6
2016	2.3
2012	1.6

TEXTBOOKS PURCHASED BUT NOT USED

	Frequency	Percent
None	3,884	31.5%
1	1,468	11.9%
2	1,847	15.0%
3	1,349	11.0%
4	1,004	8.2%
5	830	6.7%
6	448	3.6%
7	214	1.7%
8	232	1.9%
9	77	0.6%
10	478	3.9%

Student Comments:

- “I think the cost of textbooks is ridiculously expensive considering some students like myself, don’t receive financial aid and are paying for the classes out of pocket. It’s a waste that certain professors say the textbooks are mandatory to have/ required at the beginning of the semester. But then by the end of the semester we were only required to open the book MAYBE three times. It’s a waste of money, time, and resources.”*
- “I am a twenty-year-old mom with two kids thirteen months apart. I still live at home, and I am married. My husband supports me going out for a career. So, we spend the entire semester saving for my next semester classes. We barely make enough for me to take the classes. Between the cost of diapers, wipes, rice cereal, and other things needed plus bills it is hard to afford books. I always buy the books if they say we need to because I don’t want to not buy the book and we end up needing it. Every time I buy the book, other than this semester, I don’t need the book. They make us buy the book for the class, then we never use the book.”*
- “My financial aid will no longer cover the cost of my books as I am taking more courses. Textbooks are too expensive. I was registered for a class last spring and got all THREE required books, got to the class and said that none of those were required. Only one of the books was optional. I only got those books because the college said I needed them. Complete waste of my financial aid and I had to go back and pay for those books after the fact. I dropped the course and still paid \$150 for those books that weren’t even required by the professor.”*
- “In other countries its way cheaper to buy the exact same textbooks as the ones we use here. also, most of the textbooks we buy aren’t even necessary, but professors make us buy them anyway.”*
- “The cost of textbooks and instructional materials throughout my academic career has really made it difficult at times to get ahead of the coursework in general. For example, when purchasing all the recommended books through the school with financial aid only to find out that the teacher does not utilize the book and requires a different book which happens more times than you would think.”*

Section 9: Impact of Textbook Costs

In your academic career, has the cost of required textbooks caused you to:

Students were asked to select from a given list of options which measures they had taken to reduce their textbook costs. The main body of this report combined categories other than “Never” to produce a composite value of students who had ever taken these measures. A full breakdown is presented:

COST REDUCTION STRATEGIES

	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
Take fewer courses	6,208	56.3%	1,597	14.5%	2,155	19.6%	1,062	9.6%	11,022
Not register for a specific course	6,781	61.5%	1,487	13.5%	1,809	16.4%	945	8.6%	11,022
Drop a course	8,358	75.8%	1,249	11.3%	929	8.4%	486	4.4%	11,022
Withdraw from a course	8,745	79.3%	1,122	10.2%	737	6.7%	418	3.8%	11,022
Earn a poor grade because I could not afford to buy the textbook	7,451	67.6%	1,724	15.6%	1,298	11.8%	549	5.0%	11,022
Fail a course because I could not afford to buy the textbook	8,911	80.9%	1,097	10.0%	623	5.7%	391	3.6%	11,022
Not purchase the required textbook	5,129	46.5%	1,821	16.5%	2,298	20.9%	1,774	16.1%	11,022
Other (please specify below)	9,495	86.2%	447	4.1%	458	4.2%	622	5.6%	11,022

The most common measure taken is to not purchase the required textbook. This is followed by taking fewer courses, not registering for a specific course, earning a poor grade, and dropping a course.

For those who said “other,” a majority of students mentioned that the cost of textbooks has caused them to shop around for the best prices. Among other strategies, this includes looking for free downloads of similar materials, purchasing older versions of the textbook, or choosing digital copies even though the student prefers a physical copy. Many simply entered comments that they purchased the textbooks, or mentioned expensive textbook prices, and even expressed anger and frustration at a system that seems to value profits to industry (textbook publishers and/or higher-

ed) over making resources affordable to students. Several mentioned stress as an impact: having to take on additional jobs, choosing which bills not to pay, and even sometimes prioritizing books over food. Quite a few mentioned using financial aid, whether that be scholarships, grants, borrowing money, or relying on family to help with costs. A few mentioned timing, including needing to buy books later in the semester due to a lack of funds at the onset of the semester. Some were frustrated at purchasing books, only for the books to be used very little – or not at all – during the course. Some students shared resources, while others mentioned challenges in affording additional materials that may not be books but that are required, including access codes, calculators, and computers. A few others expressed that they had no other option but to purchase the textbooks or materials.

Student Comments:

- *“Due to the high prices of textbooks, I have changed my major. I can't afford the high prices of textbooks with my already growing student loan bill.”*
- *“I'm dropping out now.”*
- *“Caused me to have to work extra hours at work on top of school to make up costs.”*
- *“Unable to do homework.”*
- *“Specifically try to find teachers that I have taken before but I know do not require you to take a book or buy one because they provide sufficient information via lectures or study guides.”*
- *“Often I buy the next older version of the book. It is much cheaper and has mostly the same info.”*
- *“just use google instead of textbook.”*
- *“I can only afford to take a few classes at a time due to the cost of tuition, books, and other school expenses.”*
- *“Go without basic necessities, e.g. food, hygiene products, clothing.”*
- *“Go to the bookstore and pretend to be browsing to study from a textbook I couldn't afford.”*
- *“My mother had to charge some of my books on her credit card. She is disabled and lives on a fixed income. It was difficult to accommodate the cost of the books on our tight budget.”*
- *“Borrow textbook from campus library, but it's only available for 1hr as long as it's not checked out by another student already.”*
- *“I am an international student and I cannot withdraw from class or drop class. Also, I must purchase book to pass the class.”*
- *“... ask my classmates for a picture of the chapter so i can do my work.”*
- *“it's absolutely ridiculous what some of these professors are doing and everything points to either them or the school are getting kickback from the textbook companies. You can buy a used book, but most of the courses that I have attended ...have required access to the online content which normally costs more than a new textbook. Then the turn around and use the online content for only one or two small "evaluations" which could have been done through BlackBoard. I really feel that students are being taken advantage of ... when it comes to textbooks.”*
- *“I can't take a class without a book so if I want to obtain my degree I have no choice but to figure out how to get the money somehow.”*

Section 10: Textbook Rentals

Would you rent one or more of your required textbooks if it saved you money?

More than 60% of students are in favor of textbook rentals, either printed or digital. Smaller numbers prefer only one or the other, though twice as many of those prefer print over digital.

WOULD STUDENTS RENT TEXTBOOKS?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, either printed or digital	6,929	62.9%
Yes, only if printed	1,584	14.4%
Yes, only if digital	862	7.8%
No	679	6.2%
Maybe	968	8.8%
Total	11,022	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *"Renting" digital copies of textbooks is a scam. Originally some of the cost of textbooks was from printing a book out. There's no paper in digital copies. A publisher makes one version, then can sell as many as they want. Only having 90 days or 180 days for a digital copy that costs the same as a regular book should be illegal.*
- *"Some of the textbooks required for the classes for my degree are ridiculously expensive considering most of them are digital copies and the only thing I get is a piece of paper with a code and often cheaper options of the books are not available to me because that digital code is required to access required homework so there is no renting the textbook because rental books have already used codes."*
- *"I am a technical theatre student and would someday like to teach high school theatre. I (selectively) purchase theatre textbooks as opposed to renting them because I would someday like to have a classroom library of theatre books and plays. This helps me reason with the cost."*
- *"I do not like digital books but something they are cheaper than paper books. I also would prefer to rent my textbook if I know I will not want to keep it after I complete a certain class."*
- *"Renting textbooks was a money saver, but a time waster. I spent so much time proving I returned a book after I was done, that I might as well have bought it."*

Section 11: Fee-based Program

Have you participated in a fee-based program (one that charged your student account for textbooks or digital course materials) at your college or university?

A majority of respondents were not sure if such a program exists at their institution, while a combined 26.4% are either not opting in, or stated such a program is not available to them. A small group of respondents did participate in a fee-based cost savings program.

HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN A FEE-BASED PROGRAM FOR TEXTBOOKS?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, I participated in such a program	2,075	18.8%
No, I opted not to participate in such a program	1,336	12.1%
No such program was available at my college or university	1,574	14.3%
I am not sure if such a program was available at my college or university	6,037	54.8%
Total	11,022	100.0%

If yes, do you believe the fee-based program reduced your textbook costs overall?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	969	46.8%
No	1,102	53.2%
Total	2,071	100.0%

Student Comments:

Believe-Yes

- *“At a reduced cost I was able to purchase other materials needed for the course that were not books.”*
- *“When fee-based programs include all of the materials in the cost of the course itself it is a much lower cost for the materials than buying the materials separately.”*

- *“I THINK it saved me money - but I’m not sure. I was going to buy a used book on eBay, but it seemed like the campus bookstore cost was going to be about the same, so I went with the bookstore since it would be billed to my account and covered by my student loan directly.”*
- *“It did reduce the price, but I had a terrible experience with it. Because it is not fully a part of the campus bookstore, the bookstore cannot help with any problems associated with it even though they sell it to me. Last semester I paid for an e book, but I was unable to access it the whole semester. I was unable to get help from the campus bookstore and I was unable to reach the publisher as well. So I was out that money plus I was out study material as well.”*
- *“yes and no, I do not agree how you have to be all in on the program or not. Last semester, I was unaware of this. Only one of my classes required a book out of four. I got charge \$ per credit for all of the classes even when they did not require a book. I found this to be very unfair.”*

Believe-No

- *“The program’s textbook price was only a few dollars cheaper than the publishers, and didn’t provide the code needed for online assignments.”*
- *“Didn’t realize I would automatically be opted-in to the program. I thought it was the reverse where opting out was the default and I would have to manually opt-in... I already had my required textbooks since I was taking classes that used the same ones for both courses in a series...So I was charged for materials that I already had that I could have used for other school supplies.”*
- *“Digital textbooks make it more difficult to review the material and learn. I can’t bring it to class with me without having to bring my whole laptop. We need to be given a choice between digital or paper.”*
- *“I ended up spending a little less money but spent way more unnecessary time trying to navigate the difficult systems.”*

Of those who participated, a majority did not believe that their fee-based program reduced their overall textbook costs.

If you opted not to participate in such a fee-based program, why not?

A plurality of students indicated that they were not aware of the program. Other common responses included those who wanted to shop around or did not like the idea. Nearly 11% could not afford the program, and fewer found it not convenient or did not understand the program. Of those who said “other,” most said they did not need the program primarily because they either received financial aid or were dual enrolled. A few mentioned they preferred physical textbooks, whereas the program only provided digital books.

IF YOU DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN A FEE-BASED PROGRAM, WHY NOT?

	Frequency	Percent
I was not aware of the program	372	28.1%
I wanted to shop to try find materials at a lower rate	291	22.0%
I did not like the idea	241	18.2%
I could not afford it	142	10.7%
The program was not convenient for me	117	8.8%
I did not understand how to participate	99	7.5%
Other (please specify)	63	4.8%
Total	1,325	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“Because it incentivizes textbook companies to overcharge students and I would not be able to keep the textbook. What is the point if I do not have ownership and am not able to reference my own materials in my field of study...”*
- *“I did not like the idea. In our case, we had to opt-out. Students who forgot to opt out were charged much more than other available options cost. In my opinion and in the opinion of many of my peers, these programs are predatory and merely a profit center for the university and bookstore.”*
- *“Because most of the time the professors do not use the books because we have the same material in the PowerPoints that the professors provide, but if i do need the books id get it digitally from chegg.”*
- *“More expensive than printed rental.”*
- *“This program is not available to graduate students.”*
- *“The program cost was not worth it, when some courses didn't require materials and others could be purchased for less than the program cost.”*
- *“I could almost always find them cheaper myself and i was not pleased that they were charging me without really trying to inform me, It took way too many steps to opt out. Seems suspicious.”*

Although we are aware that such programs are not available at all institutions at this time, this question was presented to the statewide audience as a whole. A comparison of selected institutions with such inclusive access programs did show higher participation, but the overall pattern of awareness and participation was consistent with the statewide data. Further analysis of this data will be forthcoming in an additional paper in the future.

Section 12: Study Aids

Select the top three digital study aids you find to be the most useful to support your learning.

When asked to rank their top three preferences for study aids, interactive practice questions were favored by nearly two-thirds of respondents, with 65.9% of students indicating it as their preferred study aid in their learning. Video (59.7%), PowerPoint slide shows (50.9%), and flashcards (44.3%) were the next most popular aids.

Of the respondents who selected “other,” nearly equal numbers of students said “None” or “I don’t use digital aids,” compared to students who indicated some form of “tutoring other than online tutoring provided by the institution.” This tutoring was often a type of in-person tutoring, one-on-one tutoring, and/or other online tutoring. Just behind that was reading or interacting with physical books and materials. Following closely was studying with someone or a group in person. A few students used other online resources or found writing or using study guides as helpful aids.

MOST POPULAR STUDY AIDS

	Frequency	Percent
Interactive practice questions	7,266	65.9%
Flashcards	4,880	44.3%
PowerPoint slide shows	5,613	50.9%
Video	6,575	59.7%
Audio	2,219	20.1%
Animations	2,367	21.5%
Interactive “try it now” activities	3,935	35.7%
Online study groups	1,423	12.9%
Online tutoring system provided by the college	2,040	18.5%
Other (please specify below)	463	4.2%

Student Comments:

- *“Do not like digital textbooks. Our professors are good at giving us online study guides and practice tests through Canvas, our online student study/test-taking app.”*
- *“Ability to highlight in e-books.”*
- *“I do not find any of these activities useful. I learn best through detailed texts that I can cross-reference with other sources. I strongly dislike being forced to engage in these study aids.”*
- *“Looking up topics online.”*

- *“I prefer to buy textbooks in my fields, as I am a heavy note-taker as it helps me process the information.”*
- *“Material distilled by the professor. The “Survival Guide” ... is a perfect example. I have gotten 100% on both tests thus far despite not owning the textbook.”*
- *“The few times I was able to put my questions into words, the TAs and professors were helpful.”*
- *“YouTube is often my first choice when I find the instructor has failed to convey a concept effectively, or the textbook for the course fails to provide a succinct delivery on a topic.”*
- *“Free in person tutoring provided by the college.”*

Section 13: Paper Copies

In addition to having digital access, is having the option to purchase a low-cost paper copy of your textbooks important to you?

Students overwhelmingly indicated that having paper copies is still very important to them.

IS A LOW-COST PAPER COPY OF YOUR TEXTBOOK IMPORTANT TO YOU?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9,084	82.4%
No	1,938	17.6%
Total	11,022	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“As an older student (49) with eyesight that doesn't realize how much I need it, I would pay an arm and a leg for an actual book that I can turn the pages in. Digital books just aren't as effective for me.”*
- *“I need print versions of my textbooks due to medical reasons, but the prices and availability of my course texts sometimes prevent me from obtaining print versions.”*
- *“I prefer to have printed text...i cannot read on a digital screen. it hurts my eyes and causes me to not focus.”*
- *“While I'm fortunate enough to afford some of the costs, I'd really appreciate it if the universities would continue to offer physical copies, even if they finally figure out how to make online textbooks since it's a nice break for the eyes.”*

Section 14: Open Educational Resources

Of the number of courses that you took in the fall and spring, how many textbook(s) or other instructional materials (sometimes called OERs) were provided for you at no cost?

More than one-half of students surveyed had no OERs provided to them, However, the fact that more than 44% of students indicated that they were offered at least one OER is a promising finding and worth tracking in future versions of this survey.

HOW MANY OERS WERE PROVIDED TO YOU AT NO COST?

	Frequency	Percent
0	6,130	55.6%
1	1,950	17.7%
2	1,356	12.3%
3	587	5.3%
4	360	3.3%
5	190	1.7%
6	122	1.1%
7	48	0.4%
8	53	0.5%
9	29	0.3%
10	68	0.6%
11	8	0.1%
12	13	0.1%
13	4	0.0%
14	0	0.0%
15	2	0.0%
16	3	0.0%
>16	99	0.9%
Total	11,022	100.0%

Student Comments:

- *“The highest mark I have ever gave a professor was the class where they had an open source text book for free.”*



- *“I have been looking for classes only that have zero textbook costs. This helps me save my grant money for future classes.”*
- *“I took Philosophy last semester and the instructor taught us using books that were available to us free online. What a great idea.”*
- *“Whenever I see that one of my new classes is using OpenStax I have sigh of relief.”*
- *“...my grown daughter in Colorado is attending college where all her book materials are provided through OERs. As a full-time student with no income right now, every dollar helps to feed and shelter me and my family.”*

Section 15: Personal Stories About the Impact of Costs

If you would like to share a personal story about the impact of the costs of textbooks and instructional materials is having on you, please do so below.

Students were given the opportunity to provide their personal experiences regarding the impact of textbooks and instructional materials in a free text box. Though most students did not provide a story, more than 2,200 did.

These data were analyzed and lumped into various qualitative categories. The largest group was General Comments, with large subcategories including:

- Many comments about textbooks being very expensive for them.
- Many about the publishing industry and higher education textbook practices being viewed by them as predatory and profiting off college students who are trying to better themselves and get an education, many of whom have minimal income.
- Some positive comments from students who were thankful for conscientious instructors, for employer tuition reimbursement, etc.
- A few believed the cost of books and materials should be included with tuition.

The second largest group mentioned the financial difficulties of purchasing textbooks, only to have those books either not be used at all or used very little.

Nearly the same number of students included financial aid-related statements, including:

- How they were able to afford textbooks thanks to scholarships, grants, or money from parents.
- Being dual enrolled.
- How they are not able to pay due to a lack of financial aid.
- A few mentioned directly the change in Bright Futures no longer covering textbooks and how that posed a hardship.

Slightly fewer talked about their preference or need for using physical books due to learning styles or future professional needs. They also mentioned liking the ability to have a physical book to reference later, versus the digital texts with limited online access and typically available for one semester.

The next largest category of responses is about the expenses and requirements of not only textbooks but also additional materials and tools, most often in the form of access codes required for completing and submitting homework and/or tests.

More than a few, unfortunately, mentioned that textbook costs forced them to take fewer classes, thereby potentially delaying their graduation dates. Some in that group even mentioned they may need to drop out completely due to the high textbook costs.

Categories with smaller numbers of responses, but still important, included:

- Sacrifices made to afford textbooks such as paying bills late, giving up food and groceries, having to add debt on credit cards, and other stressful choices.
- Financial challenges of being single, being a single parent, or being a parent in a dual-parent family and the various financial challenge each of those situations posed.
- The difficulties of working one or more jobs to pay for needed expenses, and then not having time or energy to devote to homework and studies.

Student Comments:

- *“I think that books and any materials needed for class should be included in the tuition...students are struggling in having money for living. Books and online access are definitely very expensive.”*
- *“I am a dual enrolled high school student so having the text book cost waived to me is very important and is an incentive for me to continue to take college courses via dual enrollment.”*
- *“Its hard enough to pay for food and rent and college so trying to buy books means I have to go without medically necessary medicine or not eat.”*
- *“I even had to take a year and a half off from college to work 2.5 jobs just to make enough money to try to finish my degree with tuition fees and textbook costs. Lab codes and/or any code required material is the WORST since they are easily \$100 each and are one time use items. It is a complete drain on any strained bank account.”*
- *“There was one particular semester (my final semester) where my family and I had to utilize our local food bank regularly to put healthy foods in the house because my textbook costs exceeded \$500 which was every bit of money I had left in savings and checking accounts.”*
- *“I am a mother with children in school and I am trying to obtain my degree, but the cost of a textbook is almost as much as paying for a monthly grocery bill...Everyone in college is not just graduating from High School.”*
- *“I am fortunate that my employer has a tuition reimbursement program that includes textbooks.”*

- *“On one of my classes for digital marketing I asked for help for my book but my professor kicked me out because I didn’t have the textbook.”*
- *“I’ve always been fortunate enough to qualify for FA so I’ve thankfully never have had to pay out of pocket for any supplies or textbooks needed. Without the assistance I would never have gotten my AA because I simply would never have been able to afford it.”*
- *“My graduate professors are actually pretty good at assigning materials that are both cheap and useful to completing the course.”*



Appendix B: References

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