

# Keeping the Lid on Textbook Costs through a Textbooks-on-Reserve Program

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## NUTRITION INFORMATION

Textbooks-on-reserve programs take on renewed relevance in light of their sustainable economic, environmental, and social benefits. These agile programs can be readily customized to accommodate each institution's unique culture and changing needs.

Open educational resources (OERs) and online materials address many sustainability concerns, although there are some instances where they cannot substitute for the hard-copy printed book. The program is easy to start small and grow as appropriate. It can also be enhanced and cultivated through textbook and other donations.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Provides teachable moments that set examples of sustainability practice applied in everyday life.
- Demonstrates visible role of library in providing alternatives to meet student needs.
- Provides opportunity to be more inclusive for accommodating ADA needs, for those who have different learning styles, or for those who prefer print for other reasons.

## NUMBER SERVED

Program can be scaled according to need and budget.

## COOKING TIME

Include planning time for materials processing at least 2 months before semester starts.

## DIETARY GUIDELINES

Faculty and students have traditionally relied on textbooks as common ingredients for successful learning. Textbooks can be expensive, physically cumbersome, or simply not purchased. Success or failure at scavenging for access to course materials can determine a student's performance in class. Students on ramen noodle budgets have been known to sacrifice textbook purchases for food and other priorities. Students may not always see the return on investment of individually purchasing textbooks that are sometimes only marginally used.

The program addresses sustainability as follows:

- **Economic.** Textbooks on reserve can accommodate disparities in timing of student fund availability, such as students who may be waiting for aid or paychecks.
- **Environmental.** Since paper is one of the major components in landfills, textbooks on reserve can help save ink, paper, trees, landfill space, and labor. One bite at a time, the project assists in decreasing these numbers.

- **Social.** The program offers a seat at the table to everyone by increasing availability of materials for those who otherwise may not have them. It provides critical textbook access for specialized scenarios such as commuters, transfers, late-adds, publisher shortages, and out-of-stock materials.

## INGREDIENTS AND EQUIPMENT

- Funding from library or other sponsor
- Access to course materials list from bookstore or registrar
- Materials processing time and effort
- Communication time and tools to promote program to faculty and students
- Reporting ability for assessment

## PREPARATION

Academic libraries can implement a short-term 2-hour textbook loan service for highly enrolled classes. The library or other sponsor (e.g., provost, student government, library friends group, alumni, etc.) provides seed money each semester for the textbooks-on-reserve program and is acknowledged in program announcements. Over time, a growing number of books are purchased, providing just-in-time help for students at point of need. The program provides teachable moments in encouraging a sustainable, responsible waste-

not ethos, while providing visibility for the library and recognition for the sponsor.

### COOKING METHOD

Basic steps include the following:

1. Library requests the list of top ten enrolled classes from registrar or bookstore and identifies associated course materials.
2. Library staff researches materials to determine whether the library already owns them.
3. Library orders the appropriate course materials and processes them on a timely basis before the semester starts.
4. Information about the textbooks available on reserve is shared in as many places as possible, including online newsletters, circulation desk, and bulletin boards. It is emailed to faculty to include in their syllabi and share with students.
5. Usage statistics are generated and shared with the library and sponsors.

### CHEF'S NOTES

A textbooks-on-reserve program can be a relatively low-investment, high-reward service contributing to sustainability and adding a fresh ingredient for student success. The program can provide a safety valve in a struggling student's perceived pressure cooker environment.

Textbooks-on-reserve programs strengthen connections across library stakeholder groups (e.g., faculty, students, staff, administration, alumni, friends of the library, etc.),

contributing to stronger overall student retention and support networks.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Caplinger, Alexa. "In Second Year, Textbook Reserve Program Doubles in Size." News at Rider University, October 13, 2016. <https://www.rider.edu/news/2017/12/30/second-year-textbook-reserve-program-doubles-size>.

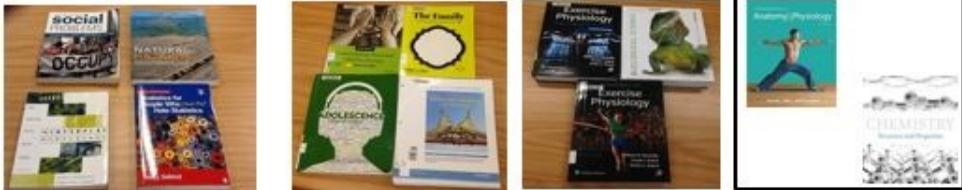
Greiner, Tony. "All Textbooks in the Library! An Experiment with Library Reserves." *Library Philosophy and Practice*, article 838 (2012). <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/838>.

Murray, Peter. "Textbooks on Reserve Program at Miami University." *Disruptive Library Technology Jester* (blog), 2007, last updated January 20, 2011. <https://dljtj.org/article/textbooks-on-reserve/>.

Thompson, Hilary H., and Jennifer E. M. Cotton. "Top Textbooks on Reserve: Creating, Promoting, and Assessing a Program to Help Meet Students' Need for Affordable Textbooks." *Journal of Access Services* 14, no. 2 (2017): 53–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15367967.2016.1257916>.

## Textbook Library Reserve Partnership Announced

Textbooks used in highly enrolled courses will be available for 2 hour loan from Drake Library through new partnership with the Friends of Drake Library.



**Some of the most widely-used textbooks will be available for two-hour loan from Drake Memorial Library this Fall.**

**The textbook loans are limited to in-library use and do not include supplementary online access. The program is designed to assist students who need short-term access to a print textbook. It does not replace purchasing texts, but can bridge a critical need during school start-up and beyond. Textbooks included in the project will be available from the Library Circulation desk with current student ID. The selected texts are valued at nearly \$2000.**

**Use will be tracked for possible expansion of the program. Thank you for helping to get the word out about this library service!**

**Figure.** Textbooks-on-Reserve flyer