



Online software adds to students' plight...

Why Do College Textbook Costs Keep Climbing?

The average college textbook costs a student \$84.14. Students buy an average of 5.8 textbooks per semester. That averages \$488 per semester or just under \$1,000 per academic year.

These are the results of an annual survey for CampusBooks.com.

Some Cost Even More

In disciplines such as biology and chemistry, one textbook can exceed \$200. In the 1980s, those textbooks were just as thick and colorful and usually cost \$40–\$60. Since the cost of paper and printing has actually gone down, why has the cost soared?

Students Pay the Bill

One problem is that market forces are not at work. It is the professor that the textbook company has to charm and the students who have to pay.

Some professors do not consider the cost of their textbook in their decision.

And with digital bells-and-whistles added over these last 20 years, it's ironic that the exorbitant cost of a textbook today is due not to printing, but to the many electronic ancillaries companies tout to professors.

Quasi-Learning to Blame?

Many of today's textbooks—especially general education books used by high numbers of students across the nation—offer online tutoring, online practice quizzes, the actual quizzes with grading, and even total testing.

More Online Offerings

This is in addition to ready-made PowerPoint presentations and short video clips that can be downloaded from the textbook company's website.

To a professor at a big research university who is burdened with teaching a large section of 300 or more students (but really wants to spend all his time

doing research), the textbook company has the perfect answer.

The company provides the canned lessons and testing and the students pay for these digital extras through the required textbook that now costs four times more than it should.

Need to Cut Corners

With the average college student taking 5½ years to complete a bachelor's degree—primarily because 60–70% of students change majors at least once—the average cost of college textbooks can approach \$5,000.

Since rising tuition is beyond their control, more and more students are cutting corners on textbooks.

Talk About Depreciation

According to CampusBooks.com, the average textbook depreciates 40% the first semester and 60% after two semesters. Textbook companies often produce new editions every two years, based on unnecessary and trivial changes. This drops the sell-back value of the prior edition to zero.

Access Code Required

Editor's note: Many of today's college textbooks include a license access code that is required to unlock the accompanying online materials.

This license key expires at the end of the semester, necessitating the purchase of a new book and reducing the resale value of last semester's textbook to zero, even if there have been no changes in the book.

New or Used

The CampusBooks.com survey revealed that 25% of students buy new and 67% buy used textbooks. This leaves some students who go without a textbook, often attempting to find the content online.

Today, 55% rent new or used books. Freshmen tend to buy new books, while

seniors increasingly rent their books. In the freshman year, textbook costs average \$572 per semester, dropping to \$421 in the senior year.

Digital Media a Bad Choice

eTexts have been a massive failure in students' eyes. Although the computer-industrial complex keeps hyping digital media, students began turning away from electronics to paper well before 2014. This new survey conducted by Campbell Rinker for CampusBooks.com sampled American college students from May 5–10, 2016.

Print Preferred

The number of students who owned a laptop dropped 8% from 2014. E-reader use was down 22%. This confirms earlier surveys in 2014 that found that 80% of students preferred print to screen.

Difference Makers

The solution to the exorbitant textbook scam lies squarely in the hands of professors.

There are new “publishers” appearing who will provide very inexpensive textbooks that can be downloaded cheaply or bought at minimal cost, printed on-demand.

As the cost of higher education in public institutions skyrockets, this is one place where professors sensitive to the economic plight of students can make a difference.

Thanks to Dr. John Richard Schrock of Emporia State University for keeping us up-to-date on this important subject.

Labor Day

Copresco will be closed Monday, September 4 for Labor Day. Enjoy the last holiday of the summer with your family and friends.



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Address Correction Requested



The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.



A comment made at a recent chamber of commerce meeting: "Advertising really brings fast results. Yesterday we advertised for a security guard and last night we were robbed."



Benny: "Who's your all-time favorite fiction writer?" Murray: "My accountant."



A small town doctor was famous in the area for always catching large fish. One day while he was on one of his frequent fishing trips he got a call that a



woman at a neighboring farm was giving birth. He rushed to her aid and delivered a healthy baby boy. The farmer had nothing to weigh the baby with so the doctor used his fishing scales. The baby weighed 22 lbs. 10 oz.

John and Judy took their two-year-old daughter Madison to the home improvement store. Eventually, she got tired of



walking, and John let her ride on his shoulders. As he walked, Madison began pulling his hair. Although he asked her to stop several times, she kept on. Getting annoyed, he scolded, "Madison! Stop that!" "But, Daddy" she replied, "I'm just trying to get my gum back."



What not to say to a police officer: "Boy you're good. I'll bet you had to do at least 85 to keep up with me."



During his first year of teaching summer school geometry to tenth-graders, Mr. Olson was frustrated with the lack of effort in the class. Trying to make the group more interactive, he asked, "Who can define a polygon?" The reply was, "A dead parrot."


An employee met with his boss about a raise. The employee said, "There are three other companies after me." "Really, which ones?" the boss replied. "The phone company, the gas company, and the credit card company."



A doctor picked up his car from the mechanic and said, "Your fee is several times more per hour than we get paid for medical care." "Yeah, but you see doc, you have always had the same model. It hasn't changed since Adam. But we have to keep up to speed with the new models coming every month."



Two cab drivers met in a pub. One asked the other, "Why did you paint one side of your cab red and the other side blue?" "Well," the other cabbie responded, "when I get into an accident, you should see how all the witnesses contradict each other."



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