

Cut it Out!

Slashing Course Material Costs in Higher Ed without Sacrificing Quality

Maikel Alendy, Senior Instructional Designer / Instructor
Lergia Olivo, Instructional Design Manager
FIU Online



Who We Are



Maikel Alendy

Senior Instructional Designer
Instructor, Honors College



Lergia Olivo

Instructional Design Manager



Learning goals for this session:

- Discuss the average cost of course materials in college courses.
- Examine ways in which institutions are approaching cost reduction in course materials.
- Assemble a list of resources available to faculty and designers to help design high-quality courses with cost in mind.



Numbers at FIU

54,000 Number of students attending FIU in Spring 2016

#1 Passing rate for the College of Law on the Florida Bar Exam in 2015 and 2016

10 among the 10 largest public universities in the United States

1 in nation in awarding bachelor's and master's degrees to Hispanic students

200,000 Number of Panther alumni around the world

Numbers at FIU Online

833 Faculty



970 Unique
Online Courses



35,253 Students

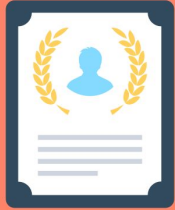


39 Degree
Programs

21 Undergraduate
18 Graduate



26% Student
Credit Hours



Quality Matters Initiative

300+ Quality Matters certified courses

Ranked 2nd in the U.S. in certified courses

1st among all public institutions

QUALITY MATTERS
P R O G R A M

QM



A banner image showing a campus scene with palm trees, a large building with 'FIU' on top, and a blue flag with a yellow and white logo. The text 'FIU Online Teams' is overlaid in large white font.

FIU Online Teams

- **Instructional Design Teams:** Faculty collaboration
- **Multimedia Team:** Creation of video, graphic design, and other multimedia elements
- **Support Services Team:** Student and faculty technical support
- **Technology Team:** Online learning technology support and maintenance
- **Marketing and Recruitment Team:** Market programs and enroll students for fully-online programs

Faculty:

**How much does your
course textbook(s) cost?**



\$200.00

What does this get you?

Dell - Inspiron 11.6" Laptop - Intel Celeron - 4GB Memory - 32GB eMMC Flash Memory - Bali blue

Model: I31620003BLU SKU: 5618116  3.8 (8) 17 Questions, 18 Answers



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**What's the highest
textbook cost
you've seen?**

<https://padlet.com/lolivo/textbookcosts>



New survey finds nearly half of college students go hungry

PAT SCHNEIDER | The Capital Times | pschneider@madison.com Oct 7, 2016



FEATURED ON CAP TIMES

Ron Johnson says he will move forward with any Clinton Supreme Court nominees that are 'strongly vetted'

Resolution would allow residents to vote on sidewalk construction in some Madison neighborhoods

Issue advocacy groups pour money into Wisconsin's 14th Senate race

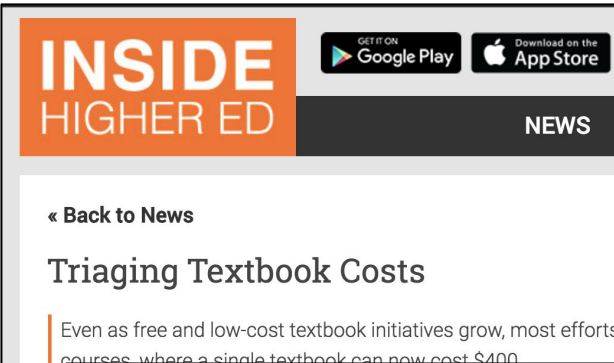
Tammy Baldwin says FBI director's appointment is a setback



Survey Highlights

- **3,765** students, across 8 community colleges and 26 four-year colleges in 12 states
- **48%** of respondents reported food insecurity in the previous month.
- Of these, **22%** reported circumstances that qualify them as hungry.

We know there's an affordability problem...



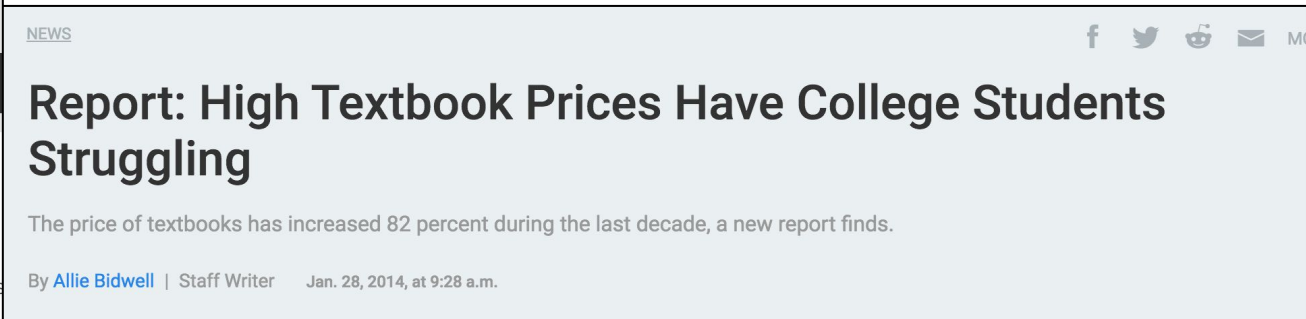
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Triaging Textbook Costs

Even as free and low-cost textbook initiatives grow, most efforts focus on courses where a single textbook can now cost \$400.



NEWS

Report: High Textbook Prices Have College Students Struggling

The price of textbooks has increased 82 percent during the last decade, a new report finds.

By [Allie Bidwell](#) | Staff Writer Jan. 28, 2014, at 9:28 a.m.

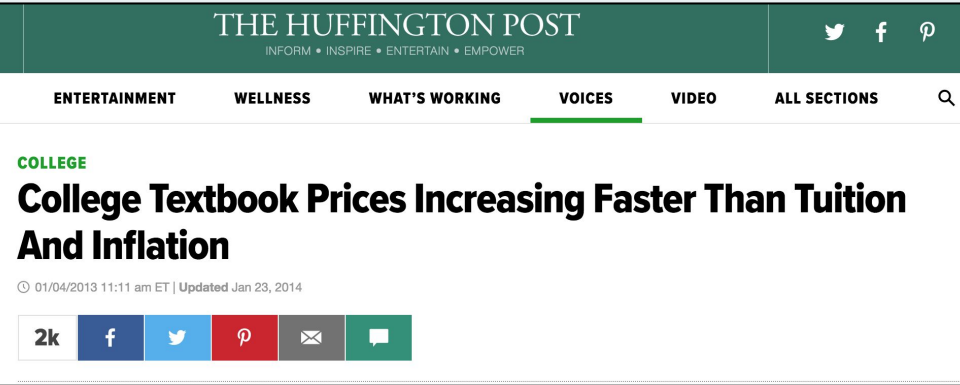


College Textbook Prices Have Risen 1,041 Percent Since 1977

By [BEN POPKEN](#)

books and supplies \$125

▶ How Rising Textbook Prices Mirror Rising Drug Costs 3:15



THE HUFFINGTON POST
INFORM • INSPIRE • ENTERTAIN • EMPOWER

ENTERTAINMENT WELLNESS WHAT'S WORKING **VOICES** VIDEO ALL SECTIONS

COLLEGE

College Textbook Prices Increasing Faster Than Tuition And Inflation

01/04/2013 11:11 am ET | Updated Jan 23, 2014

2k

FIU's 2020 & Florida's 2025 Plans

- FIU's Beyond Possible 2020 Plan calls for an improvement and increased enrollment in online education, with an emphasis on incentivizing the **adoption of low-cost textbooks** (Strategy 3B, pg. 20).
- State of Florida's 2025 Strategic Plan calls for a **reduction on the cost of educational materials for students** (Strategy 2.1, pg. 13).



Online Education
2025 Strategic Plan

November 5, 2015

Affordability Counts Framework





What is Affordability Counts?

- It's an initiative to recognize faculty who are actively making changes to reduce the cost of course materials to students.
- Faculty self-identify as teaching courses that contain course materials that are \$60 or under (total out-of-pocket expenses for students).
- A committee then reviews the course syllabus to ensure that total cost of materials are at or under the \$60 threshold.
- Courses that meet the target price and the selection criteria then receive a recognition known as the 'Affordability Counts' medallion.



Affordability Counts Goals

- Respond to rising costs of higher education and course materials
- Address FIU's 2020 and Florida's 2025 plans
- Recognize faculty actively making efforts to reduce costs
- Provide a searchable database of "affordable" course materials



How is it different?

- **Other affordability initiatives usually require the use of OERs**
 - OERs are the best...however, obtaining a completely free course is hard to do.
- **You can have materials that cost up to \$60**
 - What if there's a GREAT course material that you want to use, but it costs a couple of bucks?
\$60 is still affordable for students
 - Gives faculty a little bit of leeway (ability to use low-cost publishers)
- **No incentives** - \$0.00 spent on stipends to faculty
- **Builds up a database of affordable course materials**
 - Affordable materials are shared with others on a searchable website.



History of Affordability Counts

- April 2016: Program 'sneak peak' at distance education conference
- **June 2016: Official launch of Affordability Counts program**
- August 2016: 1st Award Session
- **October 2016: Affordability Counts Day**
- January 2017: 2nd Award Session
- June 2017: 3rd Award Session
- June 2017: OpenStax Partnership Begins
- August 2017: 4th Award Session

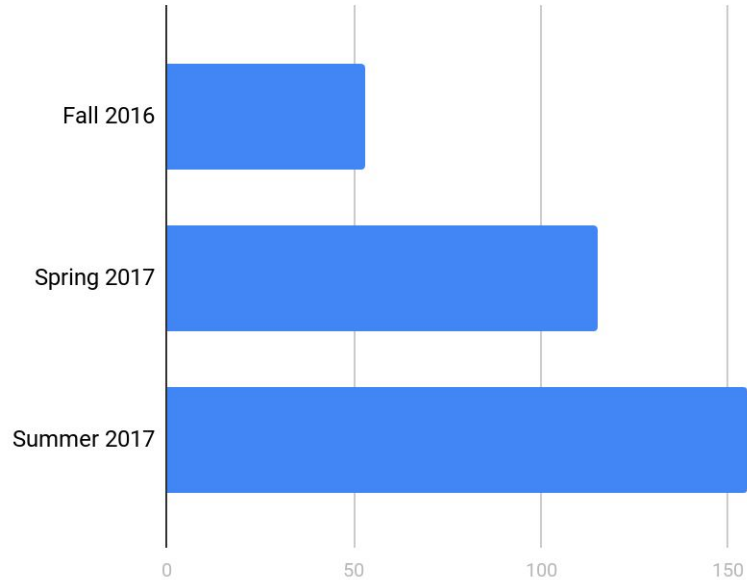




Stats

- Program kicked off June 2016
- We've held 3 award sessions
 - Fall '16
 - Spring '17,
 - Summer '17
- Since then, **155** courses now carry the Affordability Counts Medallion

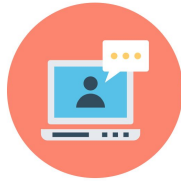
Total Medallions Awarded



Award Process



Faculty's course
total cost is \$60 or
less



Faculty submits
course on
lowcost.fiu.edu



Committee reviews
course



Faculty receives
recognition and
can display
Medallion in
syllabus & LMS



Selection Criteria

- The total cost of course materials must be \$20 per credit hour or less (e.g., 3-credit courses must not exceed \$60).
- The total cost must cover all required course materials (i.e., textbook, course pack, lab materials, etc.).
- The total cost is determined by what it costs to **purchase** the course material in **new** condition.
 - If the course materials are not purchased through the FIU Bookstore, links to the applicable retailer must be clearly present on the course overview page and the syllabus.
 - If the course materials have been officially placed on course reserve at the FIU Library and are available at no cost to the student, purchase of these materials is not required to meet the selection criteria.
- The course cannot have been recognized for the Affordability Counts medallion previously with the same course materials.

Average cost of materials

- Out of the 155 courses with the Medallion...
- Average costs of materials: **\$21.28**





Faculty Highlights





What are faculty doing to reduce costs?

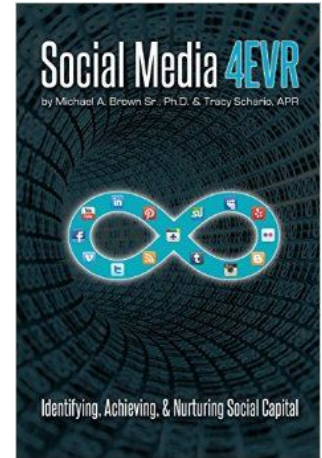
- Post journal articles (links from library) to replace/eliminate textbook chapters (\$0.00).
- Use free-to-use videos and other media resources (NBC Learn, Lynda.com).
- Incorporate publisher access codes (varying from \$45 to \$60)
- Talk to your textbook publisher and ask them to lower the cost for students.
- Self-publish (use open resources and remix it).
- Use OER and low-cost books: <http://lowcost.fiu.edu/learn/>.



Dr. Michael Brown

- PAD5934, PAD3438
- Published his own book after being unhappy with the available options for textbooks in his subject
- Cost: \$24.95
- Supplemented with web resources

<http://insider.fiu.edu/achieving-tailored-lower-cost-learning/>





Prof. Rodolfo Rego

- EVR1001L (Lab Section)
- Content on government site, which has no copyright restrictions
- Compilation of this with his own content, packaged for students
- Cost: FREE



Prof. Lorena Canelon

- PET3325L (Lab Course)
- BYOB
- Cost: Varies

Textbook



In an effort to reduce expenses, you can use **ANY** anatomy textbook (even the same one you are using for the lecture); any author, any edition. If you want to check a book you have with me, please let me know. What you have, it will work perfectly most of the times!

You must have an anatomy textbook for this course.

The following, is the recommended (but not mandatory) textbook but remember **ANY** anatomy textbook will do the job!



Prof. Maikel Alendy

- IDH3034/3035
- Course materials used: videos, webpages, podcasts and PDFs



Discussion:

**What happens when you
lose your publisher
resources?**





What we found:

- Faculty really care about how much students are spending and will go to great lengths to make their courses affordable
- Publishers will negotiate and lower prices
- Faculty like (love?) to display their Affordability Counts Medallion on their syllabus and LMS

Key Components of the Program



website



committee



partners



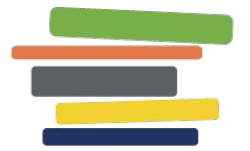
recognition



communication

OpenStax Partnership





openstax™



OpenStax Partnership

- June 2017: FIU was 1 of 11 schools selected for the 2017-2018 OpenStax Institutional Partnership Program
- OpenStax is a nonprofit organization based at Rice University that publishes openly-licensed books
- Over 30 titles, completely free to use, remix, redistribute
- FIU will receive consulting services to assess and improve our OER efforts, tech support for adoption of OpenStax content, webinars, and more.



New OER Medallion



AC Medallion - \$60 or less

COMING SOON



OER Medallion - FREE



Website

lowcost.fiu.edu



- Lists all medallion recipients using SUS common course numbering system
- Outlines research about importance of affordability in higher education
- Contains resources for finding OER and low-cost course materials



lowcost@fiu.edu



Maikel Alendy
malendy@fiu.edu
305-348-0274



Lergia Olivo
lolivo@fiu.edu
305-348-4760

lowcost@fiu.edu

Questions?
THANK YOU!

