# Textbook Adoption Policy

## Policy Purpose:

Madison College recognizes that the high and escalating cost of textbooks and course materials creates a significant barrier to student learning, retention and success. The Textbook Adoption Policy was created to provide a college-wide framework for ensuring timely, cost-effective and high-quality textbook and course material adoption.

## Policy Statement:

The textbook and course material adoption process at Madison College will promote the strategic direction of the college by promoting innovative and high-quality education and supporting the academic freedom and expertise of the faculty, with the goal of reducing textbook cost as a barrier to students' educational pursuits. The college supports individual faculty, faculty teams, programs and departments to pursue a variety of options with the goal of reducing textbook costs. The textbook and course material adoption policy ensures that Madison College is in compliance with the **Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008** (HEOA of 2008) and other federal and state statutes and regulations.

To standardize the textbook adoption procedure and to realize the **Core Principles** (Addendum A), administration and faculty adhere to the following policy guidelines that have been developed to eliminate the high cost of textbooks:

1. Each program/department adopt their textbooks for at least three academic years*.

    This number is based on the "ideal textbook life cycle": the more times a textbook can be sold as used, the greater the cost savings for students. Success of the model is dependent upon:
    a) Timely textbook orders – the earlier a textbook order is submitted, the greater the opportunity for the bookstore to acquire used books.

    b) Re-adoption of the previous semester's textbook – re-adoption allows greater opportunity for students to save through buy-back and access to used books.

    *External licensing, certification and industry standards may require new text adoptions prior to the end of the three-year adoption cycle.

2. In support of collaboration and inclusion, departments/programs identify faculty teams that are responsible for overseeing the timely and complete submission of all textbook adoptions, including no-text required, to the bookstore. Faculty teams use the **Operational Guidelines** (Addendum B) in making cost-conscious textbook adoptions.

3. In compliance with section 133(d) of the HEOA of 2008, faculty teams submit textbook and material adoptions prior to the start of the student registration period for the following term.

4. To maximize the cost savings resulting from uniformity, faculty assigned to classes after the adoption deadline use the texts already assigned to their courses by the department/program faculty teams for the adoption cycle and join the on-going department/program decision-making about future adoptions.

5. Only in exceptional circumstances may faculty request to use a textbook outside of the established approval process. The request includes a written justification submitted to the faculty team for that course for their review and approval. The justification must address the educational benefits and costs of the requested option relative to the already approved texts or course materials.

6. The policy ensures compliance with the Madison College Employee Code of Ethics-Conflict of Interest statement that states, *"No employee may use his/her position to obtain personal financial gain or financial gain for a member of his/her immediate family, or for any business in which he/she has a significant financial interest or relationship. Any salary or other compensation received by the employee from this College for services performed does not constitute "financial gain" as used in this section (June 2014)."*

## Accountability Statement

The effectiveness of the textbook and materials adoption policy is measured each academic year through the analysis of textbook costs, adoption deadline compliance rate and student feedback.

**Addendum A -** *Core Principles*

Typically, full-time students can spend over $500 per semester on textbooks and course materials. In a 2016 Student Senate survey, sixty percent (60%) of Madison College student respondents indicated that these costs have prevented them from enrolling in an additional course. The textbook adoption process has been identified as one of the root causes of the high cost. At the same time, the college recognizes the value of academic freedom and supports the selection of high-quality course materials that create vibrant learning environments for students.

**Core Principles**

Madison College supports a standardized textbook adoption procedure that aims to enhance student retention and success. Based on research into current best policies and practices, the college embraces the following core principles to guide the textbook adoption process:

**Collaboration** in textbook adoption decisions across all faculty opens the door to greater cost consciousness among all instructors, a greater sense of community and inclusion between full-time and part-time instructors, and a greater likelihood for textbook uniformity and its associated cost reductions. Collaboration also reinforces the twin goals of quality materials and low cost.

**Transparency and Accountability** means that textbook and course material selections and their costs are easily accessible to all college constituents, including among others, current and potential students, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, members of the community, and internet audiences. The goals of this principle are to eliminate "hidden costs" for all courses and to be accountable for cost-conscious textbook and course material selections.

**Flexibility and Innovation** places textbook adoption decisions with faculty teams, in recognition of faculty expertise and of the reality that any cost reduction approach may work for some departments or programs but not for others. Further, this principle acknowledges that no single policy can anticipate all of the future avenues for low and no-cost texts and course materials and encourages faculty to pursue those avenues by following the established adoption guidelines.

**Low-cost to No-cost** underscores the policy's goal of eliminating textbook cost as a barrier to students' educational pursuits.

**Addendum B-** *Operational Guidelines*

**Operational Guidelines**

Madison College recognizes the complexity of textbook and course material selection across disciplines and programs and the importance of this process in reducing student costs, providing quality education and meeting external licensing or credentialing standards.  Given the complexity of this process, the Student Affairs Council recommends that college faculty pursue a variety of options with the goal of reducing textbook cost as a barrier to education for students.  Research has identified the following models and practices as the most effective current means to reach that goal.

1) **All classes:** faculty teams adopt these practices in their textbook selection process.

   a) Faculty teams adhere to established semester textbook adoption deadlines
   This practice promotes **transparency** by giving students access to textbook costs before course registration and the bookstore the greatest **flexibility** in securing used textbooks and offering the highest price for buy-backs. The deadlines apply to equipment, tools and materials in addition to textbooks.

   b) Faculty teams use the bookstore as a consultant when selecting textbooks
   This practice promotes **collaboration** by encouraging faculty teams to work with the bookstore early in the process to obtain information about what might be the best, low-cost option for students.  The bookstore offers expertise and knowledge about what might be the best format in order to maximize cost savings for students.

   c) ALL textbook adoptions are submitted to the bookstore, including no-text or no-cost texts
   This practice promotes **transparency** for students by giving them access to textbook costs and allowing the bookstore to accurately track and access inventory needs. It also provides **accountability** by generating consistent data for evaluating policy implementation success.

   d) All required course materials (including web-based) and texts are adopted only when used substantially in the course
   This practice supports **transparency** and **accountability** by requiring students to purchase only the materials that are essential to the course.  Non-essential materials are listed as "recommended" or "optional" and are subject to the same cost-conscious selection process.

   e) Faculty teams weigh reusability versus short-term cost savings
   This practice supports the **low-cost to no-cost** principle.  Publishers often offer "cheaper" alternatives to complete print textbooks that are often not available for buy-back or in used editions.  These alternatives include loose-leaf notebooks, customized compilations, and e-texts (access codes).  Over the length of the adoption cycle, these alternatives may not generate the same cost-savings as used print texts.

   f) Faculty teams adopt cost-saving alternatives to commercial textbooks
   The use of cost-saving alternatives support **flexibility, innovation and low-cost to no-cost** principles: since these alternatives are of minimal to no cost to students, faculty have the flexibility to use them in innovative ways.

       i.   Open Educational Resources: (OERs) are no-cost and copyright-free educational materials available for teaching, learning, research and other purposes.  Faculty can access multiple OER sources online and may pursue private foundation funding to develop courses and degree tracks that use them exclusively.

          The Madison College Library has created an Open Educational Resources Guide to help faculty develop OERs and to provide resources related to OERs.  The Madison College Library is available for one-on-one consultation with Madison College faculty to help them implement and develop OERs for their classes.

ii.   Trade books: These are books published by a commercial publisher and intended for general readership. They are widely available as used, and the cost is quite minimal.

iii.   Articles compiled by instructors: Many instructors already post PDFs and hyperlinks in Blackboard in lieu of adopting textbooks.

iv.   Free on-line or digital resources: Non-profit organizations, research institutes, educational consortiums and periodicals often provide no-cost, web-based resources that can be useful supplemental materials.

**2) Practices across multiple-sections of the same course**:  Faculty teams adopt one or more of the following options in selecting their textbooks.

a) Adopt one textbook (uniform textbook adoption)
This practice supports **transparency and accountability** by providing savings by generating a large number of used textbooks and supporting the highest buy-back price. It also supports **transparency** for students and creates leverage in securing discounts from publishers.  Such coordination also reinforces **collaboration** among faculty.

b) Adopt a limited number of approved core textbooks
A survey of data provided by the bookstore of text adoptions in Spring 2017 showed a wide range of approaches that extend from a single uniform text across all sections (1 text: 12 sections) to a different text version adopted for virtually every other section (14 texts: 32 sections).  In the latter case, faculty adopted multiple editions of the same text and/or different bundles of the same core text.  Faculty teams use the table below, which provides a reference to determine the number of textbooks that can be ordered for multiple sections of a course:

| Number of sections offered (per semester) | Maximum number of approved core texts |
|---|---|
| 1-5 | 1 |
| 6-10 | 2 |
| 11-15 | 3 |
| 16-20 | 4 |
| 21 or more | 5 |

This practice supports **flexibility** by allowing faculty to select a textbook from approved core texts, and at the same time, to adopt **low-cost to no-cost** supplemental materials. It also provides savings by generating a large number of used textbooks and supports the highest buy-back price.  Lastly, it supports **transparency** for students in course selection and allows them to change sections without bearing additional textbook costs.

c) Adopt limited number of access codes or bundles
This practice supports **transparency, accountability, flexibility and innovation.** The coordinated use of access codes or bundles across sections provides the bookstore leverage to negotiate discounts with publishers and may provide students with quality supplemental online resources. Further, this approach reduces the cost variance across all sections. **Please note**: access codes and bundles are not available for buy-back or in "used" editions.  Through **collaboration,** instructors generate cost savings and foster educational quality

d) Coordinate the use of cost-saving alternatives to commercial texts
This practice supports **collaboration, flexibility,** and **innovation** at minimal cost.