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What does that textbook really cost?

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WHAT DOES THAT TEXTBOOK REALLY COST?

During the Fall 2022 semester Bates participated in a multi-institutional study coordinated by the Open and Equitable Working Group of the Oberlin Group of Libraries to examine how the cost of course materials affects students. 22% of Bates students responded. The survey offered an eye-opening view of the hidden costs of higher education.

94%

OF STUDENTS TAKE MEASURES TO REDUCE THE COST OF COURSE MATERIALS



We asked students:

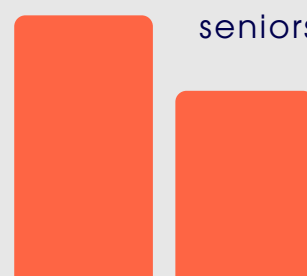
How much did books cost you this semester? (textbooks, novels, ebooks) Average response:

\$240

How much do you feel is reasonable to pay for all books and required course materials for a single class? Most common response:

\$50

First-year students reported spending **40% MORE** than seniors.



What measures are students taking to reduce the cost of their required course materials?

Students reported a number of strategies including: **buying used** copies, **sharing** texts with classmates, **going without** some of the texts they need, and **piracy**.

53% of students do not think that their institution pays attention to the cost of course materials

I would rather pay \$10 to \$30 for a book than pirate it off the internet, but anything over 50 I would much rather dig around on the internet for and pirate “ ”



First-Generation college students are spending an average of **\$95.00** more per semester on their course materials than their peers. They reported spending 44% more than non first-generation students.

\$95

First-generation college students are 29% more likely and **Pell Grant recipients** are 33% more likely to **struggle academically** because they could not access the books they needed for class.



What can Faculty do

- **Review the cost of course materials** you are assigning each year.
- **Allow students to use older editions** of textbooks.
- **Educate students about Library course reserves** on your syllabus.
- **Consider choosing openly licensed materials** when designing or redesigning a course, which can be adapted to suit your syllabus.
- **For more information** about Open Educational Resources (OER): <https://libguides.bates.edu/scholarly-communications/OER>

For more information about the results of the 2022 Survey, see the campus report-out archived in SCARAB: https://scarab.bates.edu/ils_scholarship/10/



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