

10-13-2017

Academic Blasphemy: Providing Access to Textbooks in the Library

Heidi Blackburn

University of Nebraska at Omaha, hblackbu@gmail.com

Tammi Owens

University of Nebraska at Omaha, tammiowens@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/crisslibfacproc>

 Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

Blackburn, Heidi and Owens, Tammi, "Academic Blasphemy: Providing Access to Textbooks in the Library" (2017). *Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations*. 84.
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/crisslibfacproc/84>

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

ACADEMIC BLASPHEMY

PROVIDING ACCESS TO TEXTBOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

NEBRASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
OCTOBER 13, 2017

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



Heidi Blackburn
hblackburn@unomaha.edu
Tammi Owens
tammiowens@unomaha.edu

UNIVERSITY #GOALS

Recruit, develop, retain, and support a diverse student body reflecting a dynamic metropolitan community.

ACADEMIC BLASPHEMY

NLA October 13, 2017



AND THEN WE SAW THIS THING AT ACRL...

ACRL National Conference, Baltimore, MD 2017

- *“The Best Freaking Thing in the World:” Libraries Solving the Textbook Problem*
- *But the Bookstore Won't Like It: Library-Bookstore Relationships Around OER*
- *A Tale of Two Campuses: Local and Global Approaches to Reducing Textbook Costs*
- *Poking the Bear: Promoting Textbook Affordability in the Face of a Restrictive Institutional Environment*
- *Open Educational Resources - Collaborations Between Librarians and Teaching Faculty*
- *Scaling Back Student Expenses: A Library-Based Open Educational Resources Initiative*
- *Going O'ER: Using Open Resources as the Path to New Pedagogy and Information Literacy*
- *Practicing What We Preach: Showcasing OER through the Creation of a Research Strategies Textbook*
- *Eliminating For-Cost Textbooks: The Library as Key Campus Player*
- *Evaluating Women's Studies Textbooks for Open (or Library-Licensed) Alternatives*
- *Designing and Implementing an Open Textbook Grant Program: Successes and Challenges*
- *Running Effective OER and Open Textbook Initiatives in Your Academic Library*

ACADEMIC BLASPHEMY

NLA October 13, 2017

BUT OUR LIBRARY COULDN'T DO THAT

Criss Library Collection Development Policy:

- Textbooks are not purchased
- Exception: Foundational literature

State Institution Budget Cuts:

- Tuition increase
- \$40 million in cuts to its operating budget
- Anticipated elimination of more than 100 jobs

BUT THINK OF THE STUDENTS...

Students need affordable and convenient access to textbooks for reasons including delayed financial aid, personal economic hardships, and just-in-time use. Textbooks at the library can fill those needs.



RECRUITMENT + RETENTION

BUT THE BOOKSTORE WILL HATE US

- Build on existing relationships
- Plan scope together
- Ask for advice
- Purchase from bookstore
- Acknowledge and co-brand promotion



COLLABORATION

BUT EVERYONE WILL WANT EVERYTHING

- Eligibility requirements
- Decisionmakers: team or individual
- Posting status updates



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

ACADEMIC BLASPHEMY

NLA October 13, 2017

BUT FACULTY WILL BE UNHAPPY

- Remain student-focused in all communication
- Acknowledge higher costs for different disciplines
- Focus on major impact areas: high enrollment numbers or many sections
- Consider positive and negative feedback and make measured decisions when responding with solutions



COMMUNICATION

BUT WE DON'T HAVE THE BUDGET

- What is the difference between a \$400 Biology conference proceeding and a \$400 Anatomy textbook?
- How many checkouts will that conference proceeding have in one year?
- Buying from the bookstore = saving money
- Start-up funding did not come from book budget



CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

BUT IT WON'T HELP MANY STUDENTS

In a 2013 survey of more than 2,000 students nationally

- 48 percent said the cost of textbooks affected how many and which classes they took each semester
- 65 percent opted against buying a book because it was too costly
- 94 percent of those students were concerned that their grade would suffer because of it



IT WILL HELP THESE STUDENTS

Source: Senack, E., U.S. PIRG Education Fund, The Student PIRGs. (2014). Fixing the Broken Textbook Market: How Students Respond to High Textbook Costs and Demand Alternatives. Retrieved from: <http://uspirg.org/reports/usp/fixing-broken-textbook-market>

BUT IT'S TOO MUCH WORK FOR STAFF

- DO NOT begin without staff buy-in
- Communication with staff is key to success
- Books processed and stored like all reserve books, but often faster
- New reserve category = new checkout length = more work for another staff member



BE AWARE, BE INCLUSIVE

BUT WE'LL GET COMPLAINTS

- Assess program and be prepared for positive and negative feedback
- Online survey for users on front of textbooks
- Staff and student and faculty feedback
- Online student survey sent out to instructors who had sections tied to the pilot



REALLY, THAT'S FINE

A FEW COMPLAINTS

First Year Writing Faculty email:

My concern is that [it] gives the impression that students will no longer have to buy their books, further minimizing the importance we seem to be placing on the value of their textbook as an integral part of the class and, in fact, reading itself.

Chemistry Faculty meeting comment:

The textbook program is a terrible idea. I saw that email and I thought it then too. It's not a good idea because it does not give students any incentive to buy the book. You are taking away their incentive to commit and buy the book. Students should have to buy the book.

A FEW KUDOS

Academic Advisor:

That's great news! Hopefully the students like the program as much as we do!

Multicultural Affairs staff:

This will be good for the students who are waiting for financial aid, or those who are deciding whether or not they need the textbook for the class. I often hear from students who have to choose between buying food and buying textbooks.

General Education Committee:

Enthusiastic approval around the entire table

A FEW SURVEY RESPONSES (N= 3)

How did you hear about the library's textbooks on reserve program?

The Library (3)

Why did you use a textbook on reserve?

I'm waiting to buy the book until I have my financial aid. (1)

Other (2)

Share any additional thoughts you have about the textbooks on reserve program.

this is such a good thing. i'm glad you finally decided to have it.

BUT WHAT IF IT WORKS?

Summer/Fall checkouts

- May-17 - 9 (10%)
- Jun-17 - 9 (8%)
- Jul-17 - 8 (8%)
- Aug-17 - 29 (27%)
- Sep-17 - 50 (46%)

Checkouts per book

- Anthropology - 2
- Biology - 20
- Chemistry - 15
- Anatomy - 14*
- Music - 15
- Writing - 23
- Physics - 11

BUT HOW DO WE MOVE AHEAD?

- Marketing for Spring semester
- Assessment for Spring semester (Or, how long is a pilot still a pilot?)
- Long term: OER conversations with faculty
- Lead to new partnerships (like now we have bones for check out!)



 **NOW WHAT?**

THANK YOU!

Heidi Blackburn
hblackburn@unomaha.edu

Tammi Owens
tammiowens@unomaha.edu



ACADEMIC BLASPHEMY

NLA October 13, 2017
