



AOP 10.14: THE ADOPTION AND SALE OF TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy (AOP) is to establish a Mississippi State University textbook policy consistent with IHL Board policy 617 and to standardize the policy on the sale of textbooks and other instructional materials. This policy provides the means by which the University addresses and balances the issues of textbook and required material costs for students with faculty academic freedom in publishing and choosing textbooks and other required materials, maintaining the academic integrity of the curriculum, and ensuring compliance with Section 133 of the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

Textbook and Other Instructional Material Adoption

In this policy, the term textbook and other instructional materials includes software, electronic files, supplemental materials, and course packs.

1. Adoption Deadlines

- The deadline for adoption of textbooks shall be 30 calendar days before the beginning of the pre-registration period so that affiliated bookstores have sufficient time to meet the HEOA posting requirements. Courses and or course sections added to the schedule (late) during or after the pre-registration period must include textbook adoption information as the course and sections are added to the schedule.
- The adoption process shall include an indication of whether a textbook and other instructional materials are required or recommended and, to the extent possible, whether an alternate (e.g., earlier) edition of the textbook may be used. Timely adoption of textbooks is required for the following course types: lecture, lecture/lab, laboratory, and recitation/discussion. These course types, as designated and defined by the IHL Data Dictionary, are generally assumed to be courses with textbook requirements. Any other courses at Mississippi State University that historically require textbooks shall be included in this adoption policy.
- Department heads or equivalent shall be responsible for ensuring that all pertinent courses under their authority have textbook adoptions submitted by the deadline, even in instances where no instructor has been assigned for a course section as of the announced textbook adoption deadline date.
- Departments or equivalent are strongly encouraged to adopt the same course materials for all sections of each course.

2. Minimum Adoption Periods - In this section, textbook refers specifically to a book that is resalable, as opposed to one-time usage materials (e.g., workbooks, common reading books) or books that have limited resale value.

- **Lower Division Courses:** Mississippi State University requires a minimum three-year adoption period for printed textbooks in lower division courses (courses numbered 2999 and below). Exceptions to this policy may include instances when editions go out of print, when substantive changes are made in either the course description or the textbook, or when there is a significant change in the body of knowledge pertinent to the course.
- **Upper Division, Graduate, and Professional Courses:** Mississippi State University recommends a minimum printed textbook adoption period of two years for upper division, graduate, and professional courses (all courses numbered 3000 to 9999). Mississippi State University recognizes that, to provide current scholarship in a global marketplace, upper division courses often have more advanced and changing content; that students may wish to build a personal library of books in their major field of study; and that there is more limited potential for establishing a favorable local buy-back market for such textbooks. Because of these factors, this policy balances the benefits of a minimum adoption period with the selection of the most appropriate textbook.

3. Dissemination of Textbook Information - Mississippi State University in conjunction with affiliated bookstores shall:

- Provide faculty with information and tools for the selection of textbooks, including pricing information and the availability of alternative formats for course materials (e.g., whether textbooks are available in electronic versions) and of separately available components of a bundled textbook.
- Provide students with tips on purchasing textbooks, including the availability of electronic versions, the availability of unbundled textbook components, buy-back and exchange policies, price-matching policies, and shall include an explanation of the significance of ISBNs for entering freshmen during orientations or within 30 days before the beginning of the fall semester.

4. Assessment of Progress

- The Provost and Executive Vice President shall appoint a Textbook Committee. The Textbook Committee shall be responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy.
- Annually, a textbook report shall be submitted to the IHL commissioner or their designee.

5. Conflicts of Interest in Sale of Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials

- Mississippi State University encourages faculty members to write, publish, and create instructional materials. Before the adoption of textbooks and other instructional materials from which royalties could constitute a conflict of interest,

approval must be obtained from the departmental textbook adoption committee, which can be a committee of the whole or an established departmental committee. The existence of such a committee is necessary to reduce the potential for conflicts of interest.

- No faculty member may charge or collect remuneration for educational materials directly from the students.
- If any potential conflict of interest is brought forward as a result of sales of textbooks or other educational materials, the Provost and Executive Vice President, in consultation with the Deans Council, the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, and Student Government (undergraduate and graduate), will appoint a committee to hear the case and advise the Provost and Executive Vice President on a course of action.
- Copyright clearance must be obtained by the issuing department or faculty, where necessary, for compilations to be resold through the MSU Bookstore. University General Counsel or employees of the MSU Bookstore may assist in this process, if desired.
- Royalties may not be paid to individual faculty for compilations they produce for copy and resale through the MSU Bookstore.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years (or whenever circumstances require an earlier review) by the Executive Vice Provost with recommendations, if any, for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Peter Ryan 2/25/2026
Executive Vice Provost Date

/s/ David Shaw 2/26/2026
Provost and Executive Vice President Date

/s/ Stacy Haynes 2/13/2026
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham 2/26/2026
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness Date

/s/ Joan Lucas 3/5/2026
General Counsel Date

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum 3/23/2026
President Date