



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

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (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 various course materials, including 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 (date) during or after the pre-registration period will include textbook adoption information as the course and sections are added to the schedule.
- The adoption process will include an indication of whether a textbook and other instructional materials are required or recommended and should include 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 will be responsible for ensuring that all pertinent courses under their authority have adoptions submitted by the deadline, even in instances where no instructor has been assigned for a course section as of the

announced adoption deadline date.

- Departments 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. Exceptions to this policy require approval by the respective dean level, after recommendation from a department head. Deans are required to record and report to the Textbook Committee the number of textbook adoption exceptions they grant each semester.

- Mississippi State University requires a minimum three-year adoption period for 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.
- Mississippi State University recommends a minimum textbook adoption period of at least 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 will have more advanced and changing content, that students often wish to build a personal library of books in their major, and that there is a more limited potential for establishing a favorable local buy-back market for such upper division textbooks. Because of these factors, this policy will balance the benefits of a minimum adoption period with the selection of the best available 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 will include an explanation of the significance of ISBNs, to entering freshmen during orientations or within 30 days before the beginning of the fall semester.
- Provide faculty and students with results from surveys of student satisfaction with textbooks.

**4. Assessment of Progress**

- The Provost and Executive Vice President will appoint a Textbook Coordinator and

a Textbook Committee. The Textbook Committee, chaired by the Textbook Coordinator, will be responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy.

- The Textbook Committee shall develop procedures to assess the success of the above practices in containing the costs of textbooks. These procedures shall include analyses and reports appropriate to assessing compliance with this policy, as well as identifying and improving system and institutional practices.
- The Textbook Committee will review and monitor the number of textbook adoption exceptions approved each semester by each college dean.
- Assessment strategies shall include: the inclusion of questions on student surveys about the value of assigned textbooks; production of reports of the extent of compliance of each institution with the adoption deadlines; information about the costs of the textbooks for the top twenty (highest enrollment) courses; the volume of buy-back purchases at the affiliated bookstores; the number of electronic versions of textbooks being used; and surveys (student and faculty) of the ability of the affiliated bookstore to provide adequate stocking of books.
- Annually, the textbook coordinator will submit such assessment information as required by the assessment plan as an annual assessment report to the IHL Commissioner or his/her designee.
- The annual assessment report will be made available on the website of the subject institution, as well as on the System website.

##### **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.
- When revenue from the sale of textbook(s) or instructional material goes directly to a unit, the unit will be required to obtain no fewer than two competitive quotes for equivalent and current material from mainstream vendors, if such competitive and current materials exist. The cost to the student for the textbook or instructional material must be less than the least expensive competitive price for equivalent and current material, if such competitive and current materials exist. Approval for the adoption of the textbook(s) or instructional material that generates revenue for the unit must be obtained from the University's Textbook Approval Committee. The current committee is listed in the directory of standing committees page on the Mississippi State University webpage. Once approved, the request must be submitted to the department's Dean's Office and then to the Office of the Provost

for final approval.

- 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 appropriate individuals, the Deans Council, Faculty Senate, and Student Government (undergraduate and graduate), will appoint a committee to hear the case and advise the Provost 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 he/she produces 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 for Academic Affairs with recommendations, if any, for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

This policy has been superseded.

**REVIEWED**

/s/ Peter Ryan  
Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

1/25/2021  
Date

/s/ David Shaw  
Provost and Executive Vice President

1/25/2021  
Date

/s/ Rebecca Robichaux-Davis  
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate

1/25/2021  
Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham  
Director, Institutional Research and Effectiveness

1/25/2021  
Date

/s/ Joan Lucas  
General Counsel

1/25/2021  
Date

**APPROVED**

/s/ Mark Keenum  
President

1/25/2021  
Date

**This policy has been superseded.**