How does textbook affordability impact public and private institutions?

Perspectives of librarians and faculty

Introduction

How does textbook affordability impact public and private institutions? This snapshot will cover textbook affordability through the perspectives of librarians and faculty. Librarians and faculty of public and private institutions were asked questions about textbook affordability. To view the full reports be sure to download: Textbook Affordability Survey Report: Librarian Perspective and Academic Faculty: Textbook & Course Materials Affordability Report

Questions covered in this snapshot include:

- To what degree is cost/affordability a concern for your institution when deciding course materials?
- To what degree is textbook affordability a concern for students?
- What barriers, if any, stand in the way of integrating digital resources into coursework?
- How do librarians interact with faculty?

To what degree is cost/affordability a concern for your institution when deciding course materials?

	FACULTY		LIBRARIANS	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Major Concern	75%	69%	73%	58%
Minor Concern	20%	28%	22%	34%
Not a Concern	4%	3%	1%	6%
Don't Know	1%	0%	5%	2%

As one might expect, **librarians of public institutions are more concerned with textbook affordability** than librarians of private institutions (73% vs. 58%).

Public institution faculty (75%) and public institution librarians (73%) agree that textbook affordability is a major concern.

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To what degree is textbook affordability a concern for students?

	FACULTY		LIBRARIANS	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Major Concern	91%	83%	98%	91%
Minor Concern	7%	11%	0%	3%
Not a Concern	0%	0%	0%	3%
Don't Know	2%	6%	2%	3%

Academic faculty and librarians of public and private institutions **all reported that textbook affordability was a "major concern" for students**.

What barriers, if any, stand in the way of integrating digital resources into coursework?

	FACULTY		LIBRARIANS	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Too much time and effort to build the needed resources	30%	39%	87%	68%
Materials faculty want are unavailable digitally	25%	38%	66%	63%
Internet connectivity issues for students	34%	19%	N/A	N/A
Students not as focused when reading digital texts	27%	28%	N/A	N/A
Institutional license restrictions	19%	29%	N/A	N/A
Open Education Resources are not as good quality	20%	17%	N/A	N/A
Students prefer print to digital texts	21%	16%	40%	35%
Lack of supplementary materials and tools and provided by textbook publishers	15%	17%	53%	32%
Wary of experimenting with alternative materials	10%	10%	N/A	N/A
Too difficult to change set lesson plans	8%	7%	N/A	N/A
Limits on number of concurrent users	8%	7%	N/A	N/A
Course work resources/text decisions are not up to faculty member	4%	6%	N/A	N/A
Faculty never gave digital resources much thought	1%	6%	N/A	N/A
Not a Problem that needs solving	N/A	N/A	9%	19%
Other	8%	17%	18%	19%
None	15%	10%	1%	3%

This reports that **integrating digital resources creates more barriers for faculty than librarians**. Although the statistics do differ between faculty and librarians, faculty and librarians of public and private institutions face similar barriers.

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Faculty of both public and private institutions hold similar views on barriers that stand in their way of integrating digital resources into coursework. Faculty reported that major barriers include: 1) Too much time and effort to build the needed resources, 2) materials they want are unavailable digitally, 3) Students have internet connectivity problems, 4) Students are not as focused when reading digital texts.

Librarians of public institutions primarily believe that it takes too much time and effort to build the resources their institutions face to integrate digital resources into coursework.

In summary, faculty and librarians of both private and public institutions have issues with time and effort to build the resources and unavailability of digital resources.

How do librarians interact with faculty?

	FACULTY		LIBRARIANS	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Librarians visit class to provide instructional support for use of course materials	30%	39%		
Select open educational resources (OER)	N/A	N/A	73%	47%
Purchase course reserves	29%	30%	N/A	N/A
Create course reading/resource lists	23%	20%	55%	41%
Suggest/select course materials	15%	21%	63%	45%
Coordinate course curriculums	5%	13%	18%	20%
Develop and publish an open access textbook	2%	7%	26%	14%
Other	9%	11%	12%	16%
None of the above	37%	31%	8%	14%

The questions that were posed to faculty and librarians differed slightly, but we can still compare the results.

In all, **librarians believe they interact more with faculty than faculty believe librarians interact with them**. Faculty of both public institutions and private institutions had similar views.

Librarians of public institutions believe they interact more with faculty than those of private institutions. 73% of librarians of public institutions select Open Educational Resources while only 47% of librarians of private institutions select Open Educational Resources.

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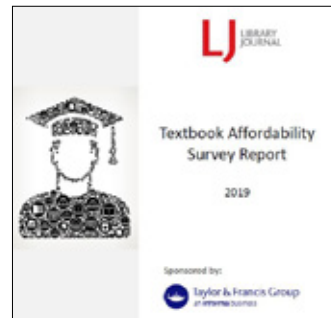
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Conclusion

This snapshot was an overview of the two reports that focus on public institution vs. private institutions and faculty vs. librarian perspectives. Textbook affordability is a challenge for students, librarians, faculty, and institutions as a whole. The obstacles of integrating digital resources into coursework are numerous. More communication between librarians and faculty would be beneficial and most librarians and faculty agree that the biggest challenges are the time and effort to build the resources, as well as the unavailability of digital materials. The full reports are more detailed and differentiate between the types of institutions and other demographics such as community college, four-year college, and professional/post-graduate school and the size of institutions.

References

The contents of this snapshot were derived from Taylor & Francis and Library Journal's joint reports:

Textbook Affordability: Faculty Perspective

Textbook Affordability: Librarian Perspective

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