

Quick Tips for Supporting Low-Income Students

Reducing Textbook Costs

Open Source

One strategy to make courses more affordable for students is to use open educational resources in place of high-cost textbooks. Open educational resources, or OER, are any educational materials that are licensed in a way that allows them to be freely downloaded, used, distributed, and revised. You can find high quality open textbooks on sites like [OpenStax](#), [Open Textbook Library](#), and [OER Commons](#).

For more information, visit dartgo.org/oer or contact Katie Harding, Teaching & Learning Librarian.

Other options for students looking to reduce textbook costs:

- The Borrow Direct system to access material from other libraries (*free*)
- The reserve corridor Mural Room (*free*)
- FYSEP's small borrowing library of donated texts for popular courses (*free*): <https://tinyurl.com/yycs9xjov>
- Renting of books through Wheelock Bookstore and online companies like Amazon or Chegg
 - ◆ *Students need to email profs 2-3 weeks ahead of time for the syllabus so that there is time to order texts to rent*
- Upperclass students who may have taken the course before to borrow/buy books
- Previous editions where acceptable (often the previous year's does work)
- Ask that professors know the cost of any textbook they require.

Directing Students to Resources

Financial Aid Emergency Fund:

This is an unadvertised source of (partial) funding for student medical or dental expenses that are not covered by insurance (including co-pays). Students can contact Rebecca Timmins in Financial Aid.

Barrier Removal: "Undergraduate Financial Assistance Request form": <https://tinyurl.com/yxc9a4>

The Division of Student Affairs oversees a fund for financial aid students, to cover such extraordinary needs as emergency travel, test prep materials or assistance with educational needs not covered by Financial Aid.

Leave term funding resources (Dickey, SELF, Rocky, and others) <https://tinyurl.com/y7chpf38>

A searchable database of college resources to help offset the costs of students' leave term experiences.

Sensitivity to Range of Financial Background In Class

Recognition (Embrace) of Socioeconomic Differences Among Students in the Class

Students particularly value when professors acknowledge and affirm that a variety of financial backgrounds and financial situations are present in the room. Socioeconomic diversity can be invisible but should not be ignored.

Sample Statement for Syllabi Use

"If you encounter financial challenges related to this class, please let me know."

Contacts

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If you know of a resource for low-income students that is not listed above, please feel free to share!