

STREAMLINING THE COURSE MATERIAL ADOPTION PROCESS

*How to Secure Earlier Submissions
Through the College Store*



STUDENT SUCCESS AND AFFORDABILITY OFTEN GO HAND-IN-HAND

Ensuring all students get the course materials they need requires delivering affordability, access and convenience. There are fresh approaches to course material management that support these key factors—but they all rely on timely submission of course material adoptions.

In this white paper, we will take a closer look at the course material adoption process: where we are today, the challenges we need to solve and the opportunity to streamline the process for all stakeholders.

Student Affordability and Preparedness

The data is clear: many students aren't getting the course materials they need when they need them. **In 2020, more than half of students (57%) said they did not have their course materials on the first day of class.**¹ This lack of preparation creates unnecessary barriers to learning and, ultimately, to success.

Cost is a significant factor—and one where students and administrators align. In fact, 89% of presidents think course materials cost too much.² For students, cost comes up both directly and indirectly in conversations on preparedness. The reason students cite most often for not having their course materials is that they wanted to check with professors before purchasing. This suggests a few potential underlying factors: a desire to save money and time, where possible, as well as a lack of confidence in the necessity of the course materials. The #2 reason cited is even more straightforward: the student simply couldn't afford the cost of a new/used book.

This is not an insurmountable problem. The latest course material models, such as inclusive access, deliver significant savings through programs with high visibility for both students and families. However, to be successful, these programs must begin with an efficient, effective course material adoption process.

Challenges in Course Material Adoption

At many institutions, the course material adoption process is complicated and involves a blend of online and offline efforts. It often is siloed, so administrators don't have the visibility to monitor overall progress. Instead, staff within schools or departments are responsible for collecting and submitting adoptions, often tracking down faculty members individually with reminders and requests.

For their part, faculty are deeply invested in course material selection, and they value the freedom to choose the best materials for their courses. They also care about their students and are sympathetic to cost concerns. However, adoption processes and tools are not always simple or intuitive, which can cause confusion and delays. And, as they prioritize deadlines, faculty may not realize the impact of on-time adoptions on student affordability and preparedness.

¹ 2020 National Student Pulse Report 4-Year Student Result, Barnes & Noble College
² 2020 Survey of College and University Presidents, Inside Higher Ed

SUCCESS & AFFORDABILITY: THE NEED FOR COURSE MATERIAL ALIGNMENT

70%

of students learn better in a class when they've read the assigned material in advance

85%

of faculty agreed that students who obtain the required course materials typically achieve higher grades

57%

of students did not have their course materials on the first day of class

89%

of presidents think course materials cost too much

5 REASONS WHY EARLY ADOPTIONS MATTER

It's important to communicate the benefits of early course material adoption to all stakeholders to help secure buy-in and support for updated adoption processes.

1. College stores can implement more cost-saving solutions.

Many institutions are turning to new models like inclusive access, which create significant savings for students through volume. Running such programs requires understanding the materials needed by a set deadline. They will not be successful without an adoption commitment from faculty.

2. Greater access to lower-cost materials.

Institutions that have not yet implemented new models of course material management still need early submissions. It allows the college store to provide a broader range of course material options so that faculty can choose among different formats and price points.

3. Fewer backorders lead to better student preparedness.

Late adoptions can lead to backorders. This means students may not have the course materials they need by the first day of class—which impacts faculty's ability to teach, create robust learning experiences and support student success.

4. Students can receive a better return at buyback.

When adoptions are made before the end of term, the college store knows what it needs to stock again. This means the store can offer students a better return on their materials and supply the next class of students with more affordable options.

5. Better timelines for regulatory compliance.

Earlier adoption also supports compliance with state regulations as well as requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA). When submissions are in on time, institutions can provide the estimated net price information as directed to all audiences.



BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING YOUR STORE'S ADOPTION RATE

Engage with faculty in person and online

Faculty today are juggling a staggering number of responsibilities, within the walls of the academic building and beyond. It's difficult – but crucial – to cut through the noise and keep adoption-related dates and deadlines top of mind, even during the busiest parts of the semester.

Personal engagement with faculty can help, and college stores have a unique opportunity to support schools. In addition to hosting faculty appreciation events – whether in-person or online – the store can leverage its presence on campus and send team members to existing events on the faculty calendar, such as senate and departmental meetings. This is especially helpful as institutions introduce new adoption processes and platforms. For ongoing success, it's vital to have an efficient, centralized system for communicating with faculty. Ideally, an institution should be able to send targeted digital communications, both on demand and as an automated function, with the ability to personalize.

Emphasize impact on affordability and student benefits

What is one important way to catch faculty attention across all channels? Focus on affordability, a priority for many faculty. Adoption-related communications should highlight the ways their students directly benefit from submitting on time or early. Essentially, when college stores get a clearer view of demand and are in a better negotiating position, students win. They get better returns at buyback, have better prices for the next semester and are less likely to get shortchanged by backorders.

Make the process as easy as possible

It's simple: the easier it is to adopt course materials, the more likely faculty are to submit their adoptions in a timely manner. The core of an effective adoption portal is simple, streamlined functionality that considers faculty behaviors and preferences. It helps to partner with faculty, finding solutions to their pain points. For example, if faculty can access the portal using their institution credentials rather than needing to remember an additional password, it removes a small but frustrating barrier. It should be easy to find information like the materials adopted in previous terms—and simple to re-adopt. A convenient, robust support function also helps ensure faculty can adopt whenever and wherever it works for them.

Support faculty academic freedom and course material choice

Faculty should be able to select the right course materials for their courses each term. To support their freedom of choice, they should have access to the widest possible array of course materials across different formats and price points. Tools that support affordability are important as well, especially at institutions that haven't implemented a cost-saving course material model. The ability to easily search for materials and compare price across formats is essential, and information focused on how open educational resources (OER) fit into the materials mix also can help in decision-making.

Give administrators the visibility to identify and address issues

Administrators also have a role to play in early adoption – but they need the right information and tools to fulfill it. To break down silos, institutions need to move away from managing adoption within schools or departments and centralize the process. Administrators need a single source for key metrics like adoption rates, submission progress and affordability data, as well as the ability to drill down and segment the data. These insights allow administrators to track progress, develop targeted adoption communications and deliver to the right faculty at the right times throughout the process. It also can help administrators understand the financial implications of lost adoptions (higher costs for students, lost revenue for the institution) and make the case for submitting adoptions early, tying concepts that may feel intangible to real results that affect their mission.

FACULTY FOCUS: SUPPORTING THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

*More than half of students do not have their course materials by the first day of class.
Here are the top three reasons why:*

<i>Wanted to check with professor before purchasing or renting course materials</i>	65% +10 YoY
<i>Couldn't afford the cost of a new/used textbook</i>	22%
<i>Course materials weren't listed in time</i>	19% +7 YoY

2020 National Student Pulse Report, Barnes & Noble College

THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO SUPPORT A SMOOTHER ADOPTION PROCESS

The foundation of a streamlined, user-friendly adoption process is an updated, online platform that resolves points of friction and simplifies key steps along the way.

Functionality for Faculty:

- ✓ Easy-to-use features like single sign-on using institutional credentials
- ✓ An expansive selection of course materials, including textbooks, eBooks and courseware from a variety of publishers
- ✓ Convenient display of previous course material adoptions with a simple re-adopt option
- ✓ Tools to compare prices across formats, including new, used, digital and rental
- ✓ Affordability solutions and recommendations, including OER as a complement or substitute for traditional course materials

Functionality for Administrators:

- ✓ A real-time view of key metrics: adoption rates, submission progress, instructor assignments and affordability data
- ✓ Segmentation of data at the institutional, campus or departmental levels
- ✓ The ability to communicate directly from the portal, including:
 - On-demand or automated emails to faculty
 - Automated reminders personalized to each faculty member
 - A site-wide message displayed at the top of the portal, visible to all users

**24/7 support for all users,
available via phone or within the portal**





PARTNER CLOSE-UP:

Walla Walla
University



ADOPTION RATE SOARS TO 100% IN 3 WEEKS

In the spring of 2019, Walla Walla University (Walla Walla) received just 45% of course material adoptions through its platform. The university decided to update its adoption process to make it easier for faculty to submit adoptions and for administrators to manage.

Driving more adoptions through the university – and facilitating earlier submission – would support affordability initiatives and give students greater incentive to buy their course materials from the campus bookstore, creating an opportunity to boost market share and revenue. Walla Walla implemented the Adoption & Insights Portal (AIP) from Barnes & Noble College to help achieve its key objectives.

The portal offers faculty simplicity and convenience. They can log in using their institution credentials (single sign-on) and use features like one-click re-adoption that streamline their experience. Over 10 million ISBNs are easily searchable, with textbooks, eBooks and courseware from a large and diverse group of publishers. The portal also highlights affordable options, making it easy for faculty to compare pricing and select the best options for their courses and students.

For administrators, the portal offers a real-time view of adoption rates, submission progress, instructor assignments and affordability data at the institutional, campus or departmental level. Using these insights, they can communicate directly with faculty from the portal. It can send personalized, automated faculty email reminders as well as display site-wide messages at the

top of the dashboard, visible to all users. Administrators also can send on-demand and automated emails to faculty directly from the portal.

“The portal’s real-time dashboard resonated with university leadership. They have been taking steps to update their own business intelligence dashboard and reporting to create more of a real-time view for key metrics around enrollment, finance and other areas, so they understood and felt the need for current, up-to-date reporting,”

**Matt Heinrich, Store Manager,
Walla Walla University Bookstore**

After implementing the portal, Walla Walla received positive feedback from faculty and administrators, and all adoptions were received within 3 weeks, one of the fastest adoption periods the university had ever seen. Walla Walla received 100% of adoptions in the portal for Spring 2020, compared to 45% using the previous technology in Spring 2019.

“Faculty appreciated how easy it is to use the portal – in fact, some of them logged in and started adopting books during our in-person meetings. That’s when you know you’re off to a strong start,” said Heinrich. “Everyone really worked together to make it a successful and incredibly quick adoption period.”



PARTNER CLOSE-UP:



REAL-TIME INSIGHTS AND ENHANCED REPORTING

Florida International University (FIU) is among the top 10 largest universities in the nation. With 2,000 faculty across multiple campuses and locations, rising demand for affordable options and new regulations in place, FIU needed a simpler, more streamlined way to manage its course material adoption process.

The university wanted to improve the functionality and ease of use for faculty, while conveniently offering a broader range of affordable options. It sought better insight into the adoption process while it was in progress, which would help administrators and department heads manage it more easily and efficiently.

FIU also needed faster, more comprehensive reporting capabilities to meet requirements and guidelines set both by the State of Florida and the Florida Board of Governors related to course material submissions and affordability.

The university implemented the Adoption and Insights Portal from Barnes & Noble College, its longtime partner, to improve the user experience and bolster reporting capabilities.

The portal offers a centralized, easy-to-use platform for faculty and administrators. Finding affordable options and comparing pricing on the portal are simple. Faculty can adopt (and re-adopt) the best course materials for their courses, ensuring students get what they need, at the best prices available.

School administrators have real-time access to adoption rates and other key metrics, providing the insights they need to send timely email reminders, both automated and on-demand, through the portal. The enhanced reporting and dashboard visuals also support regulatory compliance – without the labor-intensive process.

“I’ve never had this at my fingertips before. It’s tremendously helpful to have the visualization of the dashboard instead of spreadsheet after spreadsheet,”

Birgitta Rausch-Montoto, Director of Global Strategy and Faculty Success and Chair, Textbook Affordability Task Force, FIU

“The real-time reporting and dashboard visuals allow us to pinpoint the submission rates and calculate compliance with requirements from the State of Florida. It’s instrumental in communicating to college liaisons if their unit is on track or if they may need to ramp up their efforts to meet compliance levels.”

Within the first semester, the portal not only supported a smoother process and 98% adoption rate – it provided real-time insights and enhanced reporting needed for regulatory compliance.

“In partnership with Barnes & Noble College and our campus bookstore manager we documented what works and what doesn’t and took the takeaways to improve the process,” said Rausch-Montoto. “The willingness to jointly develop a faculty- and results-oriented tool will not only generate new efficiencies but result in greater textbook affordability and ultimately our students’ success.”

SOLUTIONS FROM BARNES & NOBLE COLLEGE

The Adoption & Insights Portal (AIP)

This centralized platform provides faculty and administrators with the right tools to support timely adoption of course materials. AIP makes it easy for faculty to browse over 10 million ISBNs and a range of textbooks, eBooks and courseware from a large and diverse group of publishers, then adopt (and re-adopt) the best course materials. School administrators get real-time access to adoption rates, providing the insights they need to send timely reminders, both automated and on-demand, through the portal.

First Day® Complete

This complete access solution provides every student with all their course materials, digital and print, in time for the first day of class. Leveraging economies of scale with top publishers, Barnes & Noble College secures significant savings for students (an average savings of 40-50%), and a flat-rate, per-credit-hour cost is included in their tuition and fees as a course charge. With no additional costs and no surprises, First Day® Complete provides added value for students and their parents, enhances the college experience and sets the stage for better student outcomes.



Our forward-thinking solutions are designed to help colleges and universities navigate the fast-paced changes occurring in higher education, solve pressing challenges on campus and drive much-needed revenue. Let Barnes & Noble College help your institution achieve success today! For more information visit

www.bncollege.com.