

**BEST PRACTICES GUIDELINES ON TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY MEASURES**  
**Prince George's Community College**

*Draft: 5/18/09*

**I. Purpose**

Prince George's Community College recognizes that excessive textbook costs must be addressed in order to maintain access and affordability for PGCC students. Therefore the institution shall implement the measures outlined in the following best practices guidelines.

**II. Best Practices Guidelines**

1. PGCC shall post on the institutional website the ISBN, title, author, publisher, and edition for required course material as soon as faculty members and the bookstore have finalized the textbook selection, but no later than May 1 for the fall semester and December 1 for the spring semester. In the case that a course has not been assigned a faculty member by the given deadline, textbook selection shall be conducted and communicated to enrolled students expeditiously upon selection of the materials.
2. PGCC shall communicate to students that textbooks may be obtained at lower prices from discount vendors.
3. The college bookstore shall provide faculty members who are placing book orders with current information about the retail price of selected course materials.
4. Faculty teaching the same course for multiple semesters are encouraged to use the same textbooks and course materials for multiple semesters to the extent practicable and educationally sound.
5. Faculty should be encouraged to order new editions of textbooks only if necessary and if older editions are not of comparable educational content. Faculty should list information pertinent to previous editions which are of acceptable use
6. The institution shall make faculty aware of the option to request unbundled versions of textbook and course materials and of the price differential.
7. Faculty should order textbook bundles only if the supplements included with textbooks are necessary to the curriculum and instruction.
8. In the case that a faculty member assigns bundled materials, the bookstore shall make available both bundled and unbundled versions of the materials for purchase. The institution and bookstore shall clarify on the bookstore website that in the case of the assignment of bundled materials, students should purchase either the bundled package or all required portions of the bundle individually.
9. The bookstore should offer both print and electronic versions of textbooks whenever possible; faculty should permit students to purchase electronic versions.
10. Faculty should make every effort to use free open source learning content whenever appropriate and educationally sound.

11. Faculty members should incorporate into course instruction the use of online resources wherever feasible and prudent.

12. PGCC shall investigate measures to assist students in printing required digital learning content.

13. PGCC shall seek ways to lessen the financial hardship of college textbook purchases, such as targeted scholarship and financial aid funds, consideration of textbook rentals for introductory courses, consideration of placing selected course materials on reserve in campus libraries when practicable, and development of customized course materials. The institution shall consider incentives for faculty to develop customized course materials.

### III. Implementation

These best practices guidelines shall be effective beginning with course materials examined and ordered after July 1, 2009.

These best practices guidelines should be implemented collaboratively by faculty, institutional managers, the bookstore, the library, students, and other stakeholders.

PGCC shall include in course evaluations questions concerning the use and value of assigned textbooks and other course materials.

The institution should make faculty aware of the provisions in this best practices guidelines handout each semester.

PGCC shall periodically assess the effectiveness of these guidelines, including publishing specific data regarding textbook cost reductions.