



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3341-3-70 Selection of textbooks and other instructional materials.

Effective: March 18, 2020

(A) Policy statement and purpose

Section 3345.025 of the Revised Code requires each state institution of higher education to adopt a textbook selection policy for faculty to follow in selecting and assigning textbooks and other instructional materials for use in courses offered by the institution. 20 U.S.C 1015b requires each institution of higher education that receives federal financial assistance to provide certain information about required and recommended textbooks and supplemental materials before course registration. This policy is intended to promote compliance with those statutes. It includes faculty responsibilities and actions faculty should take in selecting and assigning textbooks and other instructional materials.

(B) Policy scope

This policy applies to each course offered at BGSU and to all textbooks sold to the university or its students.

(C) Definitions

(1) Faculty

As used in paragraphs (A) to (D) of this policy, the term faculty means the instructor of record for a course. In paragraph (E) of this rule, faculty means all university faculty and those other university employees who are teaching a course or courses.

(2) Textbook

The term textbook includes all instructional materials purchased by BGSU students.



(D) Policy

(1) Academic freedom

The university recognizes that faculty have a right to select their own textbooks, but that right is limited by considerations such as quality, cost, availability, and the need for coordination with other faculty or courses. Subject to those considerations and applicable law, faculty are free to select course content and textbooks that they deem most appropriate for their course offering and that also align with curricula approved by the program, department, or school.

(2) Quality and excellence

The academic freedom exercised by faculty carries with it the responsibility of assuring a teaching environment in which learning thrives. High quality textbooks and their effective use in class contribute significantly to that outcome. When considering which textbooks are most suitable for use within a course, faculty shall consider the following factors:

- (a) The reputation of the author and publisher;
- (b) Content coverage and the textbooks popularity;
- (c) Physical characteristics relevant to convenience of use by all students (such as size, weight, electronic accessibility, and equipment demand);
- (d) Affordability; and
- (e) Discipline-specific considerations.

(3) Minimizing costs

When selecting textbooks, faculty shall give particular consideration to keeping the cost to students as low as practicable without compromising the quality of their education. Faculty are encouraged to consider assigning or allowing students to use ebooks or older editions when feasible; to investigate



alternative sources such as library materials and open-access materials; and to put materials on reserve in the library.

Faculty should require the purchase of a textbook only if it is an integral and extensively-used part of the course. If a textbook is to be used for occasional consultation only, faculty should not require students to purchase it.

(4) When information about textbooks is provided to students; results of non-fulfillment

In an effort to reduce costs to students and allow them ample time to obtain materials before the start of class, faculty shall use the appropriate institutional outlets to provide students with as much information as possible about all textbooks required for a course, including ISBN number and price. To assure compliance with federal law, this information must be made available before the first day of registration for the course.

If this deadline is not met, the department chair/school director shall select the textbook(s) for the course.

The department chair/school director shall select the textbook(s) for any course or course section without an assigned instructor of record.

When selecting a textbook, the chair or director shall consult with faculty in the unit when practicable.

(E) Ohio ethics law awareness; earning royalties or other payments on sales of textbooks

Ohio ethics law prohibits a public official or employee from making a decision or recommendation that results in a personal benefit. Accordingly, a faculty member who stands to earn a royalty or other payment from the sale or rental of a textbook shall not participate in any discussion or decision-making related to the selection of that textbook for use in any university course. The faculty member may identify the textbook as suitable for use, but the decision to select or assign the textbook shall only be made by the department chair or school director (with the concurrence of the dean or designee) or by the relevant curriculum or textbook selection committee.



To help ensure compliance with Ohio ethics law, faculty members shall also refrain from: selling a textbook directly to a student; selling to anyone (e.g., a book reseller) a textbook the faculty member received because of their employment at BGSU; and participating in any manner in the selection of a textbook if the faculty member receives any payment (e.g., a consulting fee) from a company engaged in the sale or distribution of textbooks.