

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS POLICY

I. Policy Section

7.0 Instruction

II. Policy Subsection

7.3 Instructional Materials

III. Policy Statement

A. Guiding Principles

1. Cost is one of the most significant barriers to higher education. Without compromising academic standards or academic freedom, lower-cost instructional materials are a better choice than more expensive instructional materials.
2. Fewer departmental or program options for instructional materials promotes curricular consistency. This is particularly important in environments that employ larger numbers of adjunct faculty.
3. A smaller number of instructional materials options stabilizes the resale market for used instructional materials and helps keep student materials costs low.
4. All materials selected for a course must provide for equal access as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act of 1973). This requirement for accessibility applies to websites and all other adjunctive resources identified for use in the course.
5. An apparent conflict of interest may occur when instructional materials produced by a faculty member are required or recommended for a course taught by that faculty member, and where the sale of such materials produces financial gain for the faculty member. In such a circumstance, the faculty member and the department must address this issue directly.

B. Policy Parameters

1. Every course shall have an identified set of instructional materials that support the course curriculum.
2. Instructional materials that must be purchased by students shall be adopted for no less than two consecutive years. Specific exceptions to this are:
 - a. if a department/program selects freely licensed materials (“Open Educational Resources - OER”) that provide access to the instructional materials at no or low-cost to the students in the course. Because of the significant financial benefit to students in the course, traditional commercial materials may be

replaced with OER materials if the department/program chooses to do so prior to the conclusion of the two-year adoption period.

- b. if curriculum in an area changes significantly such that adherence to the established time-period would render course content out-of-date with contemporary standards.
- c. if an instructor identifies instructional materials that better expand the diversity of perspectives included and/or support the equity and inclusion goals in their existing curriculum.

3. All instructional materials identified as required or recommended, including OERs, will be adopted through the process established by the respective department/discipline and ordered by the Department Head/Program Director or their designee. This selection will conform to the calendar established for instructional materials selection. If instructional materials options considered by the department have been authored by a member of the department, that member should recuse themselves from the selection decision to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest in this selection. (If instructional materials authored by a member of the department are selected for use, the member and department should address this conflict in the manner identified in the *Procedures* section below.) Differences of opinion among faculty members regarding instructional materials choices will be resolved through the process established by the department/program.

4. Instructional materials, which are adopted by the department/discipline, shall be used by all faculty teaching that course. If the department/discipline approves multiple materials options, anyone teaching the course must use one of the identified options. If a material is identified as *required* for a course, it must be used substantively in the course (i.e., students must only be required to purchase materials that are used substantively in the course - for assigned readings, homework, activities, etc.).

5. Instructional materials selection decisions will include the following three primary considerations: 1) quality of content to meet course learning outcomes, 2) cost to students, and 3) equal access as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act of 1973). Because of the significant importance given to promoting access to higher education by controlling student educational costs, departments or programs will consider free/low-cost textbooks that meet qualitative requirements. If more than one textbook meets the quality and accessibility criteria above, preference will be given to a free/low-cost textbook. If more than one textbook meets the quality, cost, and accessibility criteria above, preference will be given to those that are available in multiple formats (e.g. electronic, print, e-book).

6. Variation from this policy can be confirmed with or resolved by the Department Head/Program Director and, if necessary, with the mediation of appropriate Dean or Associate Dean. Those variations shall be aligned with the Guiding Principles laid out in III.A.

7. Departments that order materials that are electronic or are bundled with electronic media containing courseware or software applications must acquire a sufficient number of licenses for the College to use in its computer labs and classrooms.
8. Departments that order printed instructional materials should make every effort to ensure print copies are available in the Library reserve collection and relevant tutorial labs on campus.

IV. Reason for Policy

To give clear direction dealing with use and ordering of instructional materials and supplies that support the curricular outcomes of a course, while ensuring these materials meet the college's commitment to controlling costs that promote access to higher education, and providing equal access for all students as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act of 1973).

V. Entities Affected by This Policy

College faculty, staff and students involved in instructional materials selection, purchase and use. The GRCC Bookstore, and other bookstores and entities that provide instructional materials adopted for use in GRCC courses.

VI. Who Should Read This Policy

Deans, Associate Deans, Academic Department Heads and Program Directors, Faculty, Academic Department Support Staff, Printing Services, Bookstores and Publishers.

VII. Related Documents

- GRCC Guidelines for Assuring Accessibility of Instructional Materials
<https://www.grcc.edu/faculty-staff/general-counsel/americans-disabilities-act/faculty-staff-resources/accessibility-quick-guide-resources>
- GRCC Bookstore Oversight Committee Timelines and Processes for Textbook Ordering
- National Center on Accessible Instructional Material
<http://aem.cast.org/supporting/higher-education-aem.html>
- GRCC Copyright Policy
https://www.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/docs/policies/3-0_copyright.pdf
- Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html>

VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: AGC

Deans, Associate Deans, Academic Department Heads and Program Directors, and
Printing and Graphic Services

Director of Disability Support Services

Director of Equal Opportunity Compliance

IX. Definitions

- A. Instructional Materials – (including printed and digital materials, and web-based instructional resources) created and selected to promote understanding and facilitate student acquisition of course curriculum outcomes.
- B. Course Packs – customized course materials developed in-house. (Note: All materials must meet Copyright regulations, see GRCC Copyright Policy linked above.)
- C. Open Educational Resources (OER) - freely accessible, openly licensed documents and media used as instructional materials in teaching and learning environments.
- D. Course Supplies – Special instructional supplies required for a course.
- E. Software/electronic Media: Audio, video, electronic media, off air recording, computer software, etc.

X. Procedures

- A. Each department/program is encouraged to establish their own instructional materials selection process, inclusive of a method for constructively resolving differences of opinion among members. A rubric for the selection of instructional materials as designed by the department/program is recommended. Materials selection will include the following four primary considerations:
 1. Quality of content to meet course learning outcomes
 2. Cost to students
 3. Equal access as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act of 1973). In compliance with ADA Title II regulations, digital learning materials will meet the current or previous version of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Additional accessibility criteria may be considered.
 4. Equitable and inclusive frameworks
- B. When multiple instructors teach courses with multiple sections, using the established instructional materials selection process, the department must decide if there is going to be a single set of instructional materials used by all faculty teaching the course or if there are

multiple options available to course instructors. If there is more than one official set of instructional materials, the following algorithm will be employed to determine the maximum number of instructional materials options that can be used. The number of sections applies to a single semester.

1. 8 or fewer sections: 1 base set of instructional materials or 2 if one or both are OER.
2. 9 to 25 sections: 2 base options or 3 if one or more are OER.
3. More than 25 sections: 3 base options or 4 if one or more are OER.

If a faculty member is assigned multiple sections of a single course that has more than one instructional materials option, every effort should be made so that each section assigned to that faculty member uses the same single set of course materials (i.e., a faculty member should not have to use multiple sets of instructional materials to teach a single course).

Regardless of the number of sections of a particular course offered, courses taught in an alternative delivery format (e.g., online, hybrid, etc.) may necessitate the use of different instructional materials. Use of the aforementioned three primary considerations (i.e., quality, cost and accessibility) continue to guide the selection, as does use of the departmental instructional materials selection process.

- C. Faculty-produced course packs must follow the established procedures and timelines, which are available through the School Dean's Office or GRCC's Printing and Graphic Services. Faculty are encouraged to also provide students with a digital version of course packs through their learning management system.
- D. In order to be compliant with federal regulations, where practicable, each section of a course should have instructional materials assigned to it by the date of registration. This allows the bookstore to order the materials in a timely manner and students have access to that information when selecting courses.
 1. When the timelines for instructional materials selection and faculty assignments for a given course are not practicable by the date of registration, all unassigned sections should get the designation 'To Be Determined' until such time that instructional materials are adopted.
 2. In courses where more than one base selection option is available (See Section B), a default instructional materials option for unassigned sections will be determined through the process established by their department/discipline.
 3. If a course section is still unassigned to any faculty member at the first tuition deadline for students for the upcoming semester, then instructional materials for each unassigned section will be determined through the process established by their department/discipline (e.g. through the textbook selection committee or using default instructional materials option).

- E. Faculty must make every effort to have instructional materials/supplies available for students by the first day of class, and preferably before.
- F. An apparent conflict of interest may occur when instructional materials produced by a faculty member are required for a course taught by that faculty member, and where the sale of such materials produces financial gain for the faculty member. In such a circumstance, the faculty member and the department must address this issue directly in the following manner:
 1. The faculty member must inform the department chair or program director about the selection and this unit head must inform the dean of the school.
 2. The faculty member must disclose this issue to students along with the efforts taken to address and mitigate the same.
 3. The faculty member should accommodate students who choose not to purchase the materials by placing copies on reserve in the library.
 4. The faculty member is encouraged to avoid this personal financial gain by donating royalties from the sale of the materials to the GRCC Foundation or to another charitable organization of the faculty member's choosing.

XI. Forms

Ordering forms from the College Bookstore must be supervised as needed by the appropriate Department Head/Program Director.

XII. Effective Date

Winter 2026

XII. Policy History

June 11, 2001 – Approved December 12, 2001

Revised and Approved by AGC - April 23, 2013

Revised and Approved by AGC – February 14, 2017

Revised and Approved by AGC – January 21, 2020

Revised and Approved by AGC – April 12, 2022

Revised and Approved by AGC – December 3, 2024

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date:

Next Review: 2027-2028