

The Textbook Process at SUNY Potsdam

SUNY Potsdam offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses. There are eight different course types offered on the SUNY Potsdam campus: lecture, seminar, discussion, lab, distance learning, tutorials, independent studies, and student teaching. Buying and selling textbooks and course material for these course offerings is a complex process.

The college employs an average of 275 faculty members to teach courses each semester. Many courses have multiple class sections and each section can require different titles. "Titles" include books and course packs. Course packs include bundled items, such as lab books, CD, and duplicated materials.

Faculty adopt titles by communicating to the textbook manager of The College Store which books will be used in what class section(s).

The next step in the cycle is sourcing. The textbook manager must research where the book/course material can be purchased, its rarity (availability), what formats it is in (new, used, e-book, rental, open source, custom press, or authorized duplication) and the cost.

The textbook manager then must determine quantities of books to buy. The store buyer's most critical role is estimating how much to buy and from whom.

The College Store runs a buyback program, purchasing books from students to resell. The store buyer's most critical role is estimating how much to buy and from whom. To do so, she must determine the quantity on hand in inventory, determine the quantity she expects to receive through buyback, comparing those figures to the sourcing information and enrollment figures.

The next step is to order the appropriate number of books, coordinate and receive shipment, manage inventory and stock shelves.