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Date: December 4, 2022
To: Christopher Dowd, PhD
Chair of English Department
University of New Haven
From: Asher Duke, Senior Operations Manager
Subject: Recommendation Report for Textbook Assignment at UNH

I am a student at the University of New Haven who has been tasked with deciding whether to require students to purchase the latest edition of Technical Communication. The research question I am pursuing is if it is worth the money to buy the most recent addition of Technical Communication by Mike Markel and Stuart A. Selber. I will be preparing a recommendation report for the chair of the English department, Christopher Dowd, PhD.

Attached is the report for the “Textbook Assignment and Access at the University of New Haven” for the English department at the University of New Haven.” This report details the impact of textbooks on students and the environment, and detail ways in which the university can offset the burden of textbooks.

To carry out these tasks I used several secondary and primary sources. I analyzed each one and took all necessary data from each. These sources allowed me to form my conclusion and back it up using data.

My findings are that textbooks put a large financial strain on students, and that assigning expensive books harms them. In addition, their lifecycle, environmental impact, and cost to benefit make them harmful in all facets. I found the best course of action to be the creation of a regulatory committee that ensures students are paying a fair and reasonable price for textbooks. I also found that the best way to offset the environmental impact of textbook production to be switching to an online database that students could access through the university’s library.

**Textbook
Assignment
and Access at the
University of New Haven:
A Recommendation Report**

Prepared for: Christopher Dowd, PhD
Chair of English Department
University of New Haven

Prepared by: Asher Duke, Senior Operations Manager

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Abstract

“Textbook Assignment and Access at the University of New Haven: A Recommendation Report”

Prepared by: Asher Duke, Student and Senior Operations Manager

On October 30th, 2022, Dr. Devon Moore, Professor of Technical Writing at the University of New Haven (UNH), Approved a proposal by Asher Duke (Student and Senior Operations Manager) to carry out a study on textbook purchasing at UNH. The author began by performing research to fully grasp the prices of textbooks and their environmental impact, lifecycle, and cost to benefit. The author found that textbooks cause major financial and psychological stress on students across the nation, primarily due to their excessive cost and the rate at which they are required to purchase new textbooks. The environmental impact of book production is largely negative, causing pollution and carbon emissions at nearly every step of the process. Regarding the lifecycle of textbooks, they are used for a short period of time, and their short-term impact does not justify the damage that they cause. In addition, the cost to benefit of textbooks is nearly nonexistent, considering that prices have been on a rise since 2006. All this information allowed the author to come to a final conclusion and recommendation about price, production and accessibility. Ultimately, textbooks cause a large, negative environmental impact. I recommend that the University of New Haven form a regulatory committee to ensure students are paying fair and reasonable prices for their textbooks. Additionally, to offset the environmental impact of textbook production the university should switch to digital textbooks, accessible through the University’s library. Ultimately, the purchasing of textbooks is a financially, psychologically, and environmentally harmful practice, and the goal of the university should be to offset all damages caused from using textbooks.

Keywords: textbooks, environmental impact, lifecycle of textbooks, cost benefit/cost to benefit, academic career, literary entertainment, physical books, magazines, short-term, long-term

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Executive Summary

To determine whether or not to assign the latest edition of textbooks, I studied the various effects of the textbook industry and its ramifications on students. I assessed the environmental impact, the lifecycle of textbooks, and the cost and benefit of assigning university students the latest edition and interviewed ten students on their opinions about textbooks.

At this time, university students are being assigned extremely expensive textbooks. Unfortunately, this poses several financial issues for them, and there is very little discretion on the university's part regarding ensuring textbook prices do not harm students.

To carry out this study, I completed four tasks. First, I interviewed ten students of various socioeconomic backgrounds to find a sample of how textbook prices affect them. Then, I established the cost/benefit of assigning the most recent editions of textbooks. Next, I analyzed the lifecycle of textbooks. Lastly, I explored the environmental impact of textbook production. After this research I collected data and wrote the report.

My main finding is that assigning the latest editions of textbooks causes major financial and psychological stress on students. With the rising costs of textbooks, some students may find their financial ability to attend a university to be threatened. Considering that students can be assigned multiple textbooks per class and per semester, this is a legitimate worry that could impact future student's ability to attend this university. If these rising costs continue, students worry that they will not be able to afford textbooks in the near future. When it comes to the lifecycle of textbooks, students only tend to use them for a single semester. This can create waste and is one of many reasons that textbooks should not be so expensive. Lastly, the production and distribution of textbooks has a harmful impact on the environment, with massive carbon emissions at nearly every step of the process.

I recommend two separate changes to how the university assigns textbooks. First, a regulatory committee should be established in order to ensure that students are paying a fair and reasonable price for their textbooks. This committee would be tasked with speaking directly to textbook companies and distribution companies like Chegg to negotiate lower prices for members of the University of New Haven. This would help to lower the prices of textbooks for university students, and would ensure that the financial burden of textbooks is offset for them. Second, I recommend that the university purchase the licenses to digital textbooks and making them accessible to university students would remove most of the cost of textbooks, and ensure that professors could continue to assign the most recent textbooks, allowing students to utilize up to date and accurate information.

Introduction

To determine whether or not to assign the latest edition of textbooks, I studied the various effects of the textbook industry and its ramifications on students. I assessed the environmental impact, the lifecycle of textbooks, and the cost and benefit of assigning university students the latest edition and interviewed ten students on their opinions about textbooks.

At this time, university students are being assigned extremely expensive textbooks. Unfortunately, this poses several financial issues for them, and there is very little discretion on the university's part regarding ensuring textbook prices do not harm students.

I undertook four primary tasks in order to gather accurate data:

- Interview ten students about textbook prices across their classes
- Establish the Cost/Benefit of assigning the most recent editions of textbooks to students
- Analyze the Lifecycle of textbooks
- Explore the environmental impact of textbook production

I found that students undergo major stress when it comes to the purchasing of textbooks, primarily due to their price. I discovered that the cost of textbooks had risen exorbitantly since 2006. In addition, I explored the lifecycle of textbooks, finding that they are often used briefly throughout a student's career. Finally, I detailed book production's harmful impact on the environment, and a potential solution of moving to a digital publishing platform for textbooks.

Textbooks, simply put, are used as tools to teach. They contain activities, questions, guides, and information about a multitude of subjects and topics. For hundreds of years, the textbook has been used by educators to enforce and explain the learnings of lessons. They provide a crucial visual aid to classes that may otherwise be convoluted, and they ensure that a curriculum is learned in a specific way. According to B. R. Buckingham et al., "Next to the teacher himself, the textbook probably exerts greater influence than any other school factor upon the curriculum of American schools." (Buckingham et al. 1., 1952). This take remains true to this day, with even more incorporation of textbooks into the curriculum. Wordly Wise 3000, for example, is a group of textbooks that serve to teach students a plethora of new words. Each edition of Wordly Wise contains three hundred new words, with activities to enforce the included lessons. This reaches a total of three-thousand words over the nine published books. Teachers from grades K-12 have used the Wordly Wise textbooks to introduce a more extensive vocabulary to their students. Generally, students are purchasing, on average, seven textbooks per semester. This comes out to fourteen textbooks per year, and ultimately fifty-six textbooks over a four-year college education (Decision Matrix)

In this regard, textbooks remain valuable tools but become a predatory and outright harmful product within the college setting. The cost of college textbooks is exorbitant and is often a significant source of worry for students. Their environmental impact can also be harmful, as the practices for producing, printing, and shipping textbooks are unsustainable. Alongside those issues, textbooks have also been used to harm marginalized groups through the use of outdated and racist stereotypes that are still taught. Due to these factors, there have been movements to "deregulate" the use of textbooks within the classroom. Deregulation of textbooks first occurred

in 1992, when "...Sweden... deregulated textbook approval." (Reichenberg, 2016). Other countries quickly adopted similar methods, proving that deregulation is a possibility. Advocates believe that textbooks hamper the creative freedom of professors to instruct and students to learn. They argue that "A deregulated system makes it easier to motivate pupils, adapt to their different learning styles, challenge pupils, and adjust to different reading abilities." (Reichenberg, 2016). The idea that textbooks do more harm than good to the development of students is cause for concern, seeing as the majority of the education taught within the United States is done through the use of textbooks. In fact, in college alone, students are required to purchase an average of seven textbooks per semester (Decision Matrix). The importance of ensuring that students receive a proper and complete education should be the top priority of educational institutions. If textbooks are a hindrance towards that goal, it becomes the responsibility of said institutions to make room for a better system.

First and foremost, I recommend that a committee dedicated to ensuring affordable book prices be formed to lessen students' financial burdens. Next, I recommend that the university library digitally add textbooks to its services to reduce textbooks' environmental impact. In addition, this would also help students forgo the costs of textbooks entirely and minimize any waste once the student no longer needs the textbook. These opinions are based on several environmental and financial reasons discussed in the sections below.

The following sections will detail research methods, results, my conclusions, a more detailed recommendation, references, and an appendix.

Research Methods

I began my research by interviewing ten college students of various economic and social backgrounds on various ways textbook prices have impacted them. I emphasized the need for a focus on financial burdens first and foremost with most of the questions focusing on the prices of textbooks and the psychological effects that they cause on the students. I avoided questions that could be seen as “too personal,” with answers pertaining to specific classes, professors, and university grants stricken from the record.

During the beginning phase of research, I quickly discovered the tendency of subjects to lament any costs from textbooks. In order to combat this, I reminded subjects that they were only being asked about textbook prices and their effects unless otherwise stated. In addition, questions asked were either yes or no, open ended, or financial in nature. Post-interview, I compiled all the results of the data into various graphs in order to better organize my findings.

I analyzed at several peer reviewed sources and one BBC article to provide data in order to prove my research. In addition, I made sure that each source was still applicable as to not include anything disproven. While some of the sources are significantly older, they still provide factual and proven information, and in many ways, back up the more modern sources. For source collection, I used JSTOR library, where I used several keywords such as “textbook,” “cost,” “student,” and many more.

To perform the tasks outlined below, the research report was divided into seven sections:

1. Interview ten students about textbook prices across their classes
2. Plot out all results from the interview
3. Discover the median cost of textbooks nationally and within the interview pool
4. Establish the Cost/Benefit of assigning the most recent editions of textbooks to students
5. Assess the rising cost of textbooks starting from year 2006
6. Analyze the lifecycle of textbooks
7. Explore the environmental impact of textbook production

Task 1: Interview ten students about textbook prices across their classes

Ten students were interviewed with various questions based on the textbook prices and the effects they have on them. The questions asked are as follows:

1. How many books do you buy per semester?
2. Approximately how much do you spend on books per semester?
3. Do your professors assign the latest editions of textbooks?
4. Have you found the purchasing of textbooks to be a stressful experience?
5. Do textbook prices put a financial strain on you?
6. Do you ever worry about being able to afford textbooks?

As was to be expected, each subject gave varying answers. As many of the questions are opinion based, it was initially difficult to justify including them, however, upon further review of the emotional aspect of a financial burden, the questions were left in in order to provide context and reasoning for the answers given. Ultimately, the information provided by subjects is relatively similar, and while the questions are diverse in nature, serve to establish a general baseline for student’s opinions.

The questions can be found in the Appendix on page 15

Task 2: Establish the Cost/Benefit of assigning the most recent editions of textbooks to students

It is clear that the prices of textbooks have risen since 2006, but I needed to collect data to prove so. If prices have continued to rise, it would mean that the latest editions of textbooks would be quite expensive for most students.

First, I needed a baseline price for textbooks, which came out to around \$100. Then, using several sources I tracked the increase of textbook prices until 2016, which came out to \$187.50. This proved that textbooks are getting more expensive, which was the catalyst needed to explain why it puts a growing financial burden on students. For this reason, I made sure to only look at sources from the year 2016 for the cost of textbooks in 2016 so that I could get a definitive number for that year. Admittedly, it appears that textbook costs have remained relatively similar since then, with a small increase over the years. That said, the cost in 2016 is still rather large, especially when some classes have multiple textbooks.

Next, I wanted to establish the average cost of textbooks over one academic year. I could have just calculated the price based off the numbers I already had, but several surveys exist which sampled large data pools of students. Looking at a peer reviewed source, I found the average price, which was over \$1000.

Task 3: Analyze the Lifecycle of textbooks

After understanding the costs of textbooks, it was important to analyze how long a textbook could be expected to stay in use. This would be essential in exploring the long-term environmental impact. If textbooks are only used once in a student's academic career, then their production causes long-term damage for short-term gains. This task's purpose was mainly to enforce data and opinions about the other three tasks.

Task 4: Explore the environmental impact of textbook production

For the environmental impact of textbook production, it was essential to take a wider look at the book production industry as a whole. The reason being textbook production is often lumped in with other literary entertainment production. While this made finding specific statistics about textbook production impossible, understanding how book production effects the environment as a whole was crucial in determining the impact.

Physical books of all kinds are of course made of paper. Considering paper is produced from trees, I based my initial research at looking toward the production of magazines. Magazines are of course used for a much shorter period of time than textbooks, so applying its paper consumption seems like a reach, but it gave me the ability to look at how much paper textbooks may need. This proved to be a good choice as it led me to analyzing other factors of book production, such as ink and carbon emissions.

Results

Task 1: Interview ten students about textbook prices across their classes

10 students of various socioeconomic backgrounds were asked about questions pertaining to textbook prices. The questions and decision matrix (from which data was drawn) can be found in the appendix on page 15. The following results and graphs provide the full data gathered in an informed and organized manner.

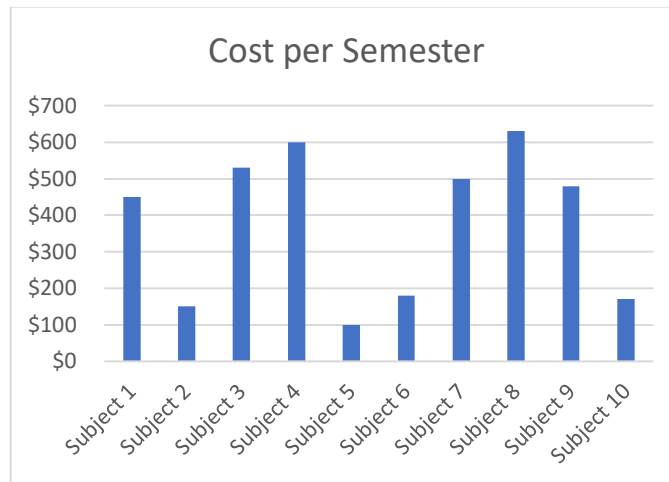


Figure 1

As can be seen in the bar graph above, students are expected to pay upwards of \$630 dollars per semester on textbooks. On average, students can expect to pay around \$379 dollars per semester on textbooks.

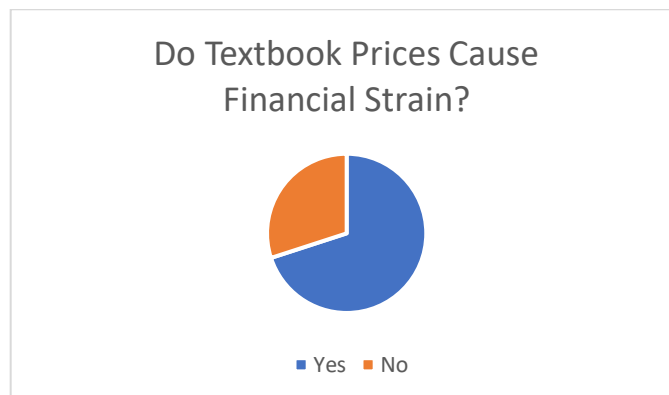


Figure 2

As can be seen in the pie chart above, an overwhelming 70% of students are under financial strain due to textbook prices. Similarly, 70% of students worry about being able to afford textbooks. Following the same pattern, 70% of university professors assign the latest edition of textbooks. In addition, 100% of subjects found the purchasing of textbooks to be a stressful event. This data has been provided from the results of the student interview, the entire result of which can be found in the appendix section.

This data proves that the overwhelming majority of students are worried about being able to afford the textbooks that their instructors assign. The main reason being the exorbitant prices of a four-year college degree putting enough stress on finances, and added costs such as room and board and textbooks being a major factor in psychological distress.

Task 2: Establish the Cost/Benefit of assigning the most recent editions of textbooks to students

It is no question that textbook prices are expensive. One major issue among college students is the price of newer textbooks. With the costs rising each year, it can be a daunting task for students to purchase the latest edition.

In January of 2006, college textbooks cost (on average) **\$100.00**. By July of 2016, the price of college textbooks rose to **\$187.50** (College Tuition and Fees, 2016). The trend has seemingly leveled off, as, “Currently, the average college textbook costs an estimated \$105.37.” (Hanson, 2022). That said, the cost of \$105.37 is still expensive, and according to my interview results, 70% of students are put under financial strain as a result (Decision Matrix). While that figure is significantly less than the estimated cost in July of 2016, it is essential to note that “The average full-time, in-state undergraduate student at a four-year public university pays **\$1,226** for books and supplies in one academic year.” (Hanson, 2022). When the price paired with the fact that, as of April 2018, “...36% of university students were food insecure...36% of university students were housing insecure...9% of university students were homeless...” (Goldric-Rab et al., 2018). In addition, the psychological stress of being unable to afford necessary college items can lead to “...increased students’ role strain” (Grady et al., 2014) which can lead to a decrease in productivity. Considering that “25% of students reported they worked extra hours to pay for their books and materials...” (Hanson, 2022), it is the university’s responsibility to ensure that the textbooks they assign are not only necessary but have a justifiable cost.

Some ways to circumvent this cost are to switch to online editions of textbooks or have a university library provide textbooks to students at a low cost. One potential solution to the rampant cost of textbooks is to create a student advocacy committee responsible for textbook pricing in the campus bookstore. While bookstore oversight is usually combined with other committees, having a separate committee is “more likely to attract vigorous faculty participation and focus attention on this critical area.” (Walton et al., 2005). It is important for universities to help its student bod

Task 3: Analyze the Lifecycle of textbooks

While the bulk of the discussion so far has been about the cost and environmental impact of textbooks, there is also a debate to be had about their usefulness and value within the classroom. Generally, the purpose of a textbook is to provide educators and students with material and procedures to enhance the learning experience. That said, there are issues with this way of thinking. Often, textbooks are written from a single perspective or collective idea on how teachers should teach a topic. In tandem, they are often fact-based, and will avoid presenting opinionated points on what would otherwise be nuanced topics. This creates a divide between the reasons for an event or procedure and the “why” of their existence. For example, if a history textbook only bolsters one side of a war, it disregards the human aspect of war and creates an objective reality where one cannot truly exist. This “objective fact” is an illusion of reality, and in that respect, “This illusion, moreover, is generally used to inculcate nothing less than standard

dogma.” (Friesen, 2013). While this may seem applicable to the histories only, there is actual harm that such thought can cause within writing fields as well. This applies to *Technical Writing* specifically as the writing format changes quite often, and while information listed in the current edition may be accurate as of writing, it can very quickly fall out of date, or be entirely useless. For example, a student could argue that much of what gets taught in *Technical Communication* is not modern enough, with several industry standards no longer being applicable as a younger generation takes over the workplace. There are times where the information can quickly become outdated or even incorrect. This task’s purpose was mainly to enforce data and opinions about the other three tasks.

With APA updates, some of the formattings of the book could even come into question. If the standard for memos is currently formal, who is to say that it will not change to informal next year? Importantly, edition 13 of *Technical Communication* has already made several significant changes, such as adding “New Coverage on nontraditional résumés” (Markel et al., 2021) in chapter 15 and “Strategies for Online Communication: Moderating User Forums” (Markel et al., 2021) in chapter 20. In the past, prospective employers would have thrown nontraditional résumés away immediately, and online communication in the workplace has only recently become a significant issue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While online communication has been used for years, it has become the norm within the workplace and educational system as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering this edition was published in 2021, there have already been significant changes to both nontraditional résumés and online communication within a year.

As stated throughout this report, textbooks are a tool with many issues. One of the most prevalent of which stems from the single-book nature of the education system. Students at any educational level will often be tasked with learning from a single textbook. That said, it is important to note the addition of online materials in tandem with textbook information has been used in many courses, Technical Writing or ENGL-2225 included. While this gives necessary information, as proven in this report, textbooks can show significant biases and, in some circumstances, blatant misinformation or propaganda. In that respect, it is dangerous to have students rely entirely on a single source of information. Having a student draw all relevant information from a single source leaves room for bias. This becomes an even bigger issue when considering the number of outdated textbooks in use. Even in college courses, outdated textbooks have been used. While it is cheaper to use older textbooks, and it does work for some majors, others require up-to-date information, like history or psychology, so that the information students are learning is accurate.

Task 4: Explore the environmental impact of textbook production

Books significantly impact the environment, as they are mostly made up of paper. That, however, is not the only impact that they have. The CO₂ emissions from obtaining the wood to make the paper, the CO₂ impact from printing and transportation, and the waste from unsold books are all major causes for concern regarding the sustainability of textbook manufacturing. When it comes to wood harvesting and printing, “...62.7 percent of carbon dioxide (CO₂) is released from forest and forest harvest impacts of book industry followed by 26.6 percent emitted from paper production and printing impacts.” (Rizvi et al., 2012). While the book industry as a whole is environmentally unsustainable, textbooks are specifically harmful, as their

nature is to get replaced upon the publishing of a new edition, which, in many cases, have nominal changes. To look at the widespread impact of book printing, "...as much as 95%-comes from trees, and not recycled sources." (Munger, 2008). This small example highlights the massive amounts of paper used within the short life cycle of texts.

While one may argue that textbooks get used for more extended periods of time, the end results are much of the same; they become a text that is often never touched again. When college textbooks are only used for a semester, or roughly four months, they become a short-term, unsustainable product that serves to harm the environment. There are ways to mediate this harm. For example, switching to an electronic publishing form of print can save trees from being felled for paper. An example of this is when "Lockheed Martin reported a savings of eight million sheets of paper and \$250,000 by putting a 100-page manual on the Internet" (Munger, 2008). Not only was the environmental impact significant, but the financial savings of skipping physical production in favor of digital publishing is also impressive. This is one way that a textbook manufacturer could increase the sustainability of their practice while also saving on production costs. The impact of the ink used in physical textbooks is also straining on the environment. According to Earth Island Journal, "The US uses about two billion pounds of printing inks per year, and most of this tremendous volume ends up in the waste stream." (Assmann). The plastics that ink cartridges use are also harmful to the environment. In 2016, HP ink cartridges were found along the coast of Europe after a spill in 2015. While HP claims that "Based on global standards, we can confirm there is no risk to sea life from the ink as it is water based." (Cacciottolo, 2016), the impact of large amounts of plastic are detrimental to marine life. This is yet another excellent reason to switch from physical printing to digital publishing. If the textbook publishing industry refuses to do so, there is no question about the unsustainability of the industry.

For ink, it is important to note that most, if not all, ink products are no longer toxic or harmful towards the environment. Many of the offending chemicals such as arsenic, cadmium, and lead have been entirely removed from ink. That said, issues still arise when one considers the packaging that ink is put into, that being plastic cartridges. I discovered that both ink byproducts and cartridges are still entering the waterway.

When it comes to carbon emissions, I found that they tend to be a large part of the issue. I explored the carbon emissions produced when harvesting the wood and when transporting the final products. I then took a look at an internal report from Lockheed Martin that outlined the savings, both environmental and financial, they benefited from after switching their manuals to a digital format. This proved the effectiveness towards switching to an online publishing of textbooks.

Conclusions

In this section, I present my conclusions based upon my research on textbooks, their impact on students, their cost, their lifecycle, and their environmental impact.

Textbook prices and their effects on students

Through the research and interviews, textbook prices have greatly risen and continue to do so yearly. These prices cause great stress, both financial and psychological, on students. Many students worry about their ability to attend university due to their financial situations, and some worry that the rising costs of textbooks (in addition to the cost of tuition) may make them unable to attend their universities. Creating a regulatory committee to oversee textbook prices and improve accessibility to free, digital textbooks would greatly reduce the stress of students.

The cost/benefit of assigning the most recent edition of textbooks

Textbooks continue to rise in price, making the financial burden on students greater each semester. This price increase is an exorbitant cost jump and highlights the ever-increasing costs of necessary items for college students. If the trend continues, college textbook expenses can reach unprecedented heights, which would put college students in a dire situation. Students can be assigned upwards of six textbooks per semester, making it a large percent of what they pay to attend university. With the large amount of financially insecure students makes it irresponsible to assign new editions of expensive textbooks, especially when the price of prior editions are often lower. Through the data, it is clear that students will benefit from being assigned cheaper, earlier editions of textbooks.

The lifecycle of textbooks

According to research, textbooks are only used for around four months of a student's academic career. This makes the continued reliance on the latest editions of textbooks to be a harmful endeavor, both towards the environment and students. In addition, the short lifespan of textbooks causes the information within them to become outdated, sometimes while they are being utilized by professors and students. By allowing digital access to the latest editions textbooks through the University's library, students could avoid the costs of textbooks while being able to access the most up to date information available.

The environmental impact of textbooks

Ultimately, like most major productions, book printing has a negative impact on the environment, and as a result, textbook sustainability is a major issue. Textbooks are largely harmful to the environment. Through emissions while being harvested and transported, the carbon from textbook production is dangerous. In addition, their short lifecycle and regular replacement with new editions makes the cycle of textbook production a constant and endless affair. Transitioning to digital textbooks would offset the environmental impact and allowing access through the University library would offset the cost of textbooks for students.

Recommendation

I recommend that the University administration peruse two separate changes:

Change 1: The creation of a regulatory committee

The establishment of a regulatory committee with the sole task of ensuring students are paying a fair and reasonable price for textbooks would offset a large amount of financial and psychological stress. In addition, it would ensure that students are capable of purchasing their physical textbooks without threat of being unable to afford books. If established, committee members would be responsible for speaking directly to textbook companies and distribution companies like Chegg to negotiate lower prices for members of the University of New Haven. It is my recommendation that department chairs of each college major should be on this committee as they have first-hand experience of the books their courses need.

Change 2: Digital access of textbooks

If the University of New Haven wishes to ensure students have access to up to date, recent editions of textbooks at no cost, they should begin to purchase the license of digital editions of course textbooks to be rented out through its library. This change would ensure that all students at the university would be able to forgo the costs of most textbooks, saving them large amounts of money and undue stress.

In addition, adopting digital textbooks would ensure that the university is no longer contributing to unsustainable textbook production practices, and in tandem could inspire other universities to follow suit. Leading the charge in a progressive and friendly initiative to provide university students would be a good point of advertisement on the University's up to date and modern practices.

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Appendix

This is the questionnaire I distributed to ten university students of various socioeconomic backgrounds. All ten university students responded. The responses to each question can be found in the decision matrix below.

Questions

How many books do you buy per semester?

Approximately how much do you spend on books per semester?

Do your professors assign the latest editions of textbooks?

Have you found the purchasing of textbooks to be a stressful experience?

Do textbook prices put a financial strain on you?

Do you ever worry about being able to afford textbooks?

Decision Matrix

	Books per Semester	Cost per Semester	Do Professors Assign Latest Edition?	Is Purchasing Textbooks Stressful?	Do Textbook Prices Cause Financial Strain?	Do You Worry About Affording Textbooks?
Subject 1	8	\$450	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Subject 2	4	\$150	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Subject 3	9	\$530	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Subject 4	10	\$600	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Subject 5	3	\$100	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Subject 6	5	\$180	No	Yes	No	Yes
Subject 7	8	\$500	No	Yes	Yes	No
Subject 8	10	\$630	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Subject 9	7	\$480	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Subject 10	6	\$170	No	Yes	Yes	No
Average	Average: 7	Average: \$379	70% Yes 30% No	100% Yes	70% Yes 30% No	70% Yes 30% No