Recommendations for Selecting Inclusive Access Course Materials

Course material is not just about content. More and more, when an instructor selects course content, publishers deliver the material with either a learning management/homework system (LMS) or electronic reading technology (eReader). The price of the content can reflect this combination of services and while many publishers can help the U of U achieve its goal of assigning affordable course material, some of the technology--i.e. the learning management system--has already been paid for. It’s also important to always be aware of privacy when using content technology that routes U of U student data to servers not maintained by the U of U.

- **Judge content and technology separately.** The U of U has campus-wide learning systems such as Canvas and Kaltura. These platforms have the capacity to incorporate rich assessment and analytics. When selecting digital course material, ask the publisher or content provider if they utilize interoperable learning technology standards (LTI) such as deep linking and grade pass-back. LTI facilitate seamless integration with learning platforms. Decouple the price of the content from the cost of the technology by initiating a conversation with the publisher or textbook sales representative. Always negotiate the price.

- **Protect the privacy of students.** If content comes with a homework system or an eReader, ask the publisher or vendor how they protect the educational records and reading privacy of students. Protecting reading privacy would be on top of standard FERPA requirements.

- **Match content to course objectives.** Education professionals determine the appropriate materials for our classrooms. Be mindful of cost to students and consider not requiring textbooks when you have no expectation that students will purchase or read the materials (or if you feel that your own materials provide sufficient background for the course). When you do require a text, do so with the expectation that students read the materials – find the proper motivational techniques to insure that students hold up their end.

- **Acknowledge students’ reading and information delivery preferences (opt-out).** The Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education issued a revised regulation in October 2015 stating institutions could add the costs of course material to tuition bills without obtaining the student’s authorization as long as the cost of the course material fell below competitive market rates and students had a mechanism in which to opt-out of the purchase.

- **Consider open content.** Openly-licensed digital course material provides alternatives for instructors who prefer to not adopt content with All Rights Reserved or negotiated contracts. Use oerutah.org to locate open educational resources.

- **Use library-licensed content or rely on fair use.** Add links to eBooks and online journal articles purchased by the library. For content not licensed by the library, rely on fair use as outlined in U Policy 7-013 and provide copies to students through learning platforms.