

Textbook Affordability

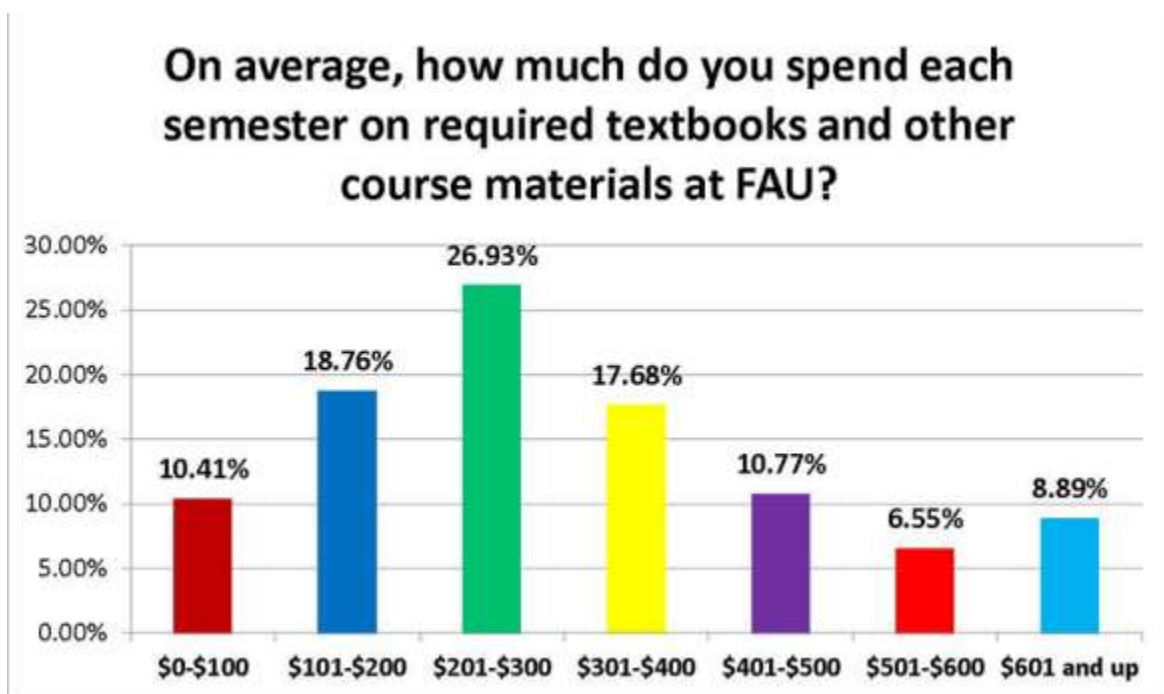
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<https://faulibrarydean.wordpress.com/2018/05/10/textbook-affordability/>

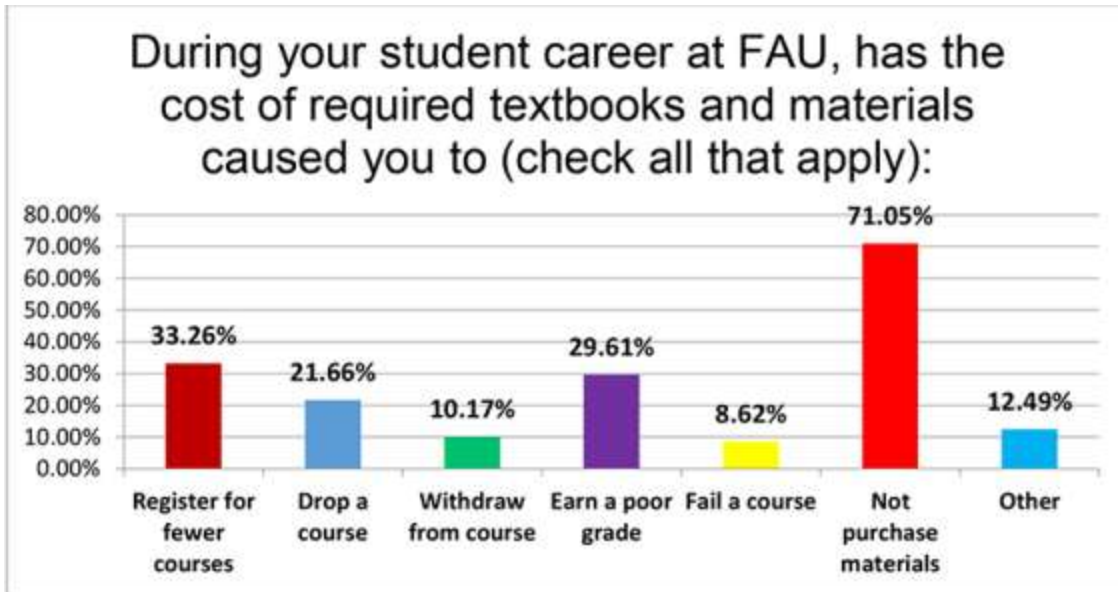
It is well known and documented across the nation that the rising cost of textbooks and other course materials have made it increasingly difficult for students to succeed in their classes.

Data from the FAU Libraries' student satisfaction survey conducted for three weeks in April 2018 revealed the average cost of course materials for FAU's students, as well as the impact of those costs on student success.

As the following chart shows, 44% of FAU students indicate that they spend more than \$300 a semester to purchase course materials or access codes.



The impact of the high cost of these course materials is significant, with students telling us that they have registered for fewer courses, they have dropped or withdrawn from courses, that they failed a course, or that they accepted getting a lower grade in a course because they did not purchase all the required course materials. As the following chart shows, over 70% of FAU students have at some point not purchased all their required course materials because of the high cost, placing them at an immediate disadvantage compared to their peers who were able to purchase all the materials needed for a course.



The Dean of the Libraries chairs the University’s [Textbook Affordability Committee](#) which reports to the Provost’s Office and is charged to “Identify options for reducing the cost of textbooks for students” and to work with partners across the University to achieve a reduction in the cost of course materials. In partnership with the Center for eLearning, the Libraries are spearheading efforts to reduce the cost of course materials for FAU’s students by taking the following actions:

- working to increase the number of textbooks and other course materials that are placed on Reserve in the Libraries, through soliciting donations, as well as requesting additional funds from the University to be able to purchase these materials
- checking for free or library-owned or licensed materials that are required for each class and creating a tool enabling students to check what is available course-by-course
- assisting faculty with identifying free or library-licensed digital materials that can be used for courses in lieu of expensive textbooks or access codes to commercially produced digital materials
- developing a system of identifying low-cost or no-cost (beyond tuition) courses that would be identified in the course catalog
- encouraging faculty (through a grant award process) to modify freely-available digital materials to use for their courses
- encouraging faculty (through a grant award process) to create their own digital textbooks that would be free to students

The new program is known as [ACT: Affordable Curriculum Today](#) and is being put in place this summer for partial implementation for fall 2018 and full implementation for spring 2019. It is our hope that all the separate segments of this program will gradually result not only in lower costs for FAU’s students but also in greater student success throughout their academic careers.