DEVELOPING A CAMPUS CONTENT STRATEGY

The following information was adapted and expanded from a presentation offered by a leading college store/digital content thought leader a few years ago.

Purpose

• To provide additional guidance in the development of your campus content strategy

• To support discussions and collaborations that will lead to more affordable and accessible course materials for students

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Campus Risks and Costs

• Rising expectations for student success and educational outcomes

• Meeting demands of incoming students

• Managing number of platforms and applications

• Ability to provide training and support to faculty in using educational technologies

• Assuring productivity increases (not decreases) and managing costs/commissions

• Integration with LMS and other campus technologies

GOAL

Every campus needs a cross-functional team to develop, implement, and champion a course materials strategy

Why Implement a Campus Strategy for Course Materials?

• Establish an institution-wide vision for course materials policies that support:
  ○ Innovation, Mastery, Options, and Affordability
  ○ Student Engagement, Achievement, and Retention
Choosing among options is becoming complicated (for both faculty and students)

To explore strategies for improving student success while:

- Optimizing their investment in course materials
- Ensuring quality of instructional content
- Sustaining faculty’s role in selecting appropriate course materials and instructional resources

Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) and other regulatory compliance

Ability to capitalize on technology investments:

- Improve efficiency and reduce costs for both institution and students

Goals and Outcomes of a Course Materials Strategy

- Increase affordability and ensure availability
- Maintain academic freedom for faculty
- Provide greater customer service for both faculty and students, and ease-of-use
- Create additional capacity for tutoring services
- Facilitate campus-based/managed transactions (e.g., refunds, financial aid)
- Increase consistency (such as course sequencing)
- Implement desirable integrations with LMS, Student Information System (SIS)

Possible Elements of a Course Materials Strategy

- Discussion and implementation on the resource attached: “Creating a Good Faith Course Materials Campus”
- Discussion and stakeholder education around trends, effective practices, and options related to course materials (including rental and course fee models)
- Standardization of processes and procedures, such as adoption submission dates
- Implementation of liaison(s) for each academic department to facilitate dialogue
• Guidelines for:
  - Recommended frequency of changing major texts
  - Content choice implications on store ability to provide choice of format/price
  - Use of Open Educational Resource (OER) materials
  - Acceptance of stipends; funding support costs
  - Creating consistency within courses across sections/campuses

• Recommended questions for faculty considering new course materials to ask publisher sales reps, such as:
  - Will you be meeting with the library and bookstore to discuss content and format options and how to keep costs down for students?
  - When is the next edition due? Are there substantial differences between the old and the new edition, and what are they?
  - Have you considered any type of custom materials, digital learning resources, or using content that the campus already has access to via licenses or subscriptions? Can the library or bookstore assist with any of these?

### ONE TERM SAMPLE TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9–6 months out</th>
<th>5–4 months out</th>
<th>3–2 months out</th>
<th>6–4 weeks out</th>
<th>Start of Term</th>
<th>Mid-term</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set initial class lists &amp; faculty assignments for next term</td>
<td>Make adoption decision</td>
<td>Validate adoption information</td>
<td>Consult course material options &amp; format options</td>
<td>Purchase course materials for new semester</td>
<td>Return used course materials</td>
<td>Trigger local buyback, rental return, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send adoption requests/reminders</td>
<td>Send pub reps or pub rep calls/email</td>
<td>Select &amp; register for course(s)</td>
<td>Order new/used course materials</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**
- Campus Store
- Faculty or Committee
- Students
- Course Materials Sources (Publishers, Wholesalers, 3rd Party Vendors)

**NOTE:** Quarter schools will have a tighter timeline for most periods of the academic year. This model does NOT show concurrent steps for previous or following term. Steps with an arrow indicate activities that are ongoing; heavy periods of the activity are at the locations of the step label(s).
Student success is the ultimate goal of college stores, publishers/content providers, faculty, academic department staff, and campus administrators. To help students succeed, these stakeholders must work together to improve communication, provide service and support, and select, deliver, and implement effective, affordable, and accessible course materials.

The College Store is encouraged to:

- Keep students and faculty informed about all available course material choices
- Ensure timely availability of instructor required or recommended course materials in all available formats
- Actively work to understand the needs of the students, faculty, and publishers/content providers
- Build relationships with other stakeholders in the digital course materials arena such as library staff, campus IT staff, and academic deans
- Provide support and maintain transparency to students by accepting multiple forms of payment, providing information on course materials, and offering price comparison tools
- Offer students as many options as practical (e.g., purchased, rented; new or used; digital content, open educational resources (OERs), or online learning systems; hardcover, paperback, course packs, publisher-custom, or loose leaf)
- Explain to students the relative merits of required course materials and/or technology to their success in the course
- Build relationships with publisher representatives to ensure seamless communication on chosen course materials, format options, and product value
- Take advantage of publishers’ product education, training and user support information to facilitate sell-through
Publishers/Content Providers are encouraged to:

• Continue to include college stores in the distribution channel for course materials—leveraging the value they bring

• Continue to explore new business models, pilots, and service/support levels to the college store, to support innovation, evolution, and viability of the channel

• Make available product education, training, and user support information to college store staff, faculty, and students

• Communicate on a regular basis with campus stakeholders about products or initiatives designed to help students succeed academically

• Work closely with campus stores to establish format and value options for requested campus course materials

• Partner with campuses—through the campus store—to determine best options in course content, study tools, and digital support for each campus and its students

• Discuss new opportunities and pilot programs with each campus that expand student access to materials and/or offer new support levels to the campus community

The College Store and Publishers/Content Providers are encouraged to work together to:

• Reach out to and engage faculty to define and better understand their needs—recognizing and leveraging the advising relationship they have with faculty

• Actively solicit, aggregate, and share needs and feedback from students with relevant stakeholders

• Achieve mutual success on product sell-through, a by-product of which will be reduced returns

• Identify and communicate ways that store-publisher collaboration can provide value/service to support faculty and students, and to enhance the channel

• Offer multiple formats and platforms (e.g., digital, print, bundles)

• Employ business practices that result in broad access, affordability of course materials, and student success
• Explore both evolutionary and revolutionary practices in the retailing of course materials

• Promote the relevant value and services of the college store to the campus at large

• Ensure college store staff and faculty receive training on course content technology products and digital downloads

• Provide on-campus course material technology demonstrations and other support to student consumers during start-of-classes, peak sales periods ("Rush") and other times appropriate for campus

**Faculty and Academic Department Staff are encouraged to:**

• Explore and consider course materials that will improve student learning outcomes

• Submit textbook requisitions (aka adoption information) to the college store as early as possible to allow college stores to source multiple formats/platforms at the most affordable prices and to publish the resulting course material information as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) and other legislation

• Consider the impact on affordability and access for students inherent in all course material decisions and fully understand all available format options

• Ensure materials are available through the college store to maximize availability of multiple formats and payment options

• Invite the publisher/provider to campus to provide demonstrations of any adopted/required digital course materials in their classroom(s) at the start of each term (e.g., a “First Day of Class (FDoC) Demo”)

• Fully utilize adopted course materials—reinforcing to students the value of the academic resources

**The College Store, Publishers, and Faculty/Staff are encouraged to work collaboratively to:**

• Ensure students have the appropriate materials—on time and at a fair price

• Provide course materials that foster the most effective learning and support student use of those resources to the fullest extent
• Embrace and strengthen dialogue that includes store, faculty, and publishers to maximize the value students realize from their adopted course material

• Create/Provide the most effective and efficient course materials bundles, as appropriate

• Consider all options to demonstrate possible products and content including individual demonstrations, departmental fairs, or campus fairs

• Investigate and/or pilot new models of course content delivery

• Discuss, pilot, and embrace new initiatives

These guidelines were developed by the Course Materials & Intellectual Property Council of the National Association of College Stores with input from faculty and five of the primary publishers serving higher education. © NACS 2014