

POLICY ON FACULTY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Faculty members have great latitude and freedom in determining the instructional materials that they assign as part of their course requirements.¹ This policy is designed to provide commercially available instructional materials in an equitable and timely manner to all students at California State University, Fresno without limiting an instructor's academic freedom in the selection of course materials. The timely and thoughtful ordering of instructional materials enhances the learning environment for all students and is especially significant for students with disabilities.

California State University, Fresno has been proactive in eliminating physical and programmatic barriers to educational access by students with disabilities, including instructional materials. The preparation of commercially available instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, novels) in alternate formats may require a significant amount of time and effort by the university.² At California State University, Fresno, we are dedicated to the success of all of our students. We must ensure that information and data are accessible, in equally effective forms, for persons with disabilities as well as those without disabilities.

According to the CSU Chancellor's Office, "The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) require that qualified individuals be provided equal access to programs, services, and activities. California Government Code 11135 applies Section 508 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1998, to State entities and to the California State University (CSU). Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities and to encourage the development of technologies that will help achieve these goals."³ The CSU policy statement on accessibility is articulated in Executive Order 926 (<http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-926.html>).

I. General Selection Guidelines

Faculty select instructional materials for their courses based on pedagogical considerations such as, but not limited to, instructional objectives, course content, teaching style, and the characteristics of the students enrolled in the course. The following guidelines shall also be considered:

1. Faculty shall submit instructional materials information requested by the Kennel Bookstore by the deadlines in Section III of this policy, even if no instructional materials are required or they can be purchased elsewhere. Instructional materials shall be ordered using the campus adoption platform for all instructional materials to include textbooks, digital materials, Open Educational Resources (OER), and other materials listed in footnote 1, excluding materials produced by the instructor (e.g., syllabus, handouts, presentation slides).

¹ Instructional materials are defined in this document to include, but are not limited to, books and other assigned readings, course readers, software, apps for mobile devices, tutorials, recordings, videos, course syllabus, handouts, presentation slides, materials posted on the Learning Management System (e.g., BlackBoard) or external websites, and other educational tools. It does not apply to routine course materials that the student requires in the normal course of academic endeavors (e.g., paper, pencils, pens, notebooks, etc.).

² A book may have to be ordered separately in e-text format, read aloud to produce an audio version, scanned and edited to produce an e-text version, photocopied for text enlargement, or sent off campus to be made accessible. The production of alternate forms of materials may take eight (8) weeks or more.

³ Coded Memorandum AA-2013-03 is available at <https://www.calstate.edu/AcadAff/codedmemos/AA-2013-03.html>

2. Instructional materials shall be available in multiple formats (e.g., print, electronic, audio) if possible. Given two (2) or more equivalent instructional materials, the instructor shall select the version with the highest levels of accessibility.
3. Given two (2) or more equivalent instructional materials, the instructor shall select the most cost-effective choice. Faculty are encouraged to consider Open Educational Resources, as they are often less expensive options.
4. The instructor shall avoid assigning or ordering ancillary materials (workbooks, CDs, etc.) that are not actively used in the course.
5. Ancillary materials ordered for a course shall meet all current requirements for accessibility.

II. Faculty Responsibility for Developing and Using Accessible Instructional Materials

Faculty members have a responsibility to be proactive in ensuring that the **required** instructional materials utilized in their courses are accessible to all students.⁴ Faculty members shall review the guidelines for creating and utilizing accessible materials provided by the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE), “Best Practices for Faculty,” at <http://fresnostate.edu/academics/cfe/resources/accessibility/index.html> >. Questions about the guidelines or development of accessible instructional materials should be directed to CFE.

A. Course Readings

1. For textbooks and other materials ordered through the campus bookstore, faculty and programs shall follow the guidelines in Section I of APM 237;
2. For materials owned by the university library, faculty shall be proactive in ensuring the accessibility of assigned readings. For example, if the only copy owned by the library is found to be damaged or illegible, faculty are responsible for notifying the appropriate library staff and requesting replacement materials in a timely manner;
3. For materials not owned by the university library, faculty are responsible for making a clearly legible copy available to students (e.g., on reserve at the library, via BlackBoard, etc.). Materials of insufficient quality shall be replaced by the faculty member within one week upon the request of a student or the Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office to ensure access when required by the course;
4. Faculty and department chairs shall collaborate with SSD and CFE to identify materials that provide equally effective alternate access for instructional materials that cannot be made accessible.

B. All Other Instructional Materials

The CFE guidelines for accessible instructional materials shall be implemented as follows:

1. New instructional materials authored by the instructor shall be created in an accessible format;
2. Existing materials shall be made accessible as they are revised and re-used the next time the course is taught by the faculty member. In cases where a faculty member is teaching multiple courses with materials that need substantial revision for accessibility, the course with the highest enrollment shall be prioritized to minimize potential impact on students.

⁴ The party that initiates use of the instructional material is responsible for making it accessible. Thus, if a program mandates use of particular materials for a given course, the program (rather than individual faculty assigned to teach the course), is responsible for producing the materials in an accessible format.

C. Accessibility Review

Faculty members are encouraged to submit courses to CFE for review of instructional materials accessibility. CFE provides a Course Accessibility Checklist that faculty members can utilize during peer evaluations to document the use of accessible instructional materials.

III. Procedures for Ordering Instructional Materials

The following procedures are designed to ensure that instructional materials will be available to all students in a timely manner, as required by the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008⁵:

- A. Departments are encouraged to monitor or coordinate ordering of instructional materials to ensure timely ordering of materials.
- B. Instructional materials shall be ordered by the instructor of record for a course, his/her designee, or the department by the following dates⁶:
 - April 15th of the year for summer courses and the fall semester.
 - October 31st for the winter intersession and following spring semester.
- C. If an instructor is assigned to a course after the deadline for ordering materials, the instructor should order instructional materials as soon as possible. Department chairs shall request that temporary faculty submit orders for instructional materials to the campus bookstore within 10 business days of receipt of the offer of employment.
- D. If a course does not have an instructor of record by the above due dates, instructional materials shall be ordered by the department chairperson (or designee) no later than May 15 for summer courses, June 15 for the following fall semester, and November 15 for the winter intersession and following spring semester.
- E. Requests by faculty members for exceptions to the instructional materials deadlines must be made in writing to the department chair. These exceptions include, but are not limited to: course reassignments, addition of new sections of a course, new or late course assignments, or the replacement of flawed materials.
- F. Department chairs and deans shall be kept apprised of the status of textbook orders by the campus bookstore. Department chairs shall notify faculty who are delinquent in submitting instructional materials information to the Kennel Bookstore.

Recommended by the Academic Senate

April 23, 2007
 March 26, 2008
 March 19, 2018

Approved by the President

June 18, 2007
 April 8, 2008
 April 2, 2018

⁵ Complying with the HEOA requirements is a condition for the CSU receiving student financial aid from the Federal government. More information is available at <http://als.csuprojects.org/heoa>

⁶ These dates permit students to take full advantage of the used books buy-back period established by the Kennel Bookstore and provide sufficient lead time for the conversion of instructional materials into alternate formats.