

Students look for textbook alternatives

Digital textbook use is rising, but reservations remain about technology

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News Writer

Digital textbooks may soon become the new popular learning medium as rising costs of physical textbooks drive students to look for alternatives.

Already in the United States, digital textbooks have seen a rise in popularity due to increasing selection through websites such as CourseSmart.com. Online textbook prices are on average 50 per cent less than their physical counterparts, according to U of A Bookstore course material manager Paul Wilde.

Wilde explained that parts of the inflation in bookstore textbook prices are due to the supplementary material that most publishers now package with their textbooks.

"There is a definite trend of textbook prices far exceeding the national inflation rate. The publishers will tell you that it's the cost of production, the cost of shipping and so on, but I don't see that. We pay the shipping for the books coming here. And when you're talking an overall market where inflation is down 0.9 per cent, how do you justify a five to seven per cent price increase?" he said.

However, Wilde stated that until the technology catches up with the database of course material, buying used books remains a more practical option.

"From the student perspective, used books are still the best deal mainly for the reason that with a new book you have the option of reselling it or keeping it. There is no residual used book value for a digital textbook," he said.

Students' Union Vice President (Academic) Leah Trueblood said that she believes that digital textbooks are a cost-effective option compared to physical textbooks, but has reservations on how user-friendly the technology currently is.

"As we see new instruments becoming usable, we will see prices of textbooks go down and I think we will see the industry change. But in terms of right now, I don't think things like CourseSmart will make a large impact," she said.

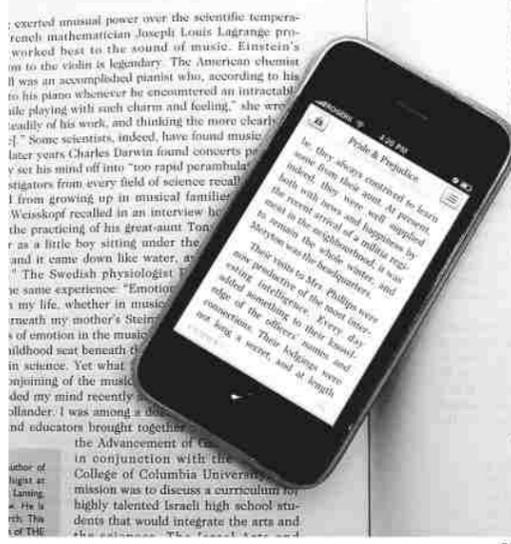
Trueblood stated that other options are still available to students with other forms of textbook purchase. The Students' Union-sponsored website www.bebooksmart.ca was created for the purpose of giving students

affordable options when purchasing textbooks, including research done on popular new editions to determine the amount of relevant changes made in comparison to previous editions.

The Students' Union is also involved with The Canadian Roundtable on Academic Materials, which includes bookstores and students' unions across Canada, in order to find ways of curbing rising book costs.

Should the demand for virtual textbooks increase, Wilde says the bookstore has the digital infrastructure to provide the service to students.

"It's going to take the stores that are more tech savvy and [have] the digital infrastructure to deliver the content, but yes, the bookstore is prepared," he said.



IT'S ALL IN HERE Textbooks downloaded onto iPhones are gaining popularity.

CAMPUS CRIME BEAT

Compiled by Cody Civiero

RE-ADMISSION

Just before 10 p.m. on August 19, Lister staff reported a female patient from the hospital had become lost and required a ride home. Hospital Security was contacted and the female was indeed reported missing from the hospital. CSS provided her with a ride back.

ROADBLOCK

On the evening of August 19, Peace officers stopped a male who crossed against the pedestrian light and impeded traffic on 112 Street and 83 Avenue. The male was identified and determined to have an extensive criminal record that included weapons offenses. He was trespassed and directed off campus.

THE NEWTON CONNECTION

Just after midnight on August 19, CSS received a report that a male was selling drugs in front on Newton place. CSS attended and located a male who match the description provided. The male was identified as a previously trespassed person who has come to the attention of CSS numerous times. The male had a criminal history that included drugs and sexual offenses. He was warned for trespassing and directed off campus.

MISS SCARLET IN TORY WITH THE LEAD PIPE

On the night of August 17, officers located a non-affiliated male and female sleeping in the Tory/Business Atrium. They identified and the female was in possession of a 16" long piece of metal pipe. The metal was voluntarily confiscated and the pair

was directed off campus.

RUBBISHRUMMAGER

Around 4 a.m. on August 17, Hospital Security reported a male was dumpster diving and pulling out scrap metal on the east side of the Rexall/Katz building. CSS attended and the male was observed to be carrying a knife sheathed in a case attached to his belt. The male provided an alias before identifying himself. He was determined to have an extensive criminal record that included weapons, theft, and drug related offenses. He was trespassed from U of A property.

RISKY BUSINESS

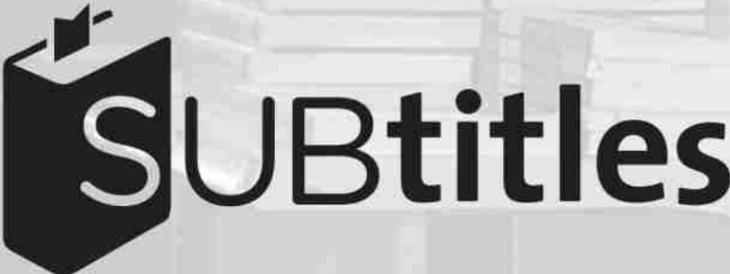
On the afternoon of August 16, CSS received a report of a naked male on the floor of a stall inside a female washroom in the Business Building. CSS attended and located a male and female student engaged in a sex act. The students were identified and Code of Student Behavior charges are pending.

ALL YOU CAN CHEAT BUFFET

Around 1 p.m. on August 15, Faculty Club staff reported a male acting strangely inside the restaurant. The male entered the building without paying and began helping himself to food at the buffet. CSS attended and identified the male who was determined to be under the influence of drugs. The male was trespassed and directed off campus.

UNWANTED VISITOR

Just after noon on August 15, a bike unit member observed a male and female yelling in HUB. Both were not affiliated with the University and the female alleged that prior to CSS arrival, the male had assaulted her. The Edmonton Police were contacted to attend and the male was trespassed from University property.



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FALL 2009 Extended Hours Of Operation

Saturday, August 29th	11:00 am – 4:00 pm
Sunday, August 30th	CLOSED
Monday, August 31st	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Tuesday, September 1st	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Wednesday, September 2nd	9:00 am – 6:00 pm
Thursday, September 3rd	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Friday, September 4th	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday, September 5th	11:00 am – 4:00 pm

SUBtitles will be closed Monday, September 7th for Labour Day
Regular Hours of Operation Resume on Tuesday, September 8th

Monday to Friday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

To contact us visit www.su.ualberta.ca/subtitles or phone 780-492-9744



