



MEMORANDUM

To: FIU Faculty & Employees

From: Kenneth G. Furton, Provost & Executive Vice President
Elizabeth Bejar, Senior Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs

Date: March 9, 2021

In our continued effort to reduce textbook and course material costs to pave the way for our students' success, we have partnered with our on-campus bookstore, FIU Barnes & Noble, to pilot an innovative subscription-based textbook and course materials rental program beginning Fall 2021.

Through this inclusive access program, called the [FIU Panther Book Pack](#), all undergraduate courses will include the price of required textbooks and course materials at the time of registration at the flat rate of \$20 per credit. This includes print and digital course materials, which will be posted in Canvas and fulfilled by FIU Barnes & Noble. We currently estimate that our undergraduate students have to budget on average \$675 in course materials for a course load of 15 credits. Through the Panther Book Pack program, this will be reduced to a \$300 flat rate for 15 credits ($\$20/\text{credit hour} \times 15 \text{ credits} = \300).

Students have the option to opt-out of this subscription until the end of add/drop period should they wish to do so, in which case the flat rate amount will be credited to the student account. Students will have ample time to review the required textbooks and materials for the semester and make the decision to purchase materials independently or to utilize the textbook subscription program. As was the case before, students are still in charge of making purchasing decisions and are encouraged to look at all available options. The Panther Book Pack program is intended to ensure that all students have their learning materials by the first day of class at a significantly discounted price to ensure access, equity, and preparedness.

The manner in which faculty select course materials will not change; they will continue via the [Adoption & Insights Portal](#) (AIP). We understand that the process of selecting high-quality course materials is a complex and often time-consuming one, which varies by discipline, course modality, course status, committee approval and other factors. Instructors who already know which materials they will require in their Fall courses are encouraged to submit their adoptions now or as soon as possible after submitting Spring semester grades. As this is a new implementation, we want to ensure our

processes are aligned to support our intended goals. Particularly for this initial launch, your cooperation will help to achieve success.

Faculty's continued adoption of low- and no-cost options for required learning materials will ensure that the negotiated flat rate of \$20 per undergraduate credit remains this low or may become even lower in the future. Thus, the Panther Book Pack program aligns perfectly with the state-wide, FIU-led [Affordability Counts](#) initiative, which awards an affordability badge to individual courses. Under the Panther Book Pack program, however, the entire campus meets the Affordability Counts standard.

We would like to recognize Gitta Montoto, Chair of the Textbook Affordability Task Force; Kenia Junco, Director of Retail Operations, Office of Business Services and Panther Book Pack project lead; and the members of the [Textbook Affordability Task Force](#), for guiding the implementation of this initiative. They are working closely with the Division of IT, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Student Financials, FIU Online, External Relations, Barnes & Noble, the Faculty Senate Student Success Committee, and the Student Government Association in this effort.

Additional information on the Panther Book Pack initiative specifically for faculty and staff is posted online at <http://go.fiu.edu/affordabilitypack>. For questions or suggestions, please contact the Chair of the Textbook Affordability Task Force, Gitta Montoto, at gmontoto@fiu.edu.