

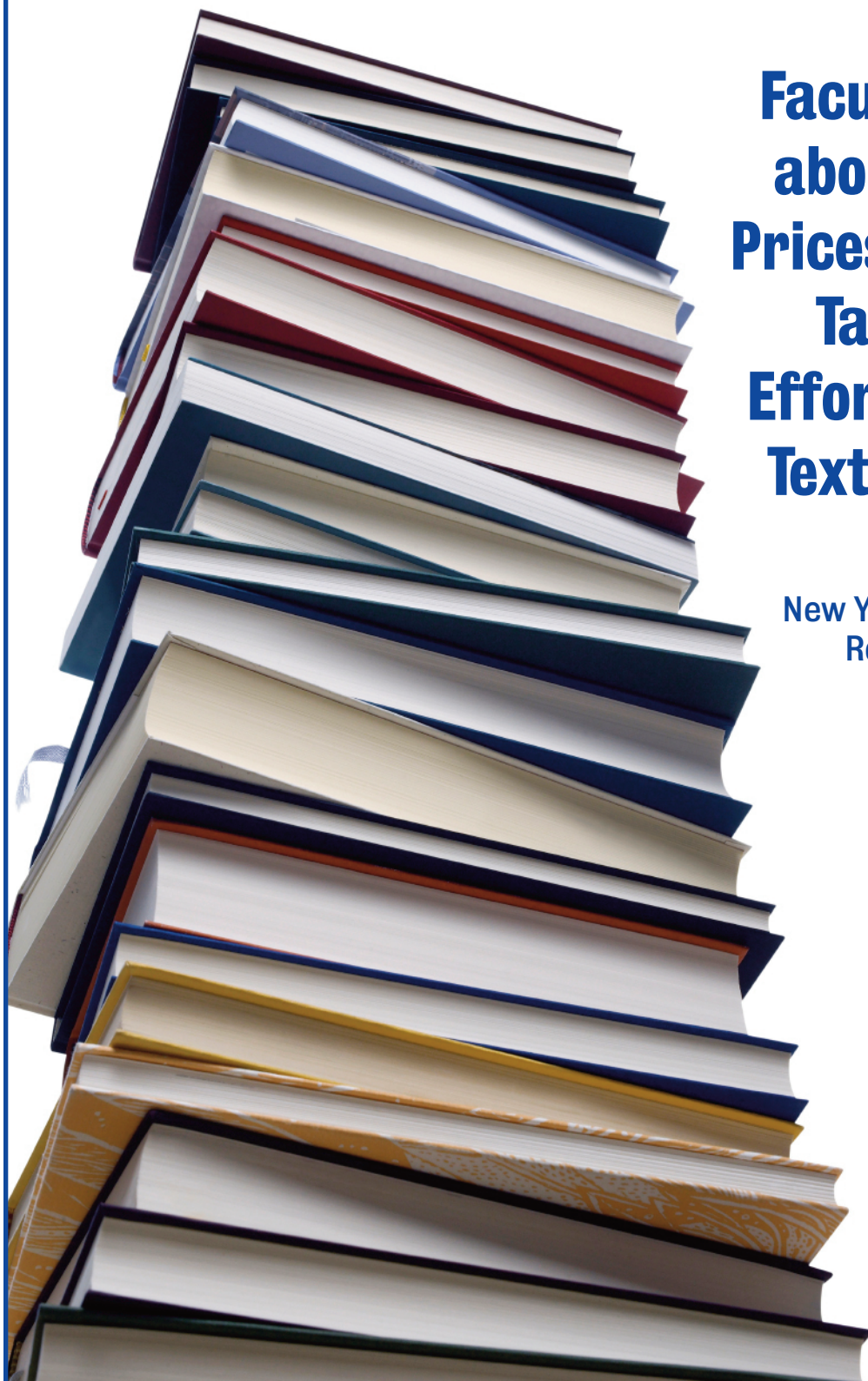
**A NYPIRG Report**

# **Sticker Shock 101**

**Faculty Opinions  
about Textbook  
Prices, Publishers'  
Tactics, and  
Efforts to Rein in  
Textbook Prices**

New York Public Interest  
Research Group

April 8, 2008



**Sticker Shock 101:**  
**Faculty Opinions about Textbook Prices, Publishers' Tactics, and**  
**Efforts to Rein in Textbook Prices**

**NYPIRG**

**April 2008**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Textbook prices are a burden for most students and a significant barrier to access for some. The average student spends almost \$1000 a year on textbooks and supplies, and, unfortunately, students of modest means do not typically receive enough financial aid to cover the cost of their texts.

NYPIRG surveyed 358 faculty representing a variety of disciplines at 26 colleges and universities to take a snapshot of their opinions about textbook publishers' business practices and gauge their awareness of textbook prices. Here are our results in brief:

### **Of the New York faculty that NYPIRG surveyed...**

- If pricing information were readily available, 97% of faculty respondents to this survey question “would consider price” (48%) or would consider price “an important factor” (49%) in their book decisions.
- Twenty-eight percent (28%) reported that they do not typically know the prices of the books they assign.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) reported that they would generally “approve” or “strongly approve” of legislation requiring textbook publishers to disclose the cost of a textbook prior to a sale.
- Sixty-four percent (64%) reported that, generally speaking, they “rarely” or “never” use the bundled extras like CD-ROMs, workbooks, web codes, etc. that come shrink wrapped with so many of today’s textbooks.
- Seventy-nine percent (79%) reported that they would generally “approve” or “strongly approve” of legislation that would require publishers to offer unbundled à la carte alternatives in addition to bundled texts.
- Fifty-seven percent (57%) reported that they feel that textbooks in their field are generally published “too frequently” or “much too frequently.”

### **Recommendations for lawmakers**

- New York’s congressional delegation should support including the House’s textbook disclosure and unbundling provisions in the final reauthorization of the federal Higher Education Act.
- The State Legislature should strengthen and pass the "Textbook Access Act," provide incentives for campuses to establish pilot textbook rental programs, encourage SUNY and CUNY to negotiate bulk pricing agreements for certain textbooks, and expand the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) to cover textbooks.

### **Recommendations for faculty and administrators**

- When content is comparable, choose the cheaper textbook.
- Stick to the same edition for as long as is pedagogically appropriate.
- Allow students to use older textbook editions, when appropriate.
- Place textbook orders as early as possible to help bookstores and students shop around for used books.
- Order books with bundled “extras” only if you’ll use them in class.
- Use and add to the growing body of open textbooks offered online.
- Develop department- or campus-wide voluntary textbook purchasing guidelines that include affordability as a criterion.
- Seek broad student and faculty input when bookstore contracts are negotiated.

### **Recommendations for students**

- Buy and sell books at the NYPIRG Book Exchange ([www.nypirg.org/bx](http://www.nypirg.org/bx)) or other online bookswaps.
- Shop online, and check international bookseller websites for lower prices.
- Ask professors to put books on reserve at the library and allow the use of older editions.

## INTRODUCTION

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*“Textbooks should not be in the same price category as washing machines and computers.”—Janet Johnson, Instructor, Nassau Community College.*

Textbook prices are too high, and they’ve been rising at twice the rate of inflation.<sup>1</sup> In 2007-08 the average college student paid \$988 for books and supplies—an amount equivalent to 23% of senior college tuition at SUNY, 25% at CUNY, or 28% of average community college tuition and fees in New York.<sup>2</sup>

That’s a lot of money, especially when you pile it on top of students’ other expenses. Nationally, the College Board reports that the average cost to an on-campus public college student is \$16,370 per year—more than \$65,000 for four years.<sup>3</sup> Working- and middle-class students are borrowing a lot to be able to afford such prices. Right now 66% of college students in New York State graduate with student loan debt, and the average debt carried by those borrowers is more than \$21,000.<sup>4</sup> Considering these figures, it’s no surprise that students are concerned about textbook prices.

Barriers to higher education resultant of rising college costs have been well documented, and textbook prices are certainly part of the problem. In fact, a recent report detailed how total grant aid does not typically cover textbook expenses for students from low- and moderate-income families.<sup>5</sup>

New York makes access to higher education for such families a priority. The state’s Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), for example, is the largest state financial aid program in the nation, and opportunity programs funded by the state provide not just money, but also support structures to help qualifying students adjust to and succeed at college. Even with all these efforts New York’s students are still facing significant increases in their college costs, and that is threatening to price student of modest means out of a college education. It’s clear; any further attempt to improve access and affordability in New York has to include efforts to rein in textbook prices.

Faculty hold a unique position in the center of the textbooks market because they choose the texts that their students will purchase. If they make price-sensitive decisions, students save money, but they must also balance the financial needs of their students with a duty to choose high-quality, up-to-date materials. This report examines their opinions about publisher business tactics, their awareness of textbook prices and their thoughts about regulatory efforts to bring textbook prices under control. Faculty input will, obviously, be crucial to developing workable solutions to the problem of textbook prices—solutions that will benefit the students of New York without compromising academic freedom or the quality of education.

## BACKGROUND

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### The Textbooks Market

Recent attempts to control textbook prices have focused on the publishing industry. Reports from PIRGs, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance have all highlighted two reasons for the disproportionate amount of power that publishers hold in the textbooks market:

**While it's faculty who choose textbooks for their classes, it's their students who pay for the books.** This incongruity removes an important downward pressure on price, because even the most conscientious professor could never be quite as price sensitive as his or her students. It also allows publishers to charge more than they might be able to get if students chose their own books. For evidence to support this claim look to Europe where faculty typically recommend multiple texts that students may choose among. In that market, where students have greater choice, publishers charge less for the same textbook.<sup>6</sup>

**A lack of competition in the market may be leading to higher prices.** Only five firms control most of the publishing industry: Thomson, McGraw-Hill, Wiley, Houghton-Mifflin and Pearson.

### Publishers' Tactics

Previous research has also identified specific publisher business practices that lead to higher prices. The tactics of most concern to students and advocates are as follows:

**Publishing new editions too frequently.** The average shelf life of a textbook edition is only three to four years.<sup>7</sup> In a field like political science such a schedule may make sense, but in physics, or other areas of study that don't shift quite so rapidly, it's unnecessary and it undermines the used book market.

Buying used books is a survival strategy for many students, and the end-of-semester buyback is perhaps the best way students have to mitigate the cost of their books. New editions lacking substantial updates make it harder for students to afford college by increasing book costs at the outset of the semester without offering any additional educational benefit. A recent CalPIRG study, for example, found that the new editions they surveyed cost 58% more than used copies of the previous edition. Unnecessarily frequent new editions also eliminate students' end of semester book buyback by making their books obsolete and valueless.

**Providing inadequate disclosure.** Faculty can't consider price if they don't know it, and publishers aren't doing enough to help faculty seek out and compare prices. A recent MassPIRG survey showed that even faculty who research books on publishers' websites



have problems discerning price information. In that study 43% of professors who reported using such websites said that the sites they used didn't typically list prices.<sup>8</sup>

Faculty also have to work hard to find information about cheaper alternatives. Another PIRG report, for example, noted that two-thirds of the cheaper, low-frills books (e.g. less expensive editions lacking glossy photos or hard covers) were housed on a website separate from the publisher's primary online catalogue.<sup>9</sup>

**Bundling textbooks with “extras” that drive up prices and undermine resale.** CD-ROMs, web codes, and other supplements that come shrink wrapped with new textbooks drive up prices because they cost a lot to produce. While some students benefit from the use of these products, and some faculty use them in class, many other students are forced to pay for these extras that they won't use, and that their professors won't assign.

What's more, it's much tougher to sell back a textbook if the CD-ROM is missing or the web code has been used. This adds further to the overall cost of the book/bundle, and reduces the availability of used books in subsequent semesters.

### **Pending Congressional Legislation**

In February 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives passed their version of the Higher Education Act reauthorization—called the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137). The bill took on textbook prices in a number of ways. It required publishers to disclose more information about textbooks to faculty, including the price of the books, substantial changes between subsequent editions, and whether supplemental material is available in any other format. It also required publishers to offer unbundled alternatives to textbooks that come packaged with additional materials. Beyond that, it encouraged colleges and universities to provide book lists with International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) to students before the beginning of term, so they have more time to shop around for used books. The U.S. Senate's version of the bill did not include such provisions when it passed in July 2007. The two chambers are now conferencing to decide on a compromise bill.

### **Pending State Legislation**

State Senator Kenneth LaValle and Assemblywoman Deborah Glick, the chairs of the higher education committees, are both sponsoring identical versions of the “Textbook Access Act” (S.3063/A.8167). It would require publishers to disclose wholesale textbook prices, on request, so that faculty can, if they wish, have the information necessary to consider price a criterion in their selection of course books. The legislation also seeks to require publishers to sell textbooks and related materials “in the same manner as ordered by such faculty,” which would allow faculty to order “unbundled” materials. When faculty orders could not be met, publishers would be required to work with faculty to provide suitable substitutes. The bill also would require colleges to encourage faculty to make their textbook selections early so that bookstores would have more time to find less expensive alternatives and students would have time to shop around for used books.

## FINDINGS

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In February and March 2008 NYPIRG surveyed 358 faculty from a variety of fields at 26 colleges and universities in New York State to get a snapshot of their awareness of textbook prices and an insight into their opinions regarding publishers' business practices and regulatory efforts to bring book prices under control. The findings in this report are based entirely on responses to our survey questions.

This and other textbook research has focused on faculty because they play a key role in the textbooks market. Since they choose the books that students will ultimately buy, faculty awareness of (and sensitivity to) cost is crucial in bringing textbook prices under control. For the same reason, faculty opinions about publishers' tactics and proper regulation will weigh heavily in any public policy or campus-level discussion of efforts to rein in textbook prices. The results of our survey are as follows:

### Textbook Price

*"I plan to change my lecture because the new edition of a book I was using costs \$150. I have let the publisher know."—Elizabeth Brauner, Associate Professor, Brooklyn College.*

**Price Awareness:** While most faculty who responded to this survey question indicated that they typically know the manufacturer's suggested retail price of a textbook, 28%—a significant percentage—do not typically know the prices of the books they assign.

*"I am very concerned about the cost of textbooks and believe the expense sometimes becomes a barrier to a successful and full educational experience for students. I am consistently searching for affordable, high-quality textbooks."—Christella Gress, Adjunct Professor, Buffalo State College.*

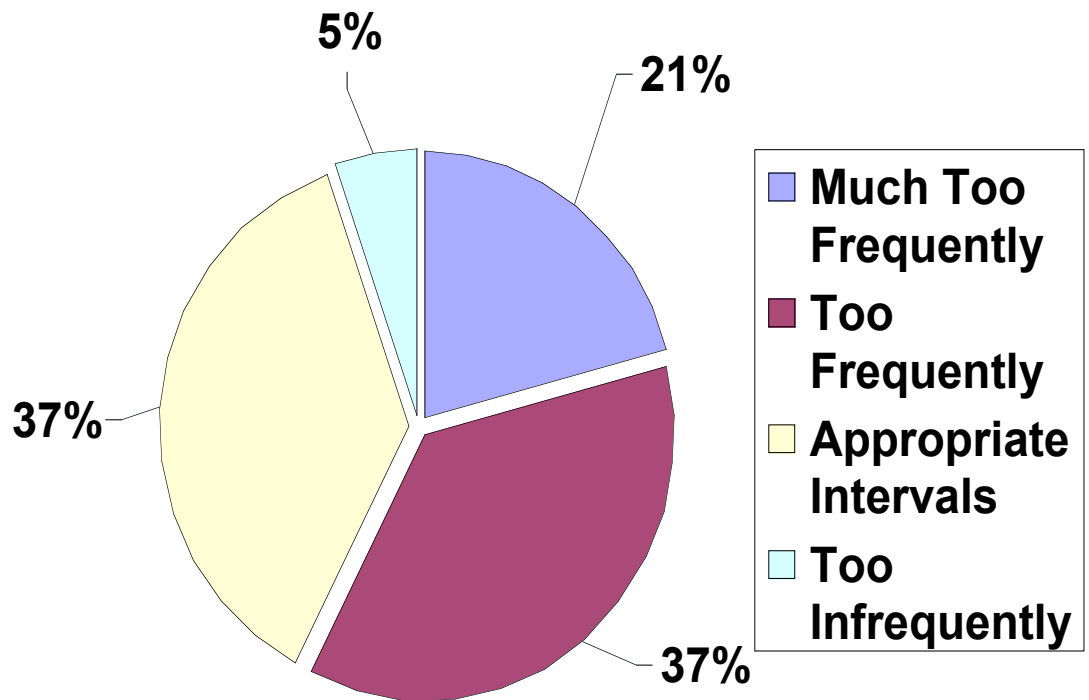
**Price Sensitivity:** If pricing information were readily available, 97% of faculty respondents to this survey question "would consider price" (48%) or would consider price "an important factor" (49%) in their book decisions.

**Conclusion:** Given more and better information about price and other factors that affect the overall cost of textbooks, more New York faculty would make price sensitive textbook decisions, and that would help students save money on books.

### Frequency of Editions

*“I generally advise my students to buy older editions since they do not change much and are much cheaper.”—Hannes Brueckner, Professor, Queens College.*

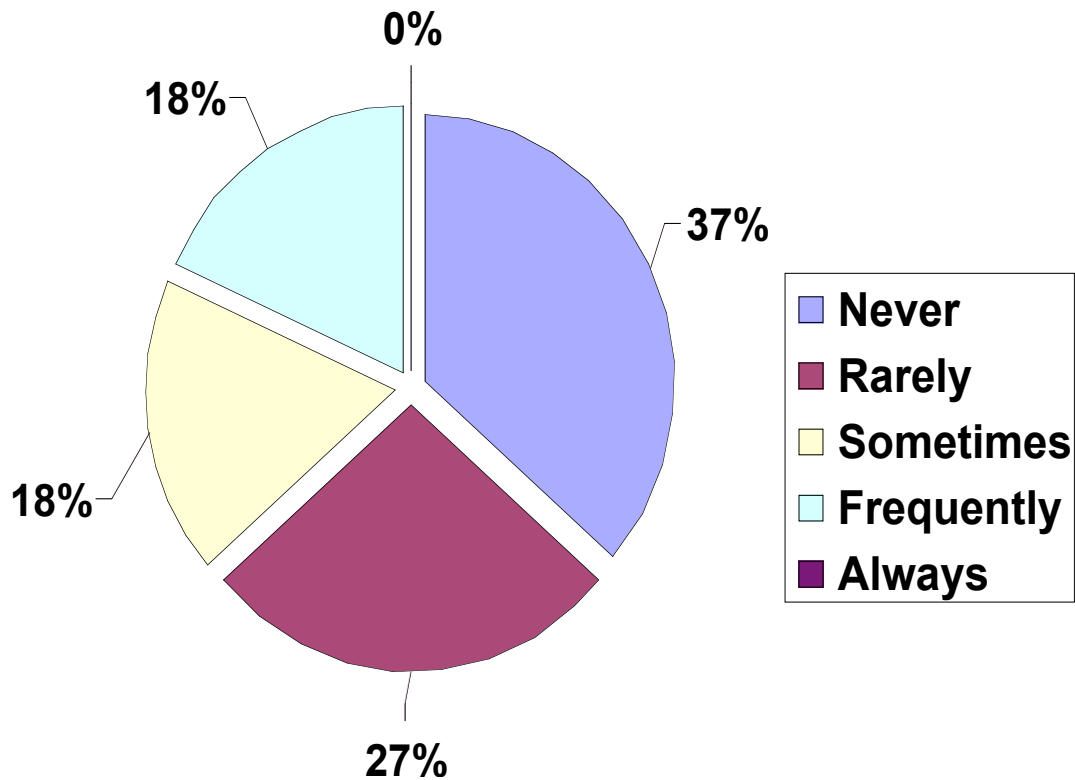
Of the faculty who responded to this survey question, 57% felt that textbooks in their field were generally published “too frequently” or “much too frequently.”



**Conclusion:** Generally speaking, publishers are releasing new editions of textbooks too often, according to the majority of the New York faculty we surveyed. Disclosure measures that would help faculty gauge if a new edition is warranted before they place an order would likely help.

### Bundling

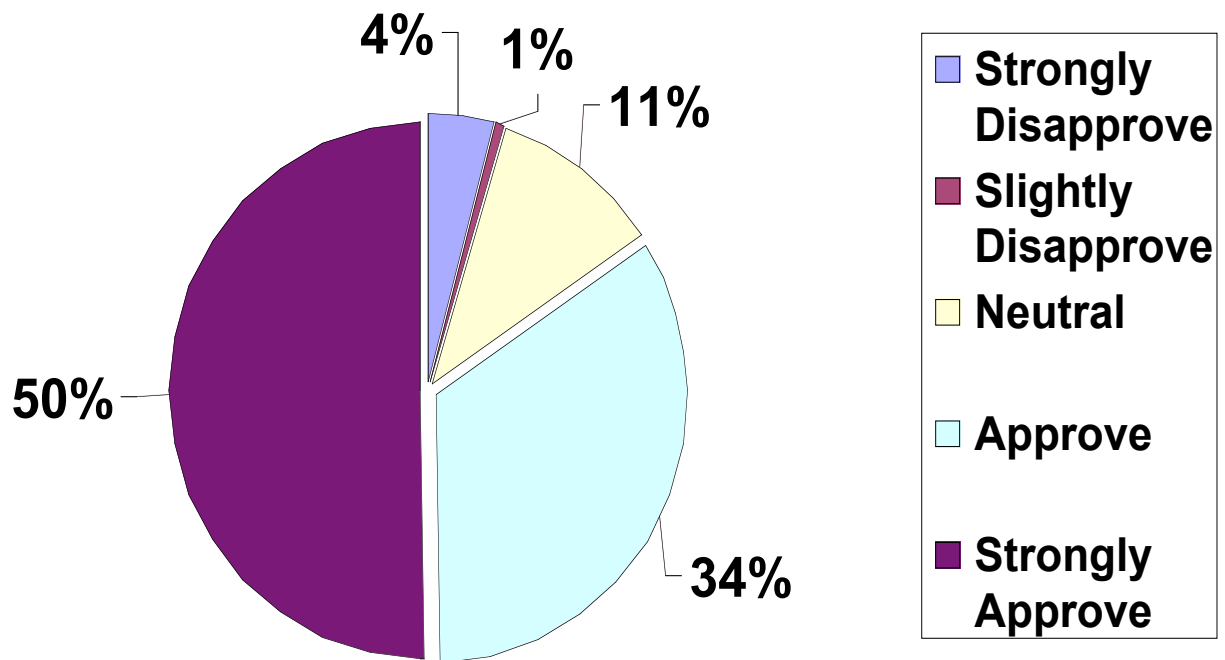
Of the faculty who responded to this survey question, 64% reported that, generally speaking, they “rarely” or “never” used the bundled CD-ROMs, workbooks, web codes, etc. that come shrink wrapped with their textbooks. This finding is comparable to findings from surveys of faculty in other states.<sup>10</sup>



**Conclusion:** Since many New York faculty report not using the supplemental materials that drive up the cost of bundled textbooks, the decision to purchase such “extras,” if not assigned by the professor, should be left to the students who will have to pay for them.

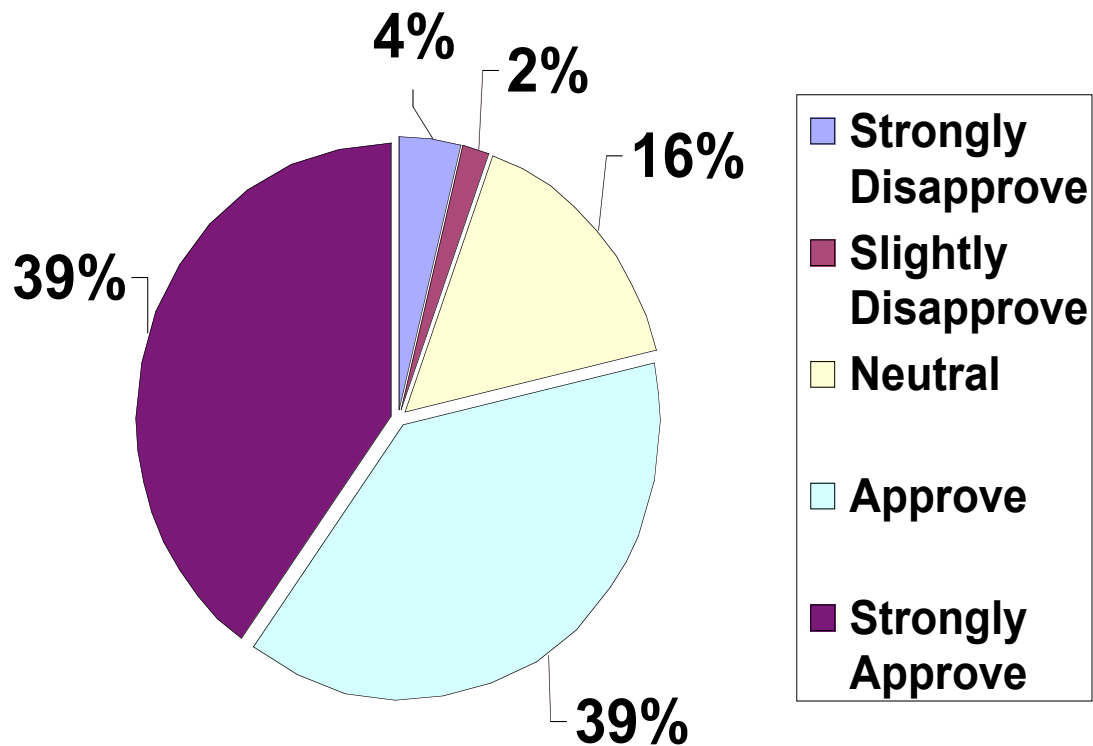
### Regulatory Efforts

**Disclosure:** Of the faculty who responded to this survey question, 85% would generally “approve” or “strongly approve” of legislation similar to a law recently passed in Connecticut (Public Act number 06-103), which requires textbook publishers to disclose the cost of a textbook prior to a sale.



**Conclusion:** There is strong support among the New York faculty that we surveyed for laws that require more and better disclosure from textbook publishers.

**“Unbundling”:** Of the faculty who responded to this survey question, 79% would generally “approve” or “strongly approve” of legislation being considered in Congress that would require publishers to offer unbundled à la carte alternatives to bundled texts. The unbundling provision referred to here was included in the House of Representative’s recently passed version of the Higher Education Act reauthorization (HR4137), and may ultimately be included in the final Act.



**Conclusion:** There is strong support among the New York faculty that we surveyed for laws that would require unbundling.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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Textbook prices are contributing significantly to the rising cost of higher education, and creating an unfortunate barrier to access for some students in New York. A growing body of research has identified flaws in the textbooks market and publishers' business practices as main causes of the problem of increasing book prices. The vast majority of faculty responding to this study indicated a willingness to consider price as a factor in their textbook decisions. Faculty involvement will be paramount to any solution, but New York's campus communities, state legislators and congressional representatives all have a role to play in ensuring that textbook prices no longer threaten access to higher education.

Based on the results of this report we recommend the following measures:

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAWMAKERS

Solving the textbook problem has to be done without infringing upon faculty's academic freedom or publishers' First Amendment rights. This rightly limits the scope of regulation that can be applied to the textbooks market, but it still leaves room for government to act.

At the federal level, textbook disclosure and unbundling provisions currently being considered should be included in the final Higher Education Act reauthorization.<sup>11</sup> Here are the measures, already included in the House's version of the Higher Education Act (H.R. 4137), that we recommend be added to the final bill:

- **Empowering faculty to be more price-sensitive by strengthening price disclosure.** Doing so wouldn't guarantee that faculty would choose cheaper books, but it would help faculty who do consider price make informed decisions.
- **Making bundles an option, rather than a requirement.** Publishers who sell bundled books should be required to also sell the textbooks and any supplements à la carte so students who won't need the extras won't have to pay for them.
- **Helping faculty determine if new editions are warranted by requiring publishers to disclose content revisions between subsequent editions.** Such disclosure would make it easier for faculty to determine if a newer edition seems unwarranted. If so, faculty could allow students to use older editions. Disclosing the information, so faculty could make informed decisions, could allow market forces to help determine the proper shelf life of a textbook edition.
- **Ensuring faculty awareness of cheaper alternatives by strengthening publisher disclosure.** Some students and faculty may prefer to use low-frills books. Others may not. Either way, a nudge from regulators is necessary to ensure that faculty are able to choose from all the options available to them.

- **Empowering students to shop around.** To the maximum extent practicable, colleges and universities should publish textbook International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN) in their online and print course schedules, so that students will have more time to search online for cheaper books.

The New York State Legislature can do a lot to affect textbook prices as well.

- **The State Legislature should strengthen and pass the "Textbook Access Act" (S.3063/A.8167), which would require publishers to disclose information about price upon request and require publishers to sell textbooks in the same manner as ordered by faculty.**

While NYPIRG supports this legislation as a good start in helping bring down the costs of textbooks and applauds our legislators for addressing the issue, this legislation would be stronger if: (1) it required the sale of stand-alone textbooks and à la carte supplements whenever bundled textbook are sold, so that the decision as to whether or not to purchase unassigned supplemental materials is left to students; and (2) it required full and clear disclosure without requiring a request.

- **Provide incentives (or low cost loans) for campuses to establish pilot textbook rental programs.** Start up costs for such programs can be high and they take up a lot of physical storage space but they can save students up to \$500 a year.<sup>12</sup>
- **Encourage SUNY and CUNY to negotiate bulk prices for certain textbooks directly with publishers.** Our university systems have a lot of purchasing power that could be put to use saving students' money. Faculty should not be told that they *must* use a particular book, but they could be made aware of the savings to their students that would result if they "opt in" to using a book used by many of their colleagues. After a rigorous and inclusive selection process, such bulk purchases could work at both the campus- and system-wide level, especially for introductory math and science courses.
- **Update and enhance the Tuition Assistance Program.**

*"Financial aid should ensure that students with financial need are provided with all needed textbooks."—Jonathan Bauchsbaum, Professor, Queens College.*

The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is a program to be proud of but it doesn't work particularly well for single, adult students—a demographic facing significant access barriers.<sup>13</sup> They receive aid determined by TAP's Independent Awards Schedule, which offers smaller grants governed by an outrageously low maximum income threshold.<sup>14</sup> Increasing grant aid to these students would free up much-needed textbook money. Expanding TAP to cover textbooks for dependent students of modest means whose total grant aid (including TAP, federal Pell



Grants and other scholarships) does not cover tuition, fees and books would also help.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACULTY

- **When content is comparable, choose the lower-cost option.**
- **Stick to the same edition.** When faculty find a textbook that suits them (or develop a customized book to match their syllabus) they should use it for as long as possible, and they should urge publishers to print it for as long as possible. Keeping books in use longer strengthens the used books market.
- **Allow students to use older textbook editions.** Faculty may not be able to order used copies of older editions for their campus bookstore when a new version is released, but some students will likely come across earlier editions on the web. When they judge the older edition's content to be acceptable, faculty should accommodate students who seek to save money by making such a purchase.
- **Place textbook orders early.** The wholesale used books market has limits. By submitting book orders early, faculty increase the odds that their campus bookstore will secure a supply of affordable used books. Students who choose to shop online will also benefit from a greater lead-time.
- **If possible, order bundled books only when you know you'll use them.** CD-ROMs, workbooks, web codes, etc. drive up prices and hinder resale. Students shouldn't be forced to buy them if they won't be required to use them. If unbundled textbooks and "extras" are not available for a particular textbook, then faculty should complain to the publisher and consider choosing a different book.
- **Develop voluntary textbook purchasing guidelines that include affordability as a criterion.** It's clear, from this and other research, that many faculty already consider price when adopting books, but developing a written set of principles could help empower more faculty to make price-sensitive decisions. Keeping them voluntary would ensure that faculty's academic freedom is protected.
- **Use and consider adding to the growing body of open textbooks offered online for little or no cost.** Caltech Professor R. Preston McAfee's Introduction to Economic Analysis (available at <http://www.introecon.com>) has been adopted by colleagues at NYU and Harvard. Other faculty are using open textbooks housed at Rice University's Connexions (<http://cnx.org/>), which describes itself as an "environment for collaboratively developing, freely sharing, and rapidly publishing scholarly content on the Web."<sup>15</sup> Authors who contribute to the project have their work protected by a Creative Commons attribution license, which allows users to "share, copy, transmit and adapt the work, as long as they attribute the work in the manner specified by the author."<sup>16</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAMPUS ADMINISTRATIONS

- **Seek broad student and faculty input when contracts with campus bookstore chains are negotiated.** At such points in time colleges and universities may have leverage enough to win concessions that help students save money. For example, it's been suggested that campus bookstores could put links to other used booksellers on their websites or provide funding or storage space for pilot book rental programs. Encouraging a vibrant used book market is already in the bookstore's interest, but provisions added to a contract—better advertising or guaranteed buybacks, for example—might nonetheless improve the market.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- **Buy and sell books at the NYPIRG Book Exchange ([www.nypirg.org/bx](http://www.nypirg.org/bx)) or at other online bookswaps.** By cutting out the middleman and eliminating the third-party markups students can pay less for the used books they buy, and get more for the books they sell.
- **Shop online, and check international bookseller websites for lower prices.** The Campaign to Reduce College Costs notes that “Thomson Learning's website sold Calculus: Early Transcendentals for \$125 to American students, \$97 (\$125 C) to Canadian students and \$65 (35 pounds) to British students.”<sup>17</sup> Even with today's weak dollar, students may find cheaper textbooks at overseas websites.
- **Ask professors to put books on reserve at the library.** Many faculty do so already. Others would probably be willing if they knew for sure that their students would use them.
- **Ask professors if you can buy an older edition.** Often the differences between editions may be mostly cosmetic or organizational. For example, the description of Pearson Publishing's Thomas' Calculus (11<sup>th</sup> edition) on campusbooks.com reads: “For the 11th edition, the authors have added exercises cut in the 10th edition, as well as, going back to the classic 5th and 6th editions for additional exercises and examples.”<sup>18</sup>

Being assured that the content is largely the same and that only the exercises have been rearranged, a professor may have no problem with their students using a older book. That said, it's important for students to talk to their professors before making such a purchase in order to be sure that their book does, in fact, have all the necessary content.

## METHODOLOGY

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During February and March 2008, NYPIRG students and staff worked together with representatives of the SUNY Student Association to survey 358 faculty members at the following 26 New York colleges and universities:

University at Albany, Binghamton University, Bronx Community College, Brooklyn College, Buffalo State College, Cayuga Community College, City College of New York, College of Staten Island, Downstate Medical Center, Hunter College, Kingsborough Community College, F.H. LaGuardia Community College, Long Island University, Nassau Community College, New York City Technical College, Pratt Institute, Queens College, Queensborough Community College, SUNY College at Old Westbury, SUNY Cortland, SUNY New Paltz, SUNY Oswego, SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Purchase, Syracuse University, Stony Brook University.

While not strictly a random sample, the breadth of the departments covered in this survey, we believe, helps to capture an accurate snapshot of faculty perceptions at these schools. Volunteers were instructed to distribute survey forms to as many faculty members as possible in a broad range of departments at their respective schools. Surveyors then collected all completed survey forms, which were visually checked for errors and entered into a spreadsheet format. The results in the report are based entirely on results to survey questions, and should not be construed as representative of opinions of faculty throughout the state or on a particular campus.

Faculty who took part in the survey reported the departments in which they work in the following ways:

Accounting; Africana Studies; American Studies; Anthropology; Art; Art Education; Art Education and Design; Art History; Asian and Asian Anime Studies; Behavioral & Social Sciences; Biology; Business Administration; Chemistry; Childhood Education; Classics; Communication and Media; Communication Disorders and Sciences Department; Computer Science; Construction Management; Economics; Education; Engineering; Environmental Science; European Languages & Literature; Geography; Geosciences; Health Sciences; History; Humanities; International Relations; Journalism; Mathematics; Media Studies; Media Communications/American Studies; Museum Studies, History and Social Studies Education; Music; Nutrition/Hospitality; Occupational Therapy; Performing and Creative Arts; Philosophy; Physics & Astronomy; Political Science; Political Science and Bioengineering; Politics, Economics and Law; Political Science/Public Affairs; Psychology; Romance Languages; Secondary Education; Sociology; Social Sciences/Cultural Studies; Speech; Sports & Wellness; Theatre Arts; Urban Studies; Women's Studies and Writing.

## NYPIRG Faculty Textbooks Survey

Please take a moment to complete this brief survey. Your answers will help us to develop solutions to the problem of rising textbook prices and allow us to better communicate our message to policy makers.

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please name the department in which you work: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Of the courses you are teaching this semester, how many fall within the following ranges of class size? *(Please provide a numerical answer for each, and write a zero if you teach no courses in a given range.)*
  - \_\_\_ 1-10 Students
  - \_\_\_ 11-30 Students
  - \_\_\_ 31-100 Students
  - \_\_\_ 101+ Students
3. In your opinion, new editions of textbooks in your field are generally:
  - \_\_\_ Published much too frequently
  - \_\_\_ Published too frequently
  - \_\_\_ Published at appropriate intervals
  - \_\_\_ Published too infrequently
  - \_\_\_ Published much too infrequently
4. Do you typically know the approximate list price (the suggested retail price) of the textbooks you assign prior to assigning them?
  - \_\_\_ Yes
  - \_\_\_ No
5. If pricing information were readily available, how important a role would it play in your choice of textbooks?
  - \_\_\_ It would be an important factor
  - \_\_\_ I would consider it
  - \_\_\_ I would not consider it at all
6. No-frills textbooks are designed to decrease production costs. No-frills options include paperbacks, limited color texts, spiral bound versions, and loose-leaf hole-punched versions. If a no-frills option were available for your textbook, would you consider using it?
  - \_\_\_ I would use this option
  - \_\_\_ I would consider using this option
  - \_\_\_ I would not use this option

7. This semester, how many of the textbooks that you ordered came bundled with additional materials (e.g. CD-ROM, workbook, etc.)?
- ☐ 0
  - ☐ 1
  - ☐ 2
  - ☐ 3
  - ☐ 4
  - ☐ 5 or more
8. Generally speaking, how often do you use the additional materials that come bundled with the textbooks you order in class or for mandatory out-of-class assignments?
- ☐ Never
  - ☐ Rarely
  - ☐ Sometimes
  - ☐ Frequently
  - ☐ Always
9. Which method(s) have you used to research texts you assign in class (Check all that apply.)?
- ☐ Publisher's website
  - ☐ Other website(s)
  - ☐ Meeting with a publishing sales rep
  - ☐ Referral from a colleague or inherited decision
  - ☐ Desk copies from publisher
  - ☐ Other
10. How often do you feel that textbook sales representatives disclose textbook prices during a meeting without being asked?
- ☐ Never
  - ☐ Rarely
  - ☐ Sometimes
  - ☐ Frequently
  - ☐ Always
11. How often do you feel that textbooks sales representatives disclose textbook prices during a meeting *when asked*?
- ☐ Never
  - ☐ Rarely
  - ☐ Sometimes
  - ☐ Frequently
  - ☐ Always

12. How often do you feel that textbooks sales representatives volunteer information about cheaper or no-frills editions of their books without being asked?
- ☐ Never
  - ☐ Rarely
  - ☐ Sometimes
  - ☐ Frequently
  - ☐ Always
13. Connecticut recently passed a bill requiring textbook publishers to disclose the cost of textbooks prior to a sale. Would you generally approve or disapprove of legislation similar to this?
- ☐ Strongly disapprove
  - ☐ Slightly disapprove
  - ☐ Uncertain/neutral
  - ☐ Approve
  - ☐ Strongly approve
14. A bill introduced in Congress requires publishers to offer unbundled "à la carte" alternatives to bundled texts. Would you generally approve or disapprove of legislation similar to this?
- ☐ Strongly disapprove
  - ☐ Slightly disapprove
  - ☐ Uncertain/neutral
  - ☐ Approve
  - ☐ Strongly approve
15. Additional comments:

Thank you for your participation. Please return this survey form to your local NYPIRG office.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *College Textbooks: Enhanced Offerings Appear to Drive Recent Price Increases*, July 2005, page 8, avail. at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05806.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> College Board, *Trends in College Pricing 2007*, October 2007, page 14.

<sup>3</sup> College Board, page 8.

<sup>4</sup> The Project on Student Debt, *Student Debt and the Class of 2006*, September 2007, page 8.

<sup>5</sup> The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, *Turn the Page: Making College Textbooks More Affordable*, May 2007, page 9, <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/turnthepage.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Koch, Dr James V, Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance College Textbook Cost Study Plan Proposal, p 7, September 2006. “July 2006, Barnes and Noble’s (U.S.) website offered to sell a new copy of Krugman and Wells’ Economics textbook for \$126.75, whereas Blackwell’s in Great Britain advertised the same book on its web site at \$76.31.”

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, page 18.

<sup>8</sup> Saffron Zomer, *Exposing the Textbook Industry: How Pricing Tactics Drive Up the Cost of College Textbooks*, February 2007, page 9.

<sup>9</sup> Make Textbooks Affordable Campaign, *Textbooks for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, August 2006, page 9, at <http://www.maketextbooksaffordable.org/newsroom.asp?id2=26063>.

<sup>10</sup> Merriah Fairchild, CalPIRG, *Ripoff 101: How the Current Practices of the Textbooks Industry Drive Up the Cost of College Textbooks*, January 2004, page 11 (finding 65% of the California professors surveyed reported “rarely” or “never” using such materials); and Zomer, page 11 (finding only half of Massachusetts faculty who assigned a bundled textbook reported using included supplements often).

<sup>11</sup> Several members of New York Congressional delegation are on the conference committee currently resolving differences between the House and Senate versions of the Higher Education Act reauthorization: Senator Hillary Clinton and Representatives Carolyn McCarthy, Yvette Clarke, Timothy Bishop and Randy Kuhl.

<sup>12</sup> Koch, Page 21.

<sup>13</sup> See Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, *Working to Learn, Learning to Work: Unlocking the Potential of New York’s Adult College Students*, August 2007 at [http://www.scaany.org/initiatives/documents/working\\_to\\_learn.pdf](http://www.scaany.org/initiatives/documents/working_to_learn.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> New York State Education Law §667(3)(a)(i)(A).

<sup>15</sup> See Connexions, About Us, *Philosophy* at [http://cnx.org/aboutus/index\\_html](http://cnx.org/aboutus/index_html).

<sup>16</sup> See Creative Commons, *Attribution 2.0 Generic* at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>.

<sup>17</sup> See The Campaign to Reduce College Costs, *Textbook Action Center: Student Actions*, at <http://www.maketextbooksaffordable.org/actioncenter2.asp?id2=18567>.

<sup>18</sup> See Campus Books, *Calculus Textbooks* at <http://www.campusbooks.com/books/textbooks/calculus.php>.