How to choose a textbook?

An important part of instruction is to choose the textbooks or other resources for students to use. Good textbooks can help you design your course and will help students be better prepared for class and also provide some of the instruction. Here are some tips for selecting textbooks for classes you teach.

1. Find out what textbooks other instructors are using

When you are assigned to teach a course for the first time, you may ask what textbook(s) the other instructors use. And you could also search for the syllabi of similar courses from other institutions and see what textbooks those instructors are using. Be sure not to choose a book at the right level. Your graduate text books are not likely to be appropriate for an undergraduate course.

1. Search for appropriate textbooks for your course

 It’s better to choose textbooks that support your teaching, which suits the course’s learning objectives and your teaching style, and also could provide a good background and examples to your course.

1. Request a desk copy for your review

Some textbook publishers might provide a desk copy for instructors who consider adopting their textbooks. You could request a complimentary desk copy of the textbook for your review, usually by contacting the publisher’s representative or completing an online form on the publisher’s website. It’s better to review and read the book yourself to evaluate the readability of the book, and the textbook contents, such as diagrams and examples.

1. Decide the use of support materials or access codes

Some textbooks come with support materials such as test banks and online practice questions. More often, those additional support materials require an access code for students to pay for. You could evaluate the necessarily of these support materials in advance, and let students know whether they need the access codes or not.

1. Contact the bookstore about course materials in advance

Though many students get the textbook from Amazon or other online retailer or rental stores, there is still a large portion of students get the textbook from the UCONN bookstores. The bookstore need time to process the textbook order for your class, so it’s better to let the bookstore know your choice of textbook at an early convenient time. You could adopt the textbook online or email the bookstore.

1. Keep in mind that text books can be expensive. You might want to check if there are free or low-cost good options for your course. Or if you could use alternative reliable free resources. UConn library usually does not have text books unless you can bring a book to place on reserve.