

Foreword

The Department of Physical Sciences supports and encourages the development of new teaching resources, including textbooks, by faculty members. To ensure the maintenance of academic standards, any required textbook must meet the selection criteria outlined below. Textbook development is a form of scholarly activity, and peer review is a fundamental cornerstone of any scholarly work.

1. Textbook selection will be performed by a committee composed of faculty who are scheduled to teach the course. All faculty who teach the course are expected to serve on the textbook selection committee.
2. Each specific textbook selection committee will remain dormant during the three-year adoption period, unless there is a call for replacement of the textbook before the end of the adoption period.
3. For students in multi-section courses that are delivered in two parts (e.g. CHEM 101/CHEM 102, CHEM 261/263, PHYS 124/126, etc.), there is a need for consistency and a common experience. Pursuant to this, there can only be one required textbook used for each multi-sectioned Physical Science course.
4. In order for a text to be eligible for consideration by a textbook selection committee, it must have gone through an external peer review process similar to the procedure publishing houses such as Nelson, Pearson, Wiley, etc. use to vet their texts. (see attachment)
5. It will be the responsibility of each committee to create short lists of admissible texts that satisfy the criteria contained within this document.
6. Official course textbook adoption will proceed at the discretion of the selection committee. The textbook chosen by the selection committee, determined by a majority vote, will be a required resource for all sections of that specific, multi-sectioned course.
7. It is up to the textbook committee to decide the period of adoption for the textbook.
8. Textbooks in development may be used as option materials in order to obtain student feedback and aid in the evolution of the textbook.

observations

1. In the latest 'Textbook Adoption Criteria', the course textbook is a required resource and any developing textbook is restricted to being an optional resource. This makes it very difficult to use the optional resource as students wonder why they are required to purchase a book that the instructor is not using.
2. Dr. Michael Deyholos at the UofA is developing a BIOL 207 textbook. In his course outline (attached) his developing textbook is a required resource, while the regular course textbook is an optional resource. There are several sections of BIOL 207, taught by different instructors. Only Dr. Deyholos is using his developing textbook.

These textbook adoption criteria would not only prevent Dr. Deyholos from developing his textbook in the same manner at MacEwan, it would absolutely prevent MacEwan from ever adopting the textbook.

3. The MacEwan Mission, MacEwan Vision, MacEwan Mandate, Academic Freedom policy, and the AGC University-Wide Standards for Interim Title of Assistant Professor recognize, support, and promote pedagogically-focused scholarly activity, including textbook development. These documents all reinforce the idea that MacEwan is an innovative educational institution focused on student learning.

The AGC 'University-Wide Standards for Interim Title of Assistant Professor' explicitly includes "Textbook published by a respected publisher" and "Textbook or curriculum reform that changes understanding in the field or innovates the instruction in the field (not simply routine revision)" as forms of scholarly activity. These textbook adoption criteria would effectively make it impossible for a faculty member to engage in textbook development as productive scholarly activity.

4. MacEwan's Academic Freedom policy (C5054) explicitly permits faculty to select topics for research (s. 3.5.3) and protects their freedom to engage in scholarly activity and to select course materials, content, methodology, and sequence of subjects, provided that they do so within the framework of course syllabi and course practices (s. 3.5.1).
5. It is evident from the Textbook Adoption Criteria and attachments that, in order to be considered, textbooks must be developed through the traditional publishing model. It follows that any textbook not developed through this model cannot be considered for use within the department.

For example, Dr. Deyholos textbook is available under a Creative Commons license -- it is FREE for others to use and develop further. Dr. Deyholos textbook does not list reviewers. I

contacted him and his developing text has only been reviewed by a few colleagues. Dr. Deyholos also did not spend 400 000 \$ developing his textbook.

<https://rowan.biology.ualberta.ca/courses/biol207/uploads/deyholos/public/Textbook/BIOL207 text 2011 final.pdf>

For example, Dalhousie has developed its own first year instructional material and UBC is in the process of doing so. I have hosted symposia at conferences on innovative publishing strategies and spoken with faculty from both institutions. They are developing their own instructional resources to provide their students with a lower cost, quality resource that specifically meets the needs of their students. UBC is considering adding 10 \$ to the cost of their textbook and using this money to support undergraduate research and travel activities. UBC has actually inquired with me regarding licensing [REDACTED] and adapting it for their purposes! (This option is available in my licensing model.)

Consider the music and film industries. With every innovation -- cassette, CD, VHS, DVD, file sharing, etc. -- these industries railed against these innovations for fear of losing profits. On the other hand, Innovative artists embraced these mediums. The Textbook Adoption Criteria closes the door to innovation.

6. Surprisingly, the Development Notes of the Mahaffy text supplied by Dr. Hilts absolutely fails to include any mention of the text being used by students at Kings and in Australia. My colleagues at Kings inform me that students were *required* to use draft editions of Mahaffy's text, starting in August 2008, concurrent with the reviews. (I was also advised that the first year using the Mahaffy text was 'challenging' and that subsequent years proceeded increasingly smooth -- very similar to my experience.) Why is this pertinent information omitted from the Development Notes?

By adopting these Textbook Adoption Criteria, the Physical Sciences department severely restricts faculty interested in pedagogically-focused scholarly activity (an area that MacEwan purports to support and hopes to excel). Furthermore, these criteria prevent faculty from selecting non-traditional textbooks for their courses.

So, in my mind, the question simplifies to: do we want the Physical Sciences department to be restricted to the traditional publishing model? And, by doing so, do we accept responsibility for establishing a standard that will likely be forced upon all of Science?