

Dear Faculty,

Recently, WKU's Student Government Association initiated conversations with us regarding an option to make textbooks more affordable to fellow Hilltoppers, and we are happy to announce an update on those talks.

Through our partnership with Barnes & Noble College, Western Kentucky University is moving to a new course material model that will reduce the cost of materials for all students and help ensure they have their materials across all courses prior to the first day of class.

This new model, called the Big Red Backpack, will make accessing textbooks at the start of fall 2022, quicker, easier, and cheaper.

- **Student Experience:** All students taking courses will receive their course materials by the first day of class at a cost of \$24/credit hour applied to their bill. Students do have the ability to opt out of the program if they desire. The WKU Store will package each student's physical books, and digital materials will be delivered directly through Blackboard.
- **Faculty Experience:** The Big Red Backpack program provides full faculty freedom in selecting the right print or digital material for your course. All required course materials, from all publishers, in your preferred format are included in the program. There are no restrictions in the course materials you select for your course.\* Excluded materials include adopted school supplies, kits, uniforms, art supplies, calculators, non-required course material, or items deemed not a textbook. Faculty will help drive affordability by selecting relevant course material that will be required for their courses and meeting the course material adoption deadline on April 1.

**Your Next Step:**

- Submit your course material adoptions no later than **April 1, 2022**, through the Adoption and Insight Portal (AIP).
- If no textbook material is required, it is extremely important that you also go through the AIP and select "no text required." These steps will allow all required course materials to be ready and available to all students by the first day of class.

While we finalize the implementation details for the Big Red Backpack, we ask that for a collective effort in our colleges ensure faculty submit course material selections to the WKU Store by the April 1 adoption deadline. **Meeting textbook request deadlines is required for students to receive their textbooks on time for the start of the semester.**

More information will follow in the coming weeks.

*\*There are no restrictions as long as the title is available to the bookstore in the format requested and meet the limitations in the paragraph above (e.g. out of print and old edition titles may not be available in the quantity or format requested; international restrictions may limit some availabilities, etc.).*