

- From the office of eLearning, this is the FlyerEd Podcast. Hi everyone, Kent Darr here from the office of eLearning. This week on the FlyerEd Podcast, I sat down with Julie Banks, the retail operations manager in the student bookstore here on campus, where we discuss everything textbooks. If you are a faculty member who is still looking to order your textbook, and has a question about the textbook process in general, or things such as student affordability, complete digital access, or even renting textbooks, I would highly encourage you to listen to this episode. Alright, let's get to it. Hey everyone, I'm here with Julie Banks, director of retail operations in the UD bookstore. Julie, thanks for coming today, I appreciate it.

- Hey, thanks for having me.

- Great. Well, hey, we're here today to talk about kind of general prepping for ordering your books for the summer and fall semesters in 2019. But, I mean, this can operate at any time that you're listening to this podcast. So, Julie, can you kind of give me an idea of what are, like, the three to four most important things that faculty should consider when they're ordering their books for the next semester?

- Sure, yeah. So, from the bookstore perspective, I would say the number one thing is just that timeliness, being on time with orders, is key. And why I mention that is, from a student perspective, especially when it comes to taking classes here at UD, there are so many students who are able to take advantage of the textbook scholarship. So right now, when we're going through registration and we're really looking at teacher's semesters, it's great opportunity to be able to give a student a sense of what their course is gonna cost. And the main way we can do that at the bookstore is through offering as many options as possible. So, when you look at placing orders and submitting textbook adoptions, there are a couple key things that I would say, in addition to timeliness of the order. Affordability is important, as I mentioned with the textbook scholarship. Students are looking at what options that they have to acquire their materials. So, what I love is through the adoption... The online adoption tool that we use, it's called Verba, it gives faculty an opportunity to see their affordability score. So basically, if you've been using

- Cool.

- that same title for years, or if you are looking at entertaining a new course material, it shows you the different options available, and what affordability that has for the students.

- So the timeliness

- Very cool.

- of the order, the affordable solutions. These are things, if we get that information right away, we can start working on sourcing, because sourcing has changed a lot over the years.

- Yeah.

- Even at the bookstore we do a lot of online sourcing, but we're also trying to get books back from the students through buyback.

- Okay.

- And through books that they've rented. So when we know from a faculty member what they're gonna use in the coming term, or if they're not gonna use... If an individual faculty member is not gonna use a book at all. Just simply knowing that information, is key.

- Yeah, so, kind of knowledge is power in that situation. Now, you mentioned Verba. When it comes to the affordability ratings, how would the faculty access that?

- So, at the beginning of each term, each individual faculty member who's teaching a course, and we get that information through Banner, they receive a link through their email that takes them directly to the courses

- Oh, great.

- that they are teaching for the coming term. And it is a very robust tool. We just watched a demo for enhancements that were rolled out

- Cool.

- for going into the fall. And, that affordability... That affordability score takes into a lot of different aspects of affordability and usage across the nation. So, it's not just looking at affordability on our campus, it's looking at how long has the book been in circulation? You know, what different formats are available of the book? How does it compare to other course materials within that discipline? So, using

that Verba adoption tool will help you with affordability. It shows other options that are available within a discipline. It shows other faculty reviews of titles.

- Very cool.

- And it keeps all of that historical information, so it's very easy to look back and say, and to be able to see, "What have I used previously?" And, to look at what other people within your department, or within the university, to get an idea of what kind of course materials they're using too. So it's a very robust tool.

- So, correct me if I'm wrong on this, but it almost sounds like Verba would allow a faculty member to kind of understand across the nation what texts are being used, and if they're conforming with their peers from everywhere.

- That's absolutely correct. You can rate different books, too, that you've reviewed, or that you've been using in a class, so definitely a lot of opportunity that's right at your fingertips. I think it's a tool that's very easy to navigate, And one thing that we like from the bookstore perspective, too, is the priciness dynamic.

- So when you're going in

- Cool.

- as a faculty member, and you can see like, what is that e-book price? If you want to participate in like, our Complete Digital Access program, so if you want to go completely digital and experience cost savings there, you can see what those cost savings look like. You can see what new and used books are selling for in the online marketplace.

- Okay.

- So, whether it's single copy on Amazon, or, you know, let's say a hundred copies that are being sold on half.com. So, we love the visibility and the transparency that it gives to the faculty and we kind of pass that knowledge on to the students, too.

- It sounds like we're arming faculty with information as they make a decision.

- Mm hmm, yeah, oh absolutely. I feel like everything that you could want to know is right there at your fingertips.

- Well, now I believe you also mentioned renting earlier too? Explain renting to me, and how a faculty member might take that into account.

- So renting can be, I think, a little scary to faculty, because no one likes to hear that a student is just gonna take a book for a term, and then turn it in and be done with it. It's like you want... You kinda want the student to hang on to that material. But for many of the entry level courses, and some things that are out of major, there is a lot of affordability to be had with rentals. So basically, a student would come in and rent a book. The process is very easy from a customer experience perspective. Checkout is very fast, and like I said, the pricing is a fraction of what it would cost for a new book especially, but even a used book. So, if we look at purchasing a used book, if you were to rent that same title, it would be 30% to 50% less.

- Oh wow, yeah.

- So it's significant savings. And with our program here at UD, one thing that's great about it is that a student could rent the book for the term, and at the end of the semester, they could decide to purchase it.

- Oh, awesome.

- And, so basically, we apply what they paid previously through renting it, we apply that toward the purchase. So really, we've done some analysis of this and most of the time, if a student converts to a purchase, they're paying like less than 30 dollars to own that book. So the option is always there to own. It's just great at the beginning of the semester for the student to have the option to rent it. They can highlight in the book, they can write in the book. Really any book that they're renting, they kind of use as if they own it. The one thing that we do caution students about is water damage.

- Oh, okay.

- So really, that's the one bummer about renting, is you don't wanna have like serious water damage, because that's a book that is no longer usable to the next student.

- Sure.

- But the rental program is easy for the students, it's an affordable option, and I think it really, it's one of the many ways where we're equipping students with the course materials that they need for the first day of class. So, it's a great, inexpensive way to make sure that they have their materials in hand.

- Absolutely, I also really love your point about renting out of major, because that's not something that I would have necessarily had available to me in my undergrad, and I seem to remember buying 90-dollar books for life in the sea and I am teaching. You know, so, it's not something that I necessarily need. Well, that's very cool. And so, then, back to the very beginning of the podcast, you mentioned the textbook scholarship. Can you explain that a bit more, and how one would take advantage of that? Maybe from a student point of view, so our faculty understands that.

- Yes, so, the textbook scholarship is a wonderful program for students here at the university. So, basically, if you have completed the FAFSA, and you have made a campus visit, you are eligible for the textbook scholarship, which is 500 dollars each semester towards course materials. And this has been opened up recently within the last year or so to international students too.

- Wow.

- So, even if they can't make a physical campus visit, our enrollment management folks have worked to develop some opportunities, so students can do more of a virtual tour and still be eligible, which is great. But if you look at the overall student body, more than 70% of our students are on a textbook scholarship, so, undergrad.

- Wow.

- So there are a lot of people who are able to take advantage of it at this point, which is absolutely wonderful. So, from the bookstore standpoint, we look at that as, how can we be as competitive as possible with our pricing, again, that full transparency, so that students can get as many of their course materials under 500 dollars a term as they can? Knowing that if they take that time, and they acquire the materials, that it is gonna make them more successful in their individual courses. So, we never want

it to be a... A situation where, you know, someone's at the register, and they feel like they don't have the funding to be able to get their books. So, I think that 500-dollar scholarship goes a long way. And then, if a student feels that they can't pay any money out of pocket, then that's where these options come into play. So, the complete digital access, so going fully digital.

- Okay.

- Being able to rent the books, or being able to acquire used books, really helps them to maximize the textbook scholarship.

- That sounds like some really good beginning information that faculty members can really go into their textbook-selecting experience with. Especially if you're newer. Or, maybe you just got assigned this course. Yeah, textbooks are obviously very important to the course.

- We think so, yeah.

- Yeah, absolutely. So, okay, one more question. For the new faculty member, or for the faculty member who's just exploring their food options on Brown Street, what is your favorite food option on Brown Street, and why?

- Oh, wow. Man, there's so many choices. Um, I have to say that my favorite right now would be Fusian.

- Oh there ya go.

- I just, I like being able to create, kind of, that creativity, create-your-own, let have a light lunch that you can easily take away back to the office.

- Very cool, and Fusian is Asian?

- Yeah.

- Okay.

- Yeah, it's like kind of, create your own sushi.

- Cool, well that sounds great. Thanks, Julie, I really appreciate you coming today, and all the information that you gave to us.

- Well, that's it for this episode of the FlyerEd Podcast. Special thanks to Julie Banks for appearing on the episode. I think the information she shared with us should be helpful for anyone ordering textbooks in the near future, whether they're veterans of the teaching process, or relatively new to it all. If you'd like to speak to Julie or a member of her staff with your questions about textbooks, be sure to reach out to them by email in the bookstore at [udayton.edu](mailto:udayton.edu). The background track for this episode was Goodbye to Spring, by Josh Woodward. If you'd like to hear more of his music, be sure to visit [joshwoodward.com](http://joshwoodward.com). This episode has been a production of the Office of eLearning. If you would like to learn more, send feedback, or schedule an appointment, you can reach out by emailing us at [elearning@udayton.edu](mailto:elearning@udayton.edu). Thanks for listening, and until next time, go Flyers.