Outcomes Made Accessible

Improving Outcomes and Retention While Lowering the Cost of College Learning Materials.

Most students pursue college as an investment in their future. Hard work and dedication now should pay off later with more career choices, better problem-solving skills and an expanded knowledge of the world.

The High Price of Higher Ed

Managing the cost of higher education can be daunting. Tuition has increased a staggering 92% in the past 30 years.1 Add to that the rising cost of learning materials. In the past decade, the average cost of textbooks has gone up four times faster than the rate of inflation.2 According to a recent Student Watch Report, average college students spend more than $1,300 on textbooks and supplies during a school year.3 It’s no wonder that more and more students are critical of increasing course material costs while academic outcomes remain unchanged.

Students are already struggling to pay tuition and even basic needs, with 3 in 5 college students experiencing housing insecurity.4 The high cost of course materials can affect their academic progress, impacting what classes and how many they take per semester, withdrawal numbers and graduation rates. Fortunately, there are a number of options available now that institutions, professors and students can take advantage of that make learning materials more affordable.

Affordability Affects Achievement

The need to reduce prices is driven by a greater understanding that the cost of learning materials can be challenging for students to manage. According to a recent Follett ACCESS student survey, nearly 55 percent of students did not have all of their course materials by the first day of class. Of those students who did not acquire all course materials, 42 percent reported experiencing increased anxiety/stress, 34 percent could not complete assigned readings, and 21 percent could not complete homework assignments.5 Accessing and utilizing required course materials are key contributors to student success. Eighty-nine percent of faculty report that the use of required course materials is very important for doing well in their courses, according to a Follett ACCESS faculty survey conducted by Follett Higher Education, which manages course material delivery for more than 1,100 campuses throughout North America.6

Institutions and professors are sympathetic to the impact that the cost of learning materials has on their students. More than 80% of faculty members and 90% of digital learning leaders say that textbooks are priced too high in a recent survey by Inside Higher Ed.7 Students are savvy consumers, often delaying the purchase of learning materials for classes requiring digital components until the quarter or semester has begun to make sure that instructors will use the courseware. They also compare the costs of new, used, rental and digital options before making acquisition decisions.8

WHAT’S INSIDE:

The Affordability Challenge
Follett ACCESS
Benefits for All Participants
Tracking Success: Students and Faculty

5 Survey of college students ("Follett Student Survey") by Follett Higher Education, Fall 2021.
6 Survey of college faculty ("Follett ACCESS Faculty Survey") by Follett Higher Education, Spring 2019.
8 Student Monitor™ “Converting data to insight, Lifestyle & Media — Spring 2018”, Student Monitor, LLC.
More Affordable Options

There are four options that campus stores can leverage now to make textbooks and learning materials more affordable:

1. Digital Learning Materials
2. Open Educational Resources (OER)
3. Rental Programs
4. Used Textbooks

Digital Learning Materials
The use of digital versions of textbooks and other course materials — often called eBooks — that students access on laptops or mobile devices is growing in popularity. A recent study by Student Watch finds that 45 percent of students obtained at least one digital material in 2021 and 58 percent of students used more digital materials this year compared to previous years.9

**Key Fact:**
Almost 70 percent of students report they will probably continue to use more digital materials even when classes return to normal.10

There are two categories of digital formats:

1. **eBooks** — typically delivered through a digital eReader with content provided in one of two formats. Both types provide little or no interactivity with the material. This content type represents two percent of all national digital content provisioning programs.11

   - **Portable Document Format (PDF)** is the most basic format of digital books, which is created by producing a PDF version of a textbook’s layout. The most popular PDF software is Adobe Acrobat Reader.

   - **Electronic Publication (ePub)** is the most widely used eBook format and is the standard open format for the publishing industry.

2. **Courseware** — software designed to be used in an educational course. Courseware can often be personalized to address students’ specific learning needs, with the content adapted based on the learners’ activities. This content type represents 98 percent of all national digital content provisioning programs.12

Digital learning materials can be made available for rent with a time-based subscription or purchased for use on student devices. Or schools can make digital books available via a learning management system (LMS), which often also includes tools for instructors to add additional course materials, track student progress and engage with students.

The price of digital learning materials is usually significantly less than their printed counterparts because there are no costs associated with printing or shipping. Purchasers simply buy access to the materials online. Students gain immediate access to digital learning materials because they are never out of stock.

Prices for digital learning materials can be up to 90 percent less than the cost of print versions. Based on internal data from April 2020 to March 2021, Follett saved students more than $147 million dollars compared to the cost of new print textbooks by offering digital format options for the same content — a 98% increase in savings compared to the previous fiscal year.13

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11 12 Follett Higher Education. Internal sell-through data research based on 1,100 stores.
13 Follett internal data, April 2020-March 2021.
Open Educational Resources (OER)
OER learning materials are openly licensed digital educational materials that can be used instead of traditional textbooks and other courseware. The concept has been available for a while but is emerging now as a viable option to reduce the cost of learning materials while still providing rich, up-to-date content.

In 2018, 48 percent of all U.S. colleges used OER textbooks from one leading provider, saving students an estimated $177 million.14

The Inside Higher Ed survey finds that instructors who consider price when selecting course materials may achieve the goal of reducing costs by assigning more OER.15 Professors can design courses on their own by building on available content from OER aggregators that host large collections of open resources. The process requires careful vetting of materials to make sure that they are high quality, peer reviewed and formatted properly.

Another option is to adopt OER content curated by a third party. For example, Lumen Learning reviews content from a variety of sources, selects the best available OER and adds timely updates, learning design and technical support to produce effective courseware for introductory courses, general education and developmental education available through an LMS. Working with Follett, students are charged only $10 to $25, which represents a significant savings compared to the cost of traditional learning materials.

OER have already proven to increase student success measured by course completions and grades earned of a C or better.16

**Key Fact:**
Students using OER enjoy an average of 83% savings with the same or better learning outcomes.

Rental Programs
Textbook rental programs can help to reduce the cost of materials for students who only want course materials while classes are in session. By renting new or used textbooks, students can save up to 80 percent off the cost of purchasing new textbooks. Follett actively pursues options to expand rental programs, including a recent direct partnership initiative with publishers to extend the benefits of their rental programs through campus bookstores.

When students purchase textbooks, there’s no guarantee that they will command strong buyback prices for titles not readopted for the next semester. Book rental is a low-risk option because students know that the rental fee is the set cost. Rental programs are also a good choice for titles that do not require access codes for supplemental materials.

Rental programs can also increase the supply of used books per campus, lowering the costs of materials for students in future semesters.

Used Textbooks
A Student Watch report finds that the vast majority – 78 percent – of students still purchase print textbooks.17 Students often look for used copies of required materials in an effort to save money. Campus stores have responded by making sure that a portion of their textbook inventory includes used materials in good condition to ensure affordable course material options.

Not only are used textbooks less expensive than new, but students can also sell books back to the campus store during buyback to recoup some of the initial costs.

For institutions, used textbooks are a good option for popular titles in general education and core courses that have larger enrollments.

**Key Fact:**
When faculty make timely adoption choices about learning materials, the probability of sourcing more used and rental texts in secondary marketplaces increases, ultimately lowering the cost of materials.

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15 Jaschik, Scott and Leder, Doug. 2017 Survey of Faculty Attitudes on Technology, A Study by Inside Higher Ed and Gallup, Inside Higher Ed.


17 Student Watch: Attitudes and Behaviors toward Course Materials, 2021 Report.
The Industry Responds to Students’ Needs
When students enroll in college, they have their sights set on bettering their lives through education. The educational community is responding to the call to make learning materials more affordable by taking advantage of technology and alternate content provisioning program models to provide options that meet both the needs of institutions and students.

Seventy-three percent of students agree they are more prepared for a course when they have course materials on the first day of class.16

Why Students Buy Course Materials

| What did you like about being part of the Follett ACCESS program? | 76% | 66% | 65% | 54% | 34% |
| Had materials first day of class | | | | | |
| Convenience of not having to shop for materials | | | | | |
| Knowing I’d have all materials and correct editions | | | | | |
| Materials cost less | | | | | |
| Materials were better incorporated into the course | | | | | |

Source: Follett ACCESS Student Survey, conducted by Follett Higher Education, Fall 2021.

By considering ways to incorporate digital learning materials, OER, rental programs and used textbooks into sourcing options, institutions can enable students to get the best prices while quickly and efficiently acquiring needed learning materials.

Automating Affordability
A new inclusive access model is emerging that enables institutions to simplify the process of acquiring required learning materials. Professors are still able to choose the course materials, be it digital, print or a mix that works best for their courses. Students can opt-in to gain access to the materials through the school, which can either be included in the cost of tuition or course charges.

Students know upfront what their course materials will cost and are prepared on the first day of classes with everything they need to succeed, generally at a much lower cost than procuring everything on their own.

Course Materials for All
For students and their families, the cost and process of obtaining the materials they need for college classes can be overwhelming, and having those materials on day one has a direct impact on academic success.

Follett has the answer: Follett ACCESS, a powerful program that enables colleges and universities to deliver all course changes (textbooks, lab kits, supplies, etc.) as part of tuition and course charges.

With Follett ACCESS, all students have what they need on the first day of class, stress-free and effortlessly — which levels the playing field for all students, regardless of economic background or social status.

With Follett ACCESS, students benefit from Follett’s buying power to save up to 30 percent or more on the cost of textbooks and course materials.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:
“I saved a lot of money using the Follett ACCESS program. The program provides books right then and there, eliminating the hassle of trying to find your books on your own.”19

Follett ACCESS is the perfect union of publishers, institutions, faculty and Follett — coming together to enhance access to course materials, engagement and learning outcomes, help make course materials more affordable and ultimately foster student outcomes.

Institutions can promote the benefits of Follett ACCESS to students who often evaluate multiple schools before deciding where to enroll. Lower course material costs included in tuition is a compelling differentiator. It’s also a way to provide student achievement support that can be evaluated on a regular basis to measure effectiveness.

Follett ACCESS offers faculty the academic freedom of choice to select the materials that work best for their learning objectives versus staying with older editions or not adopting a title because of concerns about added costs for students. All students are automatically provided with the right edition of a title. Follett has delivered an estimated 70 percent in average savings to students on the 200 campuses where the Follett ACCESS program is currently implemented.

16 Survey of college students (“Follett ACCESS Student Survey”) by Follett Higher Education, Fall 2020.
17 Testimonial by Kimoni Elizey, Southern University and A&M College student in an interview conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, September 2021.

How Follett ACCESS Works for Higher Education Students

The faculty defines what course materials are adopted for courses that are part of the Follett ACCESS program. Then Follett sources everything and provides the institution with material costs that they can share with students. When students enroll in classes that are part of the Follett ACCESS program, they receive all Follett ACCESS course materials on or before the first day of classes. Students also benefit by getting better market pricing than they most likely could find if they bought everything separately.

The program is flexible because the format of materials can be either one standard type of course material or a mix of new or used print, rental, digital learning materials and OER. Since it is essentially the institutions’ programs under Follett ACCESS, they can choose to brand the white label program with their own school-specific name or use the Follett ACCESS designation. For example, the University of Florida calls their program UF All Access.

According to Dr. Brian Harfe, associate dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, assistant provost, Teaching and Technology and professor in the College of Medicine at the University of Florida, “[t]extbook costs continue to be a source of financial hardship for many of our students. The ability of the UF All Access program to drastically decrease the cost of textbooks for UF students has reduced a financial hurdle for obtaining a UF degree.”

How Follett ACCESS Works: Student Experience

1. Students select courses for the term.
2. Student course lists are sent to the campus store.
3. The campus store pulls ALL required textbooks and course materials.
4. Course materials are packed in pickup-ready packaging.
5. Students pick up their course materials at the designated location or have them shipped directly.
6. Students gain additional benefits from the campus store.
7. Students are prepared with the materials they need for the first day of class.
8. SUCCESS! Students’ grades improve, which decreases class withdrawals and ultimately fuels higher retention and graduation rates.
5 Ways to Customize the Follett ACCESS Program

The Follett ACCESS program is very flexible. Institutions choose from options that work best for them.

1. Course Material Format
   - Materials can be print, rental, digital courseware, eBooks and OER, or the format can be a mix of all types of materials.

2. Charges Passed On to Students
   - Charges can be passed on to students as course material charges.

3. Course or Term
   - Institutions can build the cost of Follett ACCESS into tuition, based on each course in which a student is enrolled or for each term enrolled.

4. Custom or Flat Charges
   - Charges are based on participating parties and can either be customized for each material adopted or issued as charges by course/term.

5. Student Enrollment Choice
   - **Choose to either:**
     - **Opt Out:** Provisions all students in the Follett ACCESS program by default. If a student does not want to participate, the institution can choose to allow an opt-out.
     - **Opt In:** Requires students to opt in to the program by taking an action such as clicking a link on an email or enrolling in the program on a Follett site.

The Follett ACCESS program is very flexible. Institutions choose from options that work best for them.
A FOLLETT HIGHER EDUCATION WHITE PAPER

Digital-Only Option

For institutions that select the digital-only format for course materials, Follett offers Instant Access with Follett ACCESS, which produces even greater savings for students because it only incorporates digital assets that generally cost less than corresponding new print editions. Students are auto-enrolled into their digital content with a single sign-on (SSO), eliminating the need to manage multiple log-ins and user accounts.

For example, at Old Dominion University, the program has embraced lower cost digital course materials that can be seamlessly integrated with Old Dominion’s Learning Management System (LMS). The easy-to-use single sign-on (SSO) eliminates the need to manage multiple log-ins and user accounts, and students are assured fast access to correct course materials and access codes all from one place.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:
“Before the inclusive access program, I would have to make sure that I had all my books and in this scenario where I didn’t have my books, I had to either ask a classmate if I can borrow their book or a teacher if they had a book I could borrow. Now it’s really convenient because I just have to pull it up on my laptop.”

Convenience from the Beginning

Making it easier for students to succeed is a goal of every learning institution. Quick and easy access to course materials at a set price through Follett ACCESS delivers significant convenience and accessibility for students:

Print — course packs of new, used and/rental books can be preassembled by the bookstore for no-hassle pickup by students.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:
“The program relieves the stress of trying to find the book in the beginning of the semester. That’s a big relief you already have.”

Digital — easy-to-use SSO provides students fast access to all online resources from one place.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:
“I can access my textbooks from anywhere as long as I have my laptop or internet connection.”

Students like the stress-free aspect of the Follett ACCESS program because they do not need to worry about finding and paying for course materials as they settle in for the semester. For freshmen, it’s an especially welcome program as they transition to a new type of learning environment and have many adjustments to make. Materials are delivered in the same way that many of them are used to getting them in elementary, middle and high school. Even parents appreciate Follett ACCESS because they know that their students have exactly the right materials needed to succeed in their courses.

PARENT PERSPECTIVE:
“When my son learned that his textbooks would be included, he felt like Xavier appreciated and wanted him, that he was being rewarded and celebrated. It was a message to him that Xavier valued him and would value him. No other school sent this type of message as strongly. Everyone wants to be at a place where they are wanted. He later learned that it was a benefit to all incoming freshmen, but it spoke to him, and I’m convinced that his financial aid package, which included the Day One program, significantly influenced his decision to attend Xavier.”

20 Testimonial by Robert Robert Schrader, California State University Northridge student in an interview conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, September 2021.
21 Victoria Williamson, psychology major at the University of Florida, “UF shifts to e-textbooks, saving students money and lightening their load,” The Gainesville Sun, March 21, 2018.
22 Testimonial by Elijah Crawford, Southern University and A&M College student in an interview conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, September 2021.
23 Victoria Williamson, psychology major at the University of Florida, “UF shifts to e-textbooks, saving students money and lightening their load,” The Gainesville Sun, March 21, 2018.
24 Jill C. Rice, parent of an Xavier University student.
## Benefits for All Participants

Follett ACCESS produces benefits for all the participants in the program: institutions, faculty and students.

### Institutions

Colleges and universities are proactively seeking ways to lower the cost of course materials for students. In addition, administrators are acutely aware that academic outcomes have a direct and measurable impact on institutional success — class and student retention and graduation rates affect reputation, recruiting and funding.

**Follett ACCESS helps institutions:**
- Gain a competitive advantage by increasing recruitment, retention and ultimately graduation rates
- Improve academic performance and help students complete their studies
- Directly address the cost and complexity of obtaining course materials
- Leverage existing systems to provide a robust learning experience for students

For example, in Spring 2018, the University of Florida provided course materials through the UF All Access program at an average of about $76 compared to $155 for stand-alone access codes or new book purchases, a 37 percent savings. The savings are even higher when compared to average stand-alone book+code packages of $228. The program delivered materials for 142 courses and served more than 16,000 students.\(^{25}\)

**INSTITUTION PERSPECTIVE:**
“At Fayetteville State University, already economically disadvantaged students were further impacted by rising course material costs. With Follett ACCESS, students reported significantly lower costs and felt better prepared on the first day of class with all of their required course materials.”\(^{26}\)

### Faculty

Faculty have historically been challenged by inconsistent levels of student preparedness, particularly at the beginning of the term — some percentage of each class either has not obtained the course materials, has obtained only a portion of the required materials or has obtained the wrong materials, such as an older edition.

**Follett ACCESS helps faculty:**
- Have the academic freedom to choose the content provider, edition and medium that best fit the class curriculum
- Know that everyone in class will have the same edition on day one
- Let Follett troubleshoot and provide instructions for accessing materials
- Support higher academic performance for all with a leveled playing field

Jude Kiah, assistant vice president for auxiliary services at Xavier University, is enthused about the Follett ACCESS program because it doesn’t limit what titles professors can select and “is a very positive way to support students in the pursuit of education.”

**FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:**
“The first change I noticed was how easily I could access my own textbook and how easily the students could access their books. All they had to do was click the link and it would take them to their bookshelf. The other great part was the technology aspect of it. They were able to have a digital book where they could highlight and make notes they could refer to. It made everything simple because everything was at the touch of their fingertips.”\(^{27}\)

### Students

Students are under a great deal of pressure in college, whether they are first-year freshmen learning to navigate the college experience, mature students with jobs or other demands on their time or financially strapped students for whom every nickel counts.

**Follett ACCESS helps students:**
- Save significantly on course materials — up to 30 percent lower than if sourced or purchased directly by students
- Reduce stress during the purchasing process
- Easily access, manage and use all course materials regardless of format or cost
- Engage and learn on the first day of class by having access to all required course materials — regardless of background or financial status

Seventy-two percent of University of Florida students surveyed say that the opt-in program through UF All Access is a good value, and 82 percent like the convenience of accessing eBooks through provided links.\(^{28}\)

**STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:**
“The program is extremely convenient. It eliminates the stress and anxiety of looking up course materials and making sure I’ve ordered them in time before my classes start. Not only does this program save money, but it also saves time.”\(^ {29}\)

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\(^{25}\) University of Florida report on UF All Access program, September 2018.

\(^{26}\) Donald Pearsall, assistant vice chancellor for auxiliary services, Fayetteville State University.

\(^{27}\) Testimonial by Alvenia Derban, Communications Professor at Edward Waters University in an interview conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, November 2021.

\(^{28}\) University of Florida report on UF All Access program, September 2018.

\(^{29}\) Florida State College at Jacksonville student response in a survey conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, 2020.
Program Satisfaction & Cost Savings

Course materials are essential to success, yet many students struggle to pay for materials, with more than one-third opting to go without some required materials because of cost. In a Follett survey of students who participated in Follett ACCESS, 70 percent of those students reported being satisfied with the program, with the main reasons being earlier access to materials, having the correct course editions, convenience of not having to shop, and materials costing less.31

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:
“If they’re having any type of financial difficulties they don’t necessarily have to shell out any more money on books. With this particular program, they’re able to have that immediately.”32

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:
“I think it is great for students because textbooks are so expensive. It was nice to have the eText as well as a more affordable version of the actual textbook.”33

Institutions that implement the Follett ACCESS program gather data to evaluate the effectiveness of lowering costs. Results show that the bulk purchasing power of the program enables significant savings to be passed on to students.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:
“We surveyed our students, and they overwhelmingly said that they supported the program because of the cost savings that it provided.”34

Savings reported by institutions represent significant cost reductions for student learning materials.

At the University of Florida for the Fall 2017–Spring 2018 academic year, the UF All Access program saved students $7.6 million compared to the cost for the same book+code package or new book purchases.35

Florida State College at Jacksonville saved more than $350,000 in total course material costs in 2021.36

At Morehouse College, Chief Procurement Officer and Associate Vice President of Procurement and Contracts Ralph Johnson says, “Follett provided lower-cost course material options ... they have also kept us on the leading edge through various initiatives that they have introduced to our campus.”37

Student Savings*
Follett ACCESS vs. Purchasing Stand-Alone

The University of Florida has been an active Follett ACCESS program participant since 2013 with the UF All Access program. Follett tailored the program to meet state requirements that students must opt in to the program versus automatically joining the program upon enrollment. The program has proven popular. The school has processed more than 97,000 opt-in transactions and delivered materials for more than 160 different courses and products since 2013.

The school also carefully tracks how the UF All Access program helps it achieve its goal of making course materials more affordable for students.30

* Reflects data gathered from launch of the UF All Access program in 2013 through the Summer B 2018 semester.

University of Florida report on UF All Access program, September 2018.
31 Testimonial by Ray Fowler, English Instructor at Edward Waters University in an interview conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, November 2021.
32 University of Florida report on UF All Access program, September 2018.
33 University of Florida report on UF All Access program, September 2018.
34 Joseph Alston, director of business services, Fayetteville State University.
35 Results provided by Florida State College at Jacksonville, June 2021.
Better Grades, Increased Success

Access to course materials is an important contributor to academic success. Dr. Harfe from the University of Florida finds that “[t]he ability of students to obtain course materials at the beginning of the academic semester has been shown to aid students in the successful completion of their courses. The UF All Access program is an essential component that aids students in having resources from the first day of class.”

A 12-month pilot with five schools from the Virginia Community College System revealed an improvement in grades earned year over year when students had access to content on the first day of class. The content delivered was the same throughout the pilot. Only the delivery method changed with the addition of Follett ACCESS.

As the rate of withdrawals from classes drops, it is more likely that, over time, graduation rates will show a corresponding uptick as students complete courses and perform better as measured by improved grades.

**STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:**

“I feel like I was able to start the class off in a good time-frame and it helped to keep me on track with my time management.”

Transforming the Way Course Materials Are Delivered

**Delivering Change for Higher Education**

As institutions and students seek ways to lower the costs of higher education, Follett ACCESS helps reduce the amount of course materials by sharing the benefits of bulk purchasing for new and used textbooks, digital learning materials and OER. The challenge to make learning materials more affordable is achievable while at the same time promoting retention and student success.

Follett ACCESS is the perfect union of publishers, schools, faculty and Follett — coming together to improve access to course materials, enhance engagement and learning outcomes, help make course materials more affordable and ultimately foster better student outcomes.

While students can save up to 30 percent on course materials, faculty members enjoy freedom to choose from hundreds of thousands of titles and more than 6,000 publishers to best fit their needs.

But Follett ACCESS is bigger than cost or convenience. It’s about reducing student stress and increasing preparedness, so people can succeed.

It’s no wonder why institutions across the nation are using Follett ACCESS to see a positive impact on recruitment, class retention, graduation rates and academic performance measures.

### Grades on the Rise

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<th>GRADES</th>
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<th>WITH Follett ACCESS</th>
<th>NET CHANGE</th>
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Source: 12-month pilot with five schools in the Virginia Community College System, August 2015–2016.

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37 University of North Carolina at Pembroke student response in a survey conducted by Follett Higher Education about the Follett ACCESS program, November 2021.

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For more information about the Follett ACCESS program, visit: follettaccess.follett.com.
About Follett Higher Education

Our purpose is to “Improve the World by Inspiring Learning and Shaping Education.” For over 150 years, we have been doing just that by bringing together affordable educational content, products and technologies to prepare learners and educators, term after term. Follett manages all formats of affordability programs at more than 1,100 campuses in North America, resulting in lower costs and better access to learning materials. We are proud to serve as a trusted partner that fosters higher student success rates and influences positive outcomes.