InclusiveAccess.org

What is Inclusive Access?

Inclusive Access is a textbook sales model that adds the cost of digital course content into students' tuition and fees. Also known as automatic textbook billing, this model goes by a variety of local brand names including First Day, ACCESS, and Auto Access. While Inclusive Access is intended to address high textbook costs, it also creates challenges for students and faculty. The higher education community deserves to understand the facts.

What should campuses do about Inclusive Access?

Be rigorous: Take a closer look at the methodology being used to calculate Inclusive Access savings and question whether it is rigorous. Ensure savings are calculated based on the market price of an equivalent digital product, and factor in the increased cost to students who would otherwise purchase used books, print rentals, or use course reserves.

Consult stakeholders: Those impacted most by Inclusive Access should be involved in the decision-making process. Engage with student and faculty leadership to examine the implications for academic freedom, accessibility, affordability, and consent.

Engage expertise: Academic libraries have been negotiating licenses for digital resources for more than two decades, so leverage their expertise in discussions with vendors. If your institution outsources bookstore operations, keep in mind the interests of these vendors may not fully align with the campus.

Read the fine print: Carefully examine the privacy policies, terms of service, and data collection practices of any vendors for alignment with institutional legal obligations and values. Ensure that students have a real and meaningful way to decline having their personal data processed without sacrificing their grades.

Prioritize equity: Engage in a campus-wide conversation about what it means to make access to course materials equitable for students and faculty. Evaluate any potential course material distribution model with equity in mind, and for the alignment with institutional values.

Go open: Prioritize open educational resources as a way to promote more equitable access to course materials long term. Even if you determine that the benefits of inclusive access outweigh the costs in the short term, it is important to invest in long term solutions like OER.

Get the facts.