

**The Attitudes Of College Faculty  
On The Textbooks Used  
In Their Courses**

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## I. Methodology and Sample Characteristics

### Methodology

Zogby International conducted online interviews of 1,029 college faculty, from a list of 16,000 email addresses of college faculty nationwide. All surveys were completed on servers located at Zogby International headquarters in Utica, N.Y., from 12/08/04 through 12/20/04. The margin of error is +/- 3.2 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

Sample Characteristics	Frequency	Valid Percent*
Sample size	1,029	100
2-year school	169	16
4-year school	817	79
Other school	43	4
Freshmen well prepared	74	7
Average Freshmen	354	35
Struggling Freshmen	277	27
Other Freshmen	8	1
No Freshmen	304	30
Did not answer Freshmen	12	--
Full professor	331	32
Associate Professor	229	22
Assistant Professor	231	23
Adjunct Professor	150	15
Other position	82	8
Did not answer position	6	--
1 to 5 years teaching	173	17
6 to 15 years	385	38
16 to 25 years	252	25
26 to 47 years	214	21
Not sure how long teaching	1	0
Did not answer teaching length	4	--
Accounting	22	2
Agriculture	8	1
Allied Health	25	2
Anthropology	11	1

**Sample Characteristics (continued)**

Art	14	1
Biology	43	4
Business	36	4
Chemistry	27	3
CIS	13	1
Communication	64	6
Computer Science	21	2
Economics	31	3
Education	47	5
Engineering	38	4
English	83	8
Finance	5	1
Geography	8	1
Geology	6	1
Health	9	1
History	44	4
Law	20	2
Management	23	2
Marketing	13	1
Medicine	31	3
Music	26	3
Nursing	18	2
Philosophy & Religion	32	3
Phys Ed	9	1
Physics/Astronomy	28	3
Political Science	51	5
Psychology	37	4
Sociology	28	3
Other department	149	15
Not sure of department	2	0
Did not answer department	7	--
Male	651	65
Female	347	35
Did not answer gender	31	--

\* Numbers have been rounded to the nearest percent and might not total 100.

## II. Narrative Analysis

101. *What is the name of the largest course that you teach?*

**(Numbers in parentheses denotes frequency of similar response.)**

- Education / Human Sciences (132)
- Science / Mathematics (127)
- Business And Management (102)
- Communication Arts & Science Literature & Writing (79)
- General Studies (68)
- Fine & Performing Arts (50)
- Computer Science/ Information Technology (44)
- Political Science / Government (44)
- Engineering And Technology (41)
- Global & International Studies (41)
- Pre-Health / Pre-Med (36)
- Linguistics And Applied Language (30)
- Economics / Public Policy (27)
- Law / Criminal Law, Justice, Public Affairs (26)
- Philosophy (24)
- Journalism / Mass Communications (24)
- Health Care & Policy Research (22)
- Environmental Science / Environmental Studies (19)
- Earth Science (15)
- Nursing (13)
- Religious Studies (12)
- Anthropology (7)
- Urban Studies (7)
- Labor Studies / Industrial Relations (6)
- Architecture (3)
- Women's Studies (3)
- Agricultural Science (2)
- Dentistry (2)
- African / African American Studies (1)
- Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual And Trans-Gender Studies (1)
- Misc./Non-Descript. (14)

1 – 2. From the following list, please tell me if you require each, recommend each, or neither recommend nor require each for that course.

**Table 1. Whether Textbooks and Other Materials are Required or Recommended**

	<b>% Require</b>	<b>% Recommend</b>	<b>% Neither</b>
Textbook	87	7	6
Supplementary book or digital materials	46	29	25

Most respondents (87%) require textbooks for their courses, while only 7% recommend them. One in twenty (6%) neither requires nor recommends textbooks. In addition, close to half of instructors (46%) require supplementary books or digital materials as well, with 29% recommending these materials. One in four (25%) neither requires nor recommends these supplementary materials.

Professors at four-year institutions are more likely to require supplementary materials (48%), as opposed to those at two-year schools (37%). The longer a professor has been teaching, the more likely it is they will require supplementary digital materials, with 49% of those who have been teaching for 26 years or longer requiring them.

3. Do you grade students on assignments directly from the textbook (e.g., problem sets, cases, and exercises)?

Yes	34%
No	66
Not sure	1

One-third of college instructors (34%) say they grade students on assignments directly from the textbook, while twice as many (66%) do not.

Just over half (55%) of professors at two year schools do not grade students on assignments directly from the text, and 67% of professors at four year schools do not.

4. About what percentage of the textbook do you assign your students to read?

1 to 10%	1%
11 to 20%	1
21 to 30%	3
31 to 40%	5
41 to 50%	10
51 to 60%	5
61 to 70%	7
71 to 80%	27
81 to 90%	16
91 to 100%	25

Approximately two-thirds of respondents (68%) assign more than 70% of the textbook for students to read. Furthermore, one in four (25%) assigns over 90% of the textbook to read, including 21% who assign the whole book. Combined, one in five (20%) assigns half or less of the textbook to read.

5 – 14. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

**Table 2. Views on the Textbooks Used in Their Courses** (ranked by % agree)

	<b>Agree*</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree*</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Students absolutely need a textbook for this course	84	7	9	0
It is important that the material in the textbook be as current as possible	80	14	6	1
I tell my students early in the course that they need to use the textbook to get a better grade	76	10	14	1
When considering books for adoption, I generally prefer those with the most recent copyright date	62	20	17	1
Many students think they can get an acceptable grade in this course without using the textbook	38	11	47	4
Price was a major factor in my choice of which textbook to adopt	32	19	48	1
Old editions of the textbook would be adequate for my students' needs	32	18	49	2
Students in this course can pass my tests without reading the text if they attend my lectures	28	13	57	1
I recommend that students use the textbook mainly as a reference	24	11	65	1
Staying with an older edition increases the chance that students will have answers to test banks and problems	20	25	48	8

(\*Agree combines strongly agree and agree; disagree combines strongly disagree and disagree.)

A vast majority of instructors agrees that students absolutely need a textbook for the course (84%), and that it is important the material in the textbooks be as current as possible (80%). Furthermore, three-fourths (76%) agree they tell their students early in the course that they need to use the textbook to get a better grade, and three in five (62%) also agree they generally prefer textbooks with the most recent copyright date when considering books for adoption.

Respondents are most likely to disagree they recommend that students use the textbook mainly as a reference (65%), and that students in their course can pass tests without reading the text if they attend the lectures (57%).

Instructors at two-year institutions are more likely to agree that students absolutely need a textbook, and are more likely to tell them early in the course that they need to use the book. They are also more likely to strongly agree that the material in the text needs to be as current as possible, though level of agreement with this decreases as the number of years teaching increases.

The instructors are more likely to disagree than agree with the four remaining statements, as nearly half disagree with each.

*15. New editions of textbooks are generally published every three or four years. Based on your experience, have you found that the timing for the release of new editions is about right, too frequent, or not frequent enough?*

About right	48%
Too frequent	35
Not frequent enough	8
Not sure	9

Close to half of college instructors (48%) are satisfied with how frequently new textbook editions are released. One in three (35%) feels that new editions are published too frequently, and 8% say they are not released frequently enough. Nine percent are not sure.

Instructors who have been teaching for 26 years or more agree 56% of the time that the frequency of publishing new books is about right.

*Many textbooks are now available with supplementary teaching, learning, and self-assessment materials, such as PowerPoints, CD's and other print and digital resources.*

*16. When available, do you generally use these supplementary materials for your courses?*

Yes	55%
No	40
Not sure	5

Just over half of respondents (55%) use these supplementary materials for their courses, while two in five (40%) do not.

Sixty-three percent of instructors at two year schools use the supplemental materials, and 66% of those who have been teaching for 1-5 years use them as well.

*17. In your opinion, which types of students find the supplementary materials most useful?*

Above-average students	38%
Average students	15
Below-average students	6
All	16
Not sure	26

Instructors are more likely to say that above-average students (38%) get the most use out of these supplementary materials. One in seven (15%) believes that average students find these materials most useful, and 6% think that below-average students get the most use from the materials. One-sixth of instructors (16%) feel that all students find them useful. One in six (26%) is not sure.

At two-year institutions, nearly half (48%) feel that above average students find the materials most useful. At four-year institutions, twice as many are not sure (28%) as at two-year institutions (15%).