Dear Ohio University Faculty and Staff:

New federal regulations connected to the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) take effect on July 1, 2010. The regulations require institutions of higher education to disclose textbook information to students at the time that they begin online registration. A copy of this provision of the HEOA can be found at http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/textbook.cfm. In establishing this new requirement Congress wanted students to have access to information about textbooks and course materials and their estimated costs before they register for classes.

To meet the textbook requirements of HEOA, staff from the Office of Information Technology, the Office of the University Registrar, and a steering committee of faculty and college/campus staff developed a response that would enable the University to seamlessly:

- Create an online system for collecting information from faculty and staff on required and optional textbooks and course materials and their approximate retail price.
- Make this information available to students via entries included with Course Offering listings.
- Provide textbook information to the local bookstores.

The Office of Information Technology designed a software program called “Textbook.” It allows for the easy submission of information that becomes available immediately in the Course Offerings on the Registrar’s website. The Course Offerings will also list the date on which the information was last updated. Textbook information entered in the program will be sent directly to the local bookstores thereby eliminating the need for schools and departments to perform this task. A set of FAQs about “Textbook” is available at http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/textbook.cfm.

Schools, departments, and campuses must use the program for their Fall 2010 classes. As a courtesy to students, it will be helpful to have textbooks and materials for Fall classes typically taken by first-year students entered before Bobcat Student Orientation begins in mid-July. Please use your current system of textbook ordering for Summer classes.

This following disclaimer will accompany information provided to students in the Course Offerings:

“To the maximum extent practicable, Ohio University has endeavored to ensure the accuracy of the information listed here. However, please be aware of the following:

1. Prices listed are approximate and your cost might be different;
2. The textbook and material information might not be complete for every class;
3. The information relating to the textbooks and materials might change prior to the start of the class (e.g. edition, approximate price, etc.);
4. The textbook(s) and material(s) assigned as required in the class might change prior to the start of the class (e.g. a different textbook may be used than the one originally posted); and
5. The class might be canceled by Ohio University.
It is recommended that you do not purchase textbooks or class materials any sooner than necessary before the beginning of a class. The University is not responsible for purchases you make from booksellers even if you relied on the information listed here.”

The Office of the University Registrar has been in contact with chairs and directors to determine which individuals in their units will be entering textbook and course material information. Access to the program will be restricted according to their preferences. Faculty and staff who have been given access can begin entering information at any time since “Textbook” is now live and available at http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/textbook.cfm.

Individuals using the program will find on the “Textbook” page a Quick Reference Sheet that contains a set of step-by-step instructions that will guide them through its features. Plans are also in the works to create a set of video tutorials that will be available on the Registrar’s website.

I want to thank the following staff and faculty for their contributions to the development of the software: Deb Benton (Registrar), Bob Bulow (Registrar), Phil Campbell (Scripps), Craig Cornell (Enrollment Management), David Fleeman (OIT), Helen Kasler (Music), Ilya Kogan (OIT), Ming Li (Health and Human Services), Ryan Lombardi (Student Affairs), Joe McLaughlin (Arts & Sciences), Chris Moberg (Business), Barb Moran (Information & Telecommunications Systems), Marge Mowery (Registrar), Angie Mowrer (Osteopathic Medicine), Yvonne Nice (Registrar), Shawn Ostermann (Russ), Mike Parkinson (Fine Arts), Allyn Reilly (EPSA Chair), Tom Scanlan (Arts & Sciences), David Thomas (UCC Chair), Candice Thomas-Maddox (Regional Campuses), Marty Tuck (Provost), Ryan Straight (Registrar), Ginger Weade (Education), Soni Williams (Financial Aid).

“Textbook” is well designed and easy to use. It will help schools and departments to be more efficient in their textbook ordering and allow us to meet our HEOA obligations to provide useful information to students about textbook and course material costs. I am impressed with what has been created and pleased with the consultative process that was used to establish its features.

Sincerely,

Pam Benoit
Executive Vice President and Provost