



# Rediscovering an Old Genre: Open Textbook Publishing and University Presses

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## Abstract

*Most discussions about university presses focus on presses as monograph publishers. This article examines university presses as textbook publishers, and argues that presses could potentially play an important role in supporting the proliferation of open textbooks. I begin by tracing the long history of university presses' involvement in textbook publishing, and more recently, presses' involvement in open textbook publishing. I describe the different types of presses that are interested in open textbook publishing, and then attempt to classify the open textbooks that are currently being published by university presses.*

## Introduction

The textbook landscape has changed significantly over the past twenty years. Once tightly controlled by a few large commercial publishers, textbook publishing has recently seen a number of new players enter the space. These publishers have taken advantage of the public outcry over the cost of college and rising student debt. Educational technology companies such as Top Hat and FlatWorld, for example, have attempted to “disrupt” the educational market by offering low-cost digital textbooks and ancillary materials. [1] [N1] And a growing number of academic libraries now publish freely available open textbooks written by their own faculty. [2] [N2] Forced to respond, major education publishers such as Pearson, Cengage, and McGraw-Hill have turned away from print and have instead begun to invest more and more in digital textbooks and subscription-based online services often referred to as “inclusive access.” [3] [N3] Two of the biggest publishers, Cengage and McGraw-Hill, have been particularly struggling and even attempted to merge. [4] [N4] Curiously, despite all of this change and uncertainty, university presses have been mostly missing from discussions about textbooks and the future of learning materials more generally. This article aims to change that.

I begin by exploring the history of university presses and textbook publishing. While textbook publishing has never been a major focus for university presses, they have a long history of publishing such books. I then turn my attention to the university presses that have published open textbooks. I examine the different types of presses that are interested in open textbook publishing and try to characterize the open textbooks that are being published by university presses. Although this article focuses on university presses in the United States, it also discusses relevant examples in Canada, England, and Australia.

It is important to point out that university presses and libraries often define *textbooks* and *open textbooks* differently. For the purposes of this article, *textbook* is defined as a book marketed to instructors that is designed to be a comprehensive resource for use in an undergraduate or graduate course, often serving as the only or primary reading for the course. A *textbook* is an *open textbook* if it is freely available to read online and has a Creative Commons license. [5] [N5]

## A Brief History of University Presses and Textbook Publishing

Historically, only a small number of university presses have engaged in what might be called traditional textbook publishing. This is not to say that university presses do not publish books that end up being used in undergraduate courses; almost all do. However, these are generally referred to as *coursebooks* that are used in addition to or in lieu of a standard textbook. One reason that university presses never fully embraced textbook publishing is because they have always had strong competition from commercial education publishers. [6] [N6] University presses have never had the funds to offer authors large advances, develop extensive supplementary materials, or hire college sales representatives, like many of the big commercial publishers have traditionally done. In his 1967 *To Advance Knowledge: A Handbook on*

*American University Press Publishing*, Gene R. Hawes drove this point home: “University presses do not publish all books that scholars write. The presses regularly refer to commercial publishers obviously popular works as well as conventional textbooks.” [7] [#N7]

At the same time, although textbooks have never been a core part of the university press business, presses have a long history of publishing them. What would eventually become Harvard University Press, for example, published its first textbook, *A Grammar of the Hebrew Tongue*, by Harvard faculty member Judah Monis in 1735. [8] [#N8] In the early twentieth century, textbooks were an important part of the University of Chicago Press’s list. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the press published a series of high school mathematics textbooks written by Chicago faculty. In addition, when the university reorganized its undergraduate curriculum in 1937, the press published the textbooks for those new courses as well. [9] [#N9] Syracuse University Press was actually founded when the president of IBM asked the university to publish textbooks for the company to use to train their employees. Their very first publication, *Precision Measurement in the Metal Working Industry* (1942), was a textbook. [10] [#N10]

In the 1940s and 1950s, colleges and universities experienced tremendous growth thanks to increasing enrollment and the expansion of federal aid to higher education. [11] [#N11] As a result, new textbooks were in high demand, and other university presses began to experiment with textbook publishing. In 1948, a survey of the thirty-five members of Association of American University Presses (now the Association of University Presses) found that university presses had published sixty-seven textbooks aimed at the collegiate level that year. [12] [#N12] This represented 9.2 percent of the total output of university presses. [13] [#N13] During the 1940s, Harvard University Press and Princeton University Press were two of the presses that published textbooks. In 1942, Harvard published *Elementary Japanese for University Students*, by Serge Elisséeff and Edwin O. Reischauer. [14] [#N14] And in 1946, they published *A New Introduction to Greek*, by A. H. Chase and Henry Phillips Jr. [15] [#N15] Around the same time, in 1944, Princeton University Press published *Introduction to Mathematical Logic*, by Alonzo Church. Church’s textbook was so influential it was reprinted for the third time in 1996. [16] [#N16] Iowa State College Press, now defunct, and Loyola University Press, now Loyola Press, were also known to regularly publish textbooks. No press, according to the later director of Yale University Press, Chester Kerr, had a formal textbook publishing program. However, this did not mean that a university press “would refuse to publish a textbook produced on its own campus and designed primarily to fulfill a local need.” [17] [#N17] Indeed, this seems to have been the case at Harvard. In 1950, they formally decided that they would not start a textbook department nor would they publish textbooks at either the college or K–12 level. But they also left open the possibility of publishing textbooks designed for upper-level undergraduate students. [18] [#N18]

In 1963, the first director of the MIT Press, Carroll G. Bowen, argued that the “near-total neglect of textbook publication by the American university presses” was a mistake. He noted, “A university press, if it aims to support the total educative endeavor of its university, must, by definition, be concerned about providing what is useful to achieving those ends.” [19] [#N19] One of the MIT Press’s first textbooks was *Mathematics: Its Content, Methods, and Meaning*, published in 1964. Another early textbook was *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication*, first published in 1979 and currently in its seventh edition. Still, few other university presses seem to have taken Bowen’s words to heart. One possible reason for this could have been the timing. The 1960s was a period of growth for most university presses, when federal support for higher education was high, and academic libraries had money to pay for academic monographs. [20] [#N20] As a result, there was no pressing reason for university presses to diversify the types of content that they published.

The market for monographs began to change by the mid-1970s. And by the 1980s and 1990s, in order to compensate for declining monograph sales, Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press actually did make the decision to move into textbook publishing. American university presses, however, mostly did not. John B. Thompson argues that there were two reasons for this difference in approach. First, unlike in the United States, the education market in the UK was not as dominated by major commercial publishers, making it easier for Oxford and Cambridge to break in and be successful. Second, many American university presses simply felt that textbook publishing was not in line with their mission of publishing original scholarship. Instead, American university presses began focusing on publishing trade and regional books. [21] [#N21] There were, however, a few exceptions. Princeton University Press, which had experience publishing textbooks in the past, published *A Course in Microeconomic Theory* by David M. Kreps in 1990. This was a high-level textbook designed for graduate students and advanced undergraduates. [22] [#N22] Another exception was Yale University Press. In addition to monographs, Yale moved into publishing trade books, art books, and textbooks. One of their textbooks, *French in Action*, published in 1987 and written by Pierre J. Capretz, Béatrice Abetti, and Marie-Odile Germain, sold extremely well, recording \$1.4 million in sales. [23] [#N23] The book is still in print today.



The Association of University Presses (AUPresses) does not keep official statistics on which university presses publish textbooks or have published textbooks in the past, so it is difficult to know exactly how widespread textbook publishing is currently. Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and the University of Toronto Press are the only three university presses that have divisions specifically focused on textbooks. The MIT Press is one of the most well-known American university presses that publishes textbooks, focusing on textbooks mainly in science and technology. Princeton University Press is also known for publishing textbooks in biology, earth sciences, economics and finance, mathematics, and physics. Other university presses that publish textbooks have found a niche to publish in so that they do not have to compete with larger textbook publishers. For example, the University of Michigan Press, Georgetown University Press, the University of Texas Press, and the University of Wisconsin Press focus on language learning textbooks. Baylor University Press specializes in religious textbooks. And Gallaudet University Press focuses on textbooks related to sign language.

## University Presses and Open Textbooks

By the 2000s, the large commercial publishers that had controlled the market for decades increased the cost of textbooks to account for the used book market and rentals. One response to the high cost of textbooks has been the creation of open textbooks, which are free to read. While individual faculty members had been writing and self-publishing free textbooks for many years, OpenStax was one of the first university-based publishers of open textbooks. Founded by Rice professor Richard Baraniuk, OpenStax published their first open textbook in 2012. As of 2019, they had published twenty-eight textbooks for college and advanced high school classes. [24] [#N24]

The first university press to publish an original open textbook (as opposed to simply making an out-of-print textbook open access) was the University Press of Florida. Working with two faculty members from the university's Department of Mathematics, the University Press of Florida published a calculus textbook to be used in all introductory calculus classes at the university. The textbook was based on the faculty members' lecture notes, and the faculty also developed homework and test problems to go along with the book. A beta version was tested out by students in 2010, and the book was officially published in 2012. [25] [#N25] What is particularly interesting about this early date is that some of the big initiatives in open textbook publishing, such as OpenStax, were just getting started around this time. In fact, the University Press of Florida got their start working with open textbooks by offering print-on-demand (POD) versions of the OpenStax textbooks. Since that time, they have published five other open textbooks, under their Orange Grove Texts Plus imprint. Most recently, they have entered into a partnership with their library, whereby new open textbooks will be published under the LibraryPress@UF imprint. [26] [#N26]

Not long after, in 2013, the University of North Georgia Press published its first open textbook, *History in the Making: A History of the People of the United States of America to 1877*. Similar to the University Press of Florida's first open textbook, the impetus for this textbook came from within the university: specifically, a grant from the University System of Georgia. Eventually, this grant became the Affordable Learning Georgia initiative, which continues to partner with the University of North Georgia Press to publish open textbooks. [27] [#N27] Funding from Affordable Learning Georgia has helped the University of North Georgia Press become the top university press publisher of open textbooks in terms of sheer output, having published over fifteen open textbooks. [28] [#N28]

At the same time, Athabasca University Press in Canada, a fully open access university press founded in 2007, began publishing open textbooks under their Open Paths to Enriched Learning imprint. [29] [#N29] Their first open textbook was published in 2013, and as of this writing, they have published six open textbooks.

The MIT Press was one of the earliest university presses to embrace open access publishing, at least for some of their titles. They are also one of the few university presses to have an established textbook program. They too have experimented with open textbook publishing, publishing six open textbooks since 2013. [30] [#N30] MIT has tried something different than other university presses that publish open textbooks. Instead of providing PDF or EPUB versions, for some open textbooks, the only option is HTML (see, e.g., *How to Design Programs*, 2nd ed.). As current press director Amy Brand has explained, "For trade and textbook authors, protecting and monetizing their creations may be paramount, in which case immediate, free distribution will most likely not be the author's top priority. In such cases, however, we still strive to minimize barriers to accessing these works by forgoing DRM [digital rights management] where feasible and keeping our prices as low as possible..." [31] [#N31]

Recently, several other university presses have started experimenting with open textbook publishing. The University of Chicago Press published a two-volume history textbook in 2018. [32] [#N32] And Stanford University Press took an existing, collaboratively written open textbook, *The American Yawp*, which was available online only, and published a new edition in 2019. Stanford provided the peer review and copyediting and is now selling a print version. [33] [#N33]

Interest in open textbook publishing is also coming from university presses outside the United States and Canada. In Australia, for example, Sydney University Press, in collaboration with the University of Sydney Library, published *Australian Politics and Policy* in 2019. [34] [#N34] Australian National University Press has published a number of free textbooks and has recently been adding Creative Commons licenses to make them “open.” [35] [#N35] Finally, the University of Technology Sydney ePress recently published *Anatomy Quizbook*, which, while not technically an open textbook, is an open educational resource. [36] [#N36]

## Categorizing University Presses That Publish Open Textbooks

How might we categorize the university presses that are currently publishing open textbooks? In general, they seem to be of three different types. The first type are presses that already publish traditional textbooks and have decided to experiment by publishing open textbooks as well. These presses include the MIT Press, Liverpool University Press, and the University of Chicago Press. Liverpool University Press, the third oldest press in the United Kingdom, has published one open textbook and one open primary source reader.

The second type are fully open access presses that have begun publishing textbooks in addition to open access monographs. This group includes University College London (UCL) Press and Athabasca University Press. For UCL Press, although they primarily publish monographs, textbook publishing is just one of a range of activities the press is pursuing along with “a megajournal, and publishing and consulting services for other institutions.” [37] [#N37] UCL Press has published four open textbooks so far. Lara Speicher, head of publishing at UCL Press, noted, “The reasons [for publishing textbooks] are mostly obvious I think—high price of textbooks, difficulty for students to purchase, and institutional objectives to provide textbooks to students as part of the commitment to the student experience and their quality of education.” [38] [#N38]

The third type of university presses publishing open textbooks are those that did not have a history of publishing textbooks but decided to publish at least one open access textbook. This list includes Stanford University Press, Oregon State University Press, the University of North Georgia Press, and Temple University Press. For some in this group, open textbook publishing may simply be a way to continue to experiment with new modes of publishing. For other presses, their interest in open textbook publishing is due to their relationships with their university libraries or their interest in supporting a larger-university-wide push for textbook affordability.

The idea of university presses collaborating with academic libraries to publish open textbooks is not new. In 2014, Nancy Maron of Ithaka S+R wondered, “Given the current grassroots enthusiasm of students, faculty and library staff, and given the early successes of the commercial startups, could a closer alignment of interests among publishers, libraries, scholars and students lead the world of scholarly publishing into the domain once reserved for the major commercial presses?” [39] [#N39] Two years later, at the first meeting of the Publishers Reporting to Libraries (P2L) Summit, one of the recommended courses of action was to “leverage the strengths of both the library and press to create open educational resources.” The white paper produced after the meeting noted that “beyond managing print-on-demand editions, press expertise can be used to work with faculty to develop a project, have it fully peer reviewed, add the press imprint, publicize it beyond the author’s home university, and create standards for authors so the process is replicable.” [40] [#N40] Yet few presses have moved on this recommendation.

Oregon State University Press was perhaps the first university press to consider partnering with its library to publish open textbooks. In 2013, the press and library, in collaboration with the university’s online learning division, sought out proposals from their faculty that targeted high-enrollment classes and focused on areas in which the press already published, such as marine biology and environmental sciences. All projects had to be approved by the press’s editorial board. [41] [#N41] The collaboration ended soon after it began, and only two open textbooks were ever produced: a new edition of a previously published textbook on earthquakes and a textbook on computational biology. In addition to Oregon State, West Virginia University Press and Liverpool University Press worked with their libraries to create freely available readers for their students; however, these were one-off projects that have not resulted in the creation of true open textbooks. [42] [#N42]

The only other university press that has published open textbooks in collaboration with its library is Temple University Press, under its joint North Broad Press imprint. [43] [#N43] However, there are several other presses that have plans to publish open textbooks under similar partnerships in the future. Aperio, a new imprint from the University of Virginia Library and University of Virginia Press, has announced its intention to publish open educational resources, although as of this writing, they have not published any open textbooks. [44] [#N44] Likewise, the University of North Texas (UNT) Press and UNT Libraries intend to work together to publish open textbooks but have not done so yet. [45] [#N45] Finally, the

University of Florida Press, which as previously noted was one of the first university presses to get involved with open textbooks, has recently partnered with its library on a joint imprint called LibraryPress@UF. They, too, have yet to formally publish an open textbook.



## Classifying Open Textbooks Published by University Presses

I have identified forty-nine open textbooks published by twelve university presses (see table 1). This list only includes textbooks published by university presses that have Creative Commons licenses. Most of these textbooks were written as open textbooks, but a few were made openly available years after they were originally published. When looking at this group of textbooks, some common themes emerge. First, open textbooks published by university presses do not typically have Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licenses, the most permissive Creative Commons license, which many librarians and open education advocates believe is essential to truly be “open educational resources.” Like open access monographs, open textbooks published by university presses often use the least permissive Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives (CC BY-NC-ND) license. Second, open textbooks published by university presses can be difficult to find. Again, because presses tend to choose a more restrictive Creative Commons license, many of these textbooks are not included in major portals like the Open Textbook Library (which does not accept textbooks with ND licenses). These textbooks are much more likely to be found via George Mason University’s Mason OER Metafinder or SUNY’s search tool OASIS, as these tools use the Directory of Open Access Books and Open Access Publishing in European Networks (OAPEN) as sources. In addition, finding these textbooks on university press websites can be a challenge, especially if the press has no formal textbook publishing program and thus no category for these books to be placed into. Different formats might be in different locations as well. While you can purchase a print copy of *The American Yawp* textbook from the Stanford University Press website, for example, students who want a PDF must go to *The American Yawp* website or to the Open Textbook Library.

**Table 1: University Press Published Open Textbooks**

Press	Title	Year Published	CC License	Series, Imprint or Partner
Athabasca University Press	Canada's Labour Market Training System [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120282">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120282</a> ]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Athabasca University Press	Health and Safety in Canadian Workplaces [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120259">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120259</a> ]	2016	CC BY-NC-SA	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Athabasca University Press	Interrogating Motherhood [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120263">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120263</a> ]	2016	CC BY-NC-ND	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Athabasca University Press	Legal Literacy: An Introduction to Legal Studies [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120240">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120240</a> ]	2014	CC BY-NC-ND	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Athabasca University Press	Mind, Body, World: Foundations of Cognitive Science [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120227">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120227</a> ]	2013	CC BY-NC-ND	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Athabasca University Press	Open Data Structures: An Introduction [ <a href="http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120226">http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120226</a> ]	2013	CC BY-NC-ND	Open Paths to Enriched Learning
Australian National University Press	Introduction to the Tibetan Language [ <a href="https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/textbooks/introduction-tibetan-language">https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/textbooks/introduction-tibetan-language</a> ]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
Liverpool University Press	Essentials of Financial Management [ <a href="https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/pages/essentials-of-financial-management-efm">https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/pages/essentials-of-financial-management-efm</a> ]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
MIT Press	Elements of Causal Inference [ <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/elements-causal-inference">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/elements-causal-inference</a> ]	2017	CC BY-NC-ND	Adaptive Computation and Machine Learning
MIT Press	Cloud Computer for Science and Engineering [ <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/cloud-computing-science-and-engineering">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/cloud-computing-science-and-engineering</a> ]	2017	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
MIT Press	Introduction to Embedded Systems, Second Edition [ <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/introduction-embedded-systems-second-edition">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/introduction-embedded-systems-second-edition</a> ]	2017	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
MIT Press	Functional Differential Geometry [ <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/functional-differential-geometry">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/functional-differential-geometry</a> ]	2013	CC BY-NC-SA	NA
MIT Press	How to Design Programs, Second Edition [ <a href="https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/how-design-programs-second-edition">https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/how-design-programs-second-edition</a> ]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	NA

MIT Press	Reinforcement Learning, Second Edition [https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/reinforcement-learning-second-edition]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	Adaptive Computation a Machine Learnin
MIT Press	Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs, Second Edition [https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/structure-and-interpretation-computer-programs-second-edition]	1996	CC BY-SA	MIT Electrical Engineering an Computer Scie
Oregon State University Press	Living with Earthquakes, Second Edition [http://osupress.oregonstate.edu/book/living-with-earthquakes-in-pacific-northwest-0]	2013	CC BY-NC-SA	Open Access Textbook Initiative
Oregon State University Press	A Primer for Computational Biology [http://osupress.oregonstate.edu/book/primer-for-computational-biology]	2017	CC BY-NC-SA	Open Oregon State
Stanford University Press	American Yawp Vol 1 [http://www.americanyawp.com/]	2019	CC BY-SA	NA
Stanford University Press	American Yawp Vol 2 [http://www.americanyawp.com/]	2019	CC BY-SA	NA
Sydney University Press	Australian Politics and Policy [https://open.sydneyuniversitypress.com.au/9781743326671.html]	2019	CC BY-NC-SA	NA
Temple University Press	Structural Analysis [https://temple.manifoldapp.org/projects/structural-analysis]	2019	CC BY-NC-ND	North Broad Pre
Temple University Press	Bridges: United States Academia for First-Generation and International College Students [https://temple.manifoldapp.org/projects/bridges]	2021	CC BY-NC-SA	North Broad Pre
UCL Press	Textbook of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery [https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/83153]	2016	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
UCL Press	Key Concepts in Public Archaeology [https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/94771]	2017	CC BY	NA
UCL Press	Fundamentals of Galaxy Dynamics, Formation and Evolution [https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/84078]	2019	CC BY	NA
UCL Press	Introduction to Nordic Cultures [https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/116737?_pos=1&_sid=17786acdb&_ss=r]	2020	CC BY	NA
University of Chicago Press	Building the American Republic Vol 1 [https://press.uchicago.edu/sites/buildingtheamericanrepublic/index.html]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
Univeristy of Chicago Press	Building the American Republic Vol 2 [https://press.uchicago.edu/sites/buildingtheamericanrepublic/index.html]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	NA
University of North Georgia Press	History in the Making: A History of the People of the United States of America to 1877 [https://ung.edu/university-press/books/history-in-the-making.php]	2013	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Understanding Music, Past and Present [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/407]	2015	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Writing the Nation: A Concise Introduction to American Literature 1865 to Present [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/408]	2015	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	World Literature I: Beginnings to 1650 [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/409]	2015	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Laboratory Manual for Introductory Geology [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/506]	2015	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgi
University of North Georgia Press	Introduction to Art: Design, Context, and Meaning [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/374]	2016	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500 [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/375]	2016	CC BY-SA	NA

University of North Georgia Press	Compact Anthology of World Literature [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/410]	2016	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Writing and Literature: Composition as Inquiry, Learning, Thinking, and Communication [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/638]	2017	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Principles of Financial Accounting [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/640]	2017	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgia
University of North Georgia Press	Principles of Managerial Accounting [https://ung.edu/university-press/books/managerial-accounting.php]	2017	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgia
University of North Georgia Press	British Literature I Anthology: From the Middle Ages to Neoclassicism and the Eighteenth Century [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/639]	2018	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgia
University of North Georgia Press	British Literature II: Romantic Era to the Twentieth Century and Beyond [https://ung.edu/university-press/books/brit-lit-romantic-era.php]	2018	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgia
University of North Georgia Press	Brehe's Grammar Anatomy [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/717]	2018	CC BY-SA	NA
University of North Georgia Press	Becoming America: An Exploration of American Literature from Precolonial to Post-Revolution [https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/becoming-america-an-exploration-of-american-literature-from-precolonial-to-post-revolution]	2018	CC BY-SA	Affordable Learning Georgia
University Press of Florida	Concepts in Calculus [https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00011694/00001]	2011	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus
University Press of Florida	Concepts in Calculus II [https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00011715/00001]	2011	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus
University Press of Florida	Concepts in Calculus III [https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00011716/00001]	2012	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus
University Press of Florida	American Government, Second Edition [http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00061950/00001]	2018	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus
University Press of Florida	Theatrical Worlds [http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00021870/00001]	2014	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus
University Press of Florida	Distinction Through Discovery : A Research-Oriented First Year Experience [http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016299/00001]	2013	CC BY-NC-ND	Orange Grove Texts Plus

Third, open textbooks published by university presses are overwhelmingly available in PDF format. Many libraries who publish open textbooks use the platform Pressbooks, which allows them to easily publish textbooks in multiple formats, including EPUB. University presses that publish open textbooks tend not to use Pressbooks. [46] [#N46] Some, but not all, offer a POD option for these textbooks. The lack of POD is interesting because presses, unlike libraries, have preexisting relationships with POD vendors. Fourth, while university presses publishing open textbooks tend to publish the work of authors from their own institutions, that is not always the case. The MIT Press, Stanford University Press, and the University of Chicago Press are just a few examples of university presses that are willing to publish open textbooks written by authors outside of their institutions.

## Implications for Practice

As with open access monograph publishing, lack of resources is one of the biggest barriers university presses have identified when it comes to publishing open textbooks. [47] [#N47] While the publication of open access monographs by university presses has been funded by a variety of grant programs and initiatives—such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s Humanities Open Book project and the Association of Research Libraries and AUPresses’ Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem (TOME)—there have been no similar funding opportunities for open textbooks. [48] [#N48] In addition, although funding exists for the creation of open textbooks through organizations such as the U.S. Department of Education and the Hewlett Foundation, none of these existing programs are

designed in such a way as to make sense for university presses to apply. Instead, many of the university presses that publish open textbooks rely on funding from their universities to support this work. On the one hand, this is not unusual. Universities have been subsidizing the work of university presses since the 1930s. [49] [#N49] However, the creation of a national grant program could encourage more university presses to experiment with the publication of open textbooks, particularly if the textbooks could then be used in classes at presses' home institutions.

The current global pandemic has made the need for high-quality open textbooks even more urgent. Will textbook publishing remain a niche area for university presses or might this moment provide the incentive necessary for more university presses to enter the field? The history of university presses shows that publishing textbooks has always been one way that presses have been in service of their universities. Now, during a period of upheaval in higher education, more university presses should consider publishing open textbooks. Those presses already publishing textbooks have demonstrated that this work is feasible and does not need to be undertaken alone. Indeed, university presses can and should consider partnering with others, such as libraries or state-wide textbook affordability initiatives. Students everywhere will benefit from the results.

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1. Lindsay McKenzie, "Alternative Textbook Providers on the Rise," *Inside Higher Ed*, November 4, 2019, <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/11/04/window-opportunity-alternative-textbook-providers> [https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/11/04/window-opportunity-alternative-textbook-providers] .♦ [#N1-pt1]
2. The Library Publishing Coalition is the main organization that supports library-based publishing. In their 2019 directory, forty-nine libraries listed that they publish textbooks. One of the earliest library publishers of open textbooks was Portland State University Library. See Karen Bjork, "Case Study: Portland State University Library," *Authoring Open Textbooks*, ed. Melissa Falldin and Karen Lauritsen (Minneapolis: Open Education Network, n.d.), <https://press.rebus.community/authoropen/chapter/publishing-programs/> [https://press.rebus.community/authoropen/chapter/publishing-programs/] .♦ [#N2-pt1]
3. Lindsay McKenzie, "Pearson's Next Chapter," *Inside Higher Ed*, July 16, 2019, <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/07/16/pearson-goes-all-digital-first-strategy-textbooks> [https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/07/16/pearson-goes-all-digital-first-strategy-textbooks] .♦ [#N3-pt1]
4. The merger was called off in May 2020. Lindsay McKenzie, "Rival Publishers Join Forces," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 2, 2019, <https://insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/05/02/cengage-and-mcgraw-hill-merge> [https://insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/05/02/cengage-and-mcgraw-hill-merge] .♦ [#N4-pt1]
5. There is no standard definition of *textbook* or *open textbook*. Many librarians and open education advocates believe that the ability to remix is an essential part of what makes an open textbook "open." Thus, from their perspective, in order to call a textbook an open textbook, it must have a CC BY or CC BY-NC license. University presses, however, are less strict on this point. Because this article focuses on university presses, I follow the definition most presses use.♦ [#N5-pt1]
6. Peter Givler, "University Press Publishing in the United States," in *Scholarly Publishing: Books, Journals, Publishers, and Libraries in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Richard E. Abel and Lyman W. Newlin (New York: John Wiley, 2002), 114.♦ [#N6-pt1]
7. Gene R. Hawes, *To Advance Knowledge: A Handbook on American University Press Publishing* (New York: Association of American University Presses, 1967), 19.♦ [#N7-pt1]
8. Max Hall, *Harvard University Press: A History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 5.♦ [#N8-pt1]
9. John Tebbel, *The Great Change, 1940–1980*, vol. 4 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1981), 656.♦ [#N9-pt1]
10. Tebbel, 645.♦ [#N10-pt1]
11. Beth Luey, "The Organization of the Book Publishing Industry," in *The Enduring Book: Print Culture in Postwar America*, ed. David Paul Nord, Joan Shelley Rubin, and Michael Schudson, vol. 5 of *A History of the Book in America*, ed. David D. Hall (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 36.♦ [#N11-pt1]
12. Interestingly, in the same study, presses reported publishing thirteen elementary and high school textbooks. In 1961, the director of the University of Toronto Press, Marsh Jeanneret, noted that they would not publish such books because "an elementary text-book programme would alter the character of a university press organization

too drastically.” See Marsh Jeanneret, “The University as Publisher,” in *The University as Publisher*, ed. Eleanor Harman (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 7. ♦ [#N12-pt1]

13. Chester Kerr, *A Report on American University Presses* (New York: Association of American University Presses, 1949), 107. ♦ [#N13-pt1]
14. Hall, *Harvard University Press*, 84. ♦ [#N14-pt1]
15. Hall, 233. ♦ [#N15-pt1]
16. *A Century in Books: Princeton University Press, 1905–2005* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 20. ♦ [#N16-pt1]
17. Kerr, *American University Presses*, 108. ♦ [#N17-pt1]
18. Hall, *Harvard University Press*, 136–137. ♦ [#N18-pt1]
19. Carroll G. Bowen, “When Universities Become Publishers,” *Science*, May 10, 1963, 602. ♦ [#N19-pt1]
20. Joseph S. Meisel, “American University Presses, 1929–1979: Adaptation and Evolution,” *Book History* 13 (2010): 129. ♦ [#N20-pt1]
21. John B. Thompson, *Books in the Digital Age: The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2005), 146–148. ♦ [#N21-pt1]
22. *Century in Books*, 127. ♦ [#N22-pt1]
23. Nicholas A. Basbanes, *A World of Letters: Yale University Press, 1908–2008* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 138. ♦ [#N23-pt1]
24. Rebecca Koenig, “How a University Took on the Textbook Industry,” *EdSurge*, October 24, 2019, <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2019-10-24-how-a-university-took-on-the-textbook-industry> [<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2019-10-24-how-a-university-took-on-the-textbook-industry>] . ♦ [#N24-pt1]
25. Meredith Morris-Babb and Susie Henderson, “An Experiment in Open-Access Textbook Publishing: Changing the World One Textbook at a Time,” *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 43, no. 2 (January 2012): 148–155. ♦ [#N25-pt1]
26. Laurie Taylor, Chair, Digital Partnerships & Strategies, University of Florida Libraries, email message to author, October 8, 2019. ♦ [#N26-pt1]
27. Jeff Gallant, “Librarians Transforming Textbooks: The Past, Present, and Future of the Affordable Learning Georgia Initiative,” *Georgia Library Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2015), <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/gjq/vol52/iss2/8> [<https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/gjq/vol52/iss2/8>] . ♦ [#N27-pt1]
28. See table 1. The University of North Georgia Press is not a member of AUPresses. ♦ [#N28-pt1]
29. See <https://www.aupress.ca/series/opel-open-paths-to-enriched-learning/> [<https://www.aupress.ca/series/opel-open-paths-to-enriched-learning/>] . ♦ [#N29-pt1]
30. They have also published several textbooks that are freely available but not Creative Commons licensed. ♦ [#N30-pt1]
31. Bill Mickey, “Open Access Monographs: Trends and Business Models,” *Choice Reviews* 55, no. 9 (May 2018), <http://www.choicereviews.org/article/10.5860/CHOICE.feature-108> [<http://www.choicereviews.org/article/10.5860/CHOICE.feature-108>] . ♦ [#N31-pt1]
32. Harry L. Watson, *Building the American Republic*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), <https://press.uchicago.edu/sites/buildingtheamericanrepublic/index.html> [<https://press.uchicago.edu/sites/buildingtheamericanrepublic/index.html>] . ♦ [#N32-pt1]
33. *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook*, ed. Joseph L. Locke and Ben Wright (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), <https://www.americanyawp.com/> [<https://www.americanyawp.com/>] . ♦ [#N33-pt1]
34. See <https://open.sydneyuniversitypress.com.au/9781743326671.html> [<https://open.sydneyuniversitypress.com.au/9781743326671.html>] . ♦ [#N34-pt1]
35. See <https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/textbooks> [<https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/textbooks>] . ♦ [#N35-pt1]
36. Kerry G. Baker, *Anatomy Quizbook: For Students Studying or Intending to Study Medicine* (Sydney: University of Technology Sydney ePress, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.5130/978-0-9945039-3-0> [<https://doi.org/10.5130/978-0-9945039-3-0>] . ♦ [#N36-pt1]
37. Mickey, “Open Access Monographs.” ♦ [#N37-pt1]
38. Lara Speicher, Head of Publishing, UCL Press, email message to author, January 15, 2019. ♦ [#N38-pt1]

39. Nancy L. Maron, "Opening the Textbook: New Opportunities for Libraries and Publishers?," Ithaka S+R Issue Brief (2014): 10, <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/opening-the-textbook-new-opportunities-for-libraries-and-publishers/> [<https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/opening-the-textbook-new-opportunities-for-libraries-and-publishers/>].  
♦ [#N39-pt1]
40. Mary Rose Muccie, Joe Lucia, Elliott Shore, Clifford Lynch, and Peter Berkery, "Across the Great Divide: Findings and Possibilities for Action from the 2016 Summit Meeting of Academic Libraries and University Presses with Administrative Relationships," <https://www.arl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/across-the-great-divide-2016-p2l-summit.pdf> [<https://www.arl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/across-the-great-divide-2016-p2l-summit.pdf>].  
♦ [#N40-pt1]
41. Shan Sutton and Faye Chadwell, "Open Textbooks at Oregon State University: A Case Study of New Opportunities for Academic Libraries and University Presses," *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* 2, no. 4 (2014): eP1174, <https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1174> [<https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1174>]. ♦ [#N41-pt1]
42. See *West Virginia History: An Open Access Reader* (<https://textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/wvhistory/index.html>) and *Using Primary Sources* (<https://liverpooluniversitypress.manifoldapp.org/projects/using-primary-sources>) [<https://liverpooluniversitypress.manifoldapp.org/projects/using-primary-sources>]. ♦ [#N42-pt1]
43. <http://tupress.temple.edu/open-access/north-broad-press> [<http://tupress.temple.edu/open-access/north-broad-press>].  
♦ [#N43-pt1]
44. <https://aperio.press> [<https://aperio.press>]. ♦ [#N44-pt1]
45. <https://openaccess.unt.edu/unt-open-texts> [<https://openaccess.unt.edu/unt-open-texts>]. ♦ [#N45-pt1]
46. One exception is Oregon State University Press, which has two open textbooks on Pressbooks. ♦ [#N46-pt1]
47. Annie Johnson, "Advancing Open and Affordability: University Presses, Libraries, and Open Textbooks," Library Publishing Forum Preconference, May 8, 2019, <https://osf.io/2yxa8/> [<https://osf.io/2yxa8/>]. ♦ [#N47-pt1]
48. Once exception to this was Jisc's Institution as E-Textbook Publisher project, although it was not officially aimed at university presses. See <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/institution-as-e-textbook-publisher> [<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/institution-as-e-textbook-publisher>]. ♦ [#N48-pt1]
49. Meisel, "American University Presses," 138. ♦ [#N49-pt1]