



## ▲ The Challenge

Shopping for textbooks can be an overwhelming experience for students. In particular, first-year students must navigate shopping and comparing prices to find their textbooks on their own for the first time, while others, particularly those with limited financial resources, wait to buy their textbooks or avoid purchasing them entirely. In both instances, it is common for students to start their classes without the required materials, which puts them at risk of falling behind.

With the rising costs of physical textbooks, the university faces challenges in making textbooks more accessible and affordable, as the traditional model falls short in promoting student success, aligning with campus affordability and sustainability objectives, and recognizing current and future students' learning preferences.

## ▲ The Solution

Equitable Textbook Access (ETA) is a flat-rate digital-first program that will provide all students with access to their required textbooks on the first day of classes. As an evolution of our current Inclusive/Immediate Access program, Day 1 Digital Access (D1DA), ETA expands the benefits of D1DA to all classes campus wide. The cost is estimated to be \$250 per semester for all full-time undergraduate students regardless of major.

[Supported and promoted by the Chancellor's Office](#), ETA is aligned with the tenets of Graduation Initiative 2025, Beach 2030. In addition, in alignment campus sustainability goals, ETA provides access to required textbooks in a digital format, through Canvas, whenever possible, which is increasingly preferred by students.

ETA operates as an opt-out model, giving students the option to not participate if they prefer print (where print is available) or prefer to shop and compare on their own. The ultimate goal of ETA, though, is to provide immediate, affordable access to all the required course materials they need to be successful. We are preparing for ETA to pilot with the beginning of the fall 2024 semester.

## ▲ Highlights

- ETA programs provide significant savings over traditionally purchased materials, with the added convenience of having streamlined one-stop access to all materials by the first day of class.
- ETA preserves academic freedom for faculty to select materials best suited for their teaching, provides a quicker turn-around of textbooks for late hires and section changes, and allows instruction to begin on the first day of class.
- A digital-first approach aligns with campus sustainability efforts, as digital textbooks reduce carbon footprints by reducing deforestation (producing print books) and pollution (freight to ship and return unsold print books).

- In alignment with campus initiatives and equity efforts, [initial studies](#) show that students (including those from traditionally underserved populations) who participate in similar programs are performing better academically and are more likely to complete their courses.
- The number of Equitable Access (EA) programs on college campuses [has grown significantly in recent years](#) (59 in AY19-20 to 245 in AY22-23).
- UC Davis was the first to launch an EA program to address student access/equity issues and have a utilization rate of 80 percent in their third year.
- San Diego State launched their EA program in Fall 2022 with a utilization rate of 71 percent.
- Cal Poly Pomona is launching their EA program in Fall 2023.
- Multiple other CSU campuses are preparing EA launches in fall 2024 and beyond.

# ETA

**EQUITABLE  
TEXTBOOK  
ACCESS**

