Chapter 8
Establishing an Institutional E-Book Program: A Case Study for Change

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Background

Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-SA) became an independent university in 2009. The campus was established in 2000 as a branch campus of another Texas A&M regional university. The university was housed on the campus of a community college on the south side of San Antonio, Texas, with a legislative charge to "close the gap" for the city's traditionally underserved Hispanic population. Independent status of the university was pending enrollment growth to 1500 full-time-equivalent students. In 2009, the university reached that goal and became a stand-alone university and the 11th campus in the Texas A&M University System. A&M-SA was a transfer-only university and relied exclusively on the local community college district to provide transfer students. Demographics of the student population were nontraditional – average age of 32, 68% Hispanic, and low income (nearly 70% were PELL eligible students). Many of the students held full-time jobs, attended school part-time, and had family responsibilities.

Still closely tied to the community college in 2009, A&M-SA faculty and students were serviced by the campus bookstore. As the Spring 2009 semester began, it became apparent that the community college's bookstore had little interest or capacity to continue this arrangement. That is, many courses and students started the semester with no textbooks – which had previously been ordered for the Spring term.

Given this situation, the campus leadership began to look at possible alternatives to meet the needs of faculty and students. Several options were examined – including a traditional textbook rental program and contracting with an independent bookstore. As this research progressed, a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the US

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Department of Education (FIPSE) was released which solicited proposals for textbook rental programs. One of the constraints of our new university campus was limited physical space. The university now resided in an old elementary school which was located two blocks from the community college. Enrollment was growing rapidly and all available space was being converted to classrooms.

A proposal was prepared in response to the RFP for an e-textbook rental program. In researching existing e-text programs, it quickly became obvious that few programs existed. Programs that existed were primarily located in for-profit and online programs. These programs mostly relied on one publisher for 100% of their content. The lack of e-text programs to emulate was due to three primary reasons:

1. The technology and bandwidth needed to establish a quality e-text experience was not widely available either on campus or with students.
2. Major textbook publishers did not have business models in place to initiate favorable terms for institutional program models.
3. Publishers did not yet have the capacity to create and distribute quality e-texts.

As the proposal was prepared, telephone calls were made to the top three major textbook publishing companies to solicit support for preferred pricing for an e-text rental program. In general, the idea was received with lukewarm interest, but all publishers agreed to provide a letter of support for the proposal. Ultimately, the proposal was submitted for the initial three-year e-text program. In October 2009, the proposal was funded for just under $300,000 over a three-year period.

In hopeful anticipation of receiving the grant, the university put forward a request to add an e-text course fee to the A&M-System Board of Regents in early Fall 2009. The request was approved later that year after the grant was awarded and before the program launched in 2010. The fees were capped at $150 per course. This new fee was critical and a required element of the program as it allowed the e-text program to charge students (and pay vendors) for any course content associated with courses.

Program Goals

As part of the proposal process, four broad goals were established for the e-text program:

1. The cost of e-texts would be no more than 10% of tuition and fees.
2. Academic freedom rests with the faculty.
3. Students enrolled in courses that are part of the e-text program will have access to the required content needed to be successful in the course by the first day of classes.
4. Students would have access to a printed copy of their e-texts.

Goal One The cost of e-texts would be no more than 10% of tuition and fees. With the cost of a three-hour course, in 2009, set at approximately $650, this meant that the goal was to provide e-texts to students for no more than $65 per course. E-texts for many courses (primarily Humanities and Education) were priced under $65. Furthermore, electronic homework solutions that were available for various textbooks were made available for adoption for a fraction of the retail cost. In general, if faculty elected to use the electronic homework solution that accompanied their e-text, students paid an additional $10. At the time and based on the college bookstore prices, students averaged about $120 per course. In addition, electronic homework products were often as expensive as the textbook. As a result, for all courses that adopted an e-text, the average student would save just under 50% on textbook costs, and those that adopted an electronic homework product saved much more. Students enrolled in business courses where textbooks (at the time) were often priced over $200 saved nearly 70%.

As part of the agreement for reduced publisher prices, the program became an inclusive access program. This means that once a faculty member adopts an e-text, a course fee (appropriate to the cost of the relevant e-text) was applied to all students in the course, and it became included as part of the students' tuition statements. Students did not have the ability to opt out of the program once their faculty member adopted the program into their course. This restriction was necessary as required by publishers to protect their copyrights. The fear was that if some students could opt out of the program, other students in the class might illegally print or share the content. This would result in a copyright infringement of publisher content. In addition, publishers were able to offer reduced prices due to a 100% "sell-through." At the time, approximately 20% of all students typically purchased textbooks from campus bookstores. This e-text program ensured that 100% of students "rented" the e-text. While contracts with each of the publishers had some differences, most of the contracts allowed students to access e-texts for two years.

One of the important contractual agreements with the publishers included the timing of when students/university would be charged for the e-text. As with many colleges, A&M-SA has an add/drop period during the first 10 class days. During this period, students are allowed to adjust their class schedule. In order not to impede this process, the university is responsible for providing census date enrollments for relevant classes to publishers after the 10th class day. For the first 10 days of class, students are given temporary access to e-texts. After the census date, students are given full access to all subscribed electronic content. Once census date enrollments were provided to publishers, they invoice the university accordingly.

During the initial semester of the program, a common complaint from students was that they felt they could obtain used textbooks at prices that were less expensive than the e-texts. Subsequently, it became a responsibility of the program to monitor the cost of used textbooks when a new e-text was selected for a program. Since the goal was to reduce the cost of course content to students, if an equivalent used textbook was cheaper and readily available, the program coordinator would advise the faculty member. In many instances, however, the used textbooks available at a cheaper rate were international editions or older editions which were deemed by the faculty member as not equivalent substitutes.

Goal Two Academic freedom rests with the faculty. This meant that faculty were provided the option to adopt e-texts for their courses. Although encouraged to do so, the university made no requirement for faculty to add their courses to the e-text program. This meant that the program had a responsibility to provide choices, to faculty, in terms of publishers available in the program. When the program started, six publishers contracted to provide digital content within the inclusive access parameters of program. Faculty could select any e-text from any of these six publishers. Furthermore, many of the publishers provided the ability for faculty to customize their e-text in order to provide a custom solution designed to best fit the course syllabus.

As previously mentioned, it became paramount that this inclusive access program not be a single-sourced-publisher program. Although, one publisher offered deep discounts for this kind of program, the concept violated the program's emphasis on academic freedom, so that offer was declined.

Goal Three Students would have access to a printed copy of their e-texts. To achieve this goal, publishers were required to provide the university with copyright privileges for each e-text so that they could be printed should students elect to do so. Starting from the first day of classes, students could elect to order a black-and-white printed copy of e-text as well as having privileges to print the e-text themselves (note: each semester, students are allowed to print 50 pages from their university student fees and any additional page costs 10 cents per page). The printed copies would be an additional charge and were the responsibility of the student. One of the concerns for the program before it started was the availability of broadband Internet access in students' homes. Many A&M-SA students live in rural areas and/or come from low-income families who traditionally have limited access to broadband service. Although broadband service was available on campus, the lack of Internet access in students' homes meant that students would potentially have limited access to their digital course content at home. At the time, smartphones and tablets were not commonly owned by university students. In many instances, students only had access to computers and the Internet at school. Because of this, it was paramount that students be able to order a printed copy of their e-text.

Program Planning and Implementation

The primary emphasis of the FIPSE grant was to provide a jump start to a textbook rental program. With this in mind, proceeds from the grant were never intended to subsidize the cost of e-texts to students. Instead, grant proceeds were primarily used to build structure around the program elements so that it would ultimately be sustainable after the grant period. One of the major expenses of the proposal included salary for an instructional designer whose major responsibility was to coordinate with e-text providers, ensure student access, and train faculty on the adoption and use of e-texts in their courses. With inclusive access programs new to both publishers and universities, everyone was on a steep learning curve to figure everything out during the 9-month planning period before program launch. During these busy 9 months, key accomplishments included program awareness to internal stakeholders, faculty and student training sessions, keeping publishers to agreed-upon timetables for e-text delivery, selecting a vendor and developing a distribution process for e-texts, developing a system for identifying courses in the program and adding appropriate fees to the Student Information System (i.e., Banner), identifying and securing a vendor for the e-text printing service for students to purchase a printed copy, and educating administration on program progress and specific elements. An additional element to be addressed was that in late 2009, the nascent university was beginning to negotiate with a bookstore vendor to provide services on campus.

Pre-program Planning

Two elements were identified as being key to program success: faculty adoption and student acceptance. In order to accomplish these two things, incentivizing faculty to adopt e-texts for the courses was of utmost importance. With grant funds, the program purchased 20 iPads and provided them to faculty who adopted at least one of their courses into the e-text program. With a full-time faculty of about 50 at the time, this seemed like a reasonable starting point. It is important to note that the first iPads became available in early 2010 and cost about $650 (with two-year Apple warranty). Many faculty were interested in using the iPad in their classes and the e-book reader app was very user-friendly. The program was so popular that soon we had to purchase ten additional iPads for interested faculty. By program launch, about 25 faculty (or about 50% of full-time faculty) had adopted e-texts for at least one of their courses; many of them adopted e-texts for all of their courses.

Along with an incentive to encourage faculty to adopt e-texts, a series of faculty training sessions was developed and launched during the planning phase. Important elements included educating faculty as to what exactly the e-text program was, how it could be used to benefit students (i.e., reduced costs, accessibility, etc.), how to customize e-texts for their courses, what the costs of the e-texts were and the savings to students the program represented, as well as how to incorporate the iPad into their classroom.

Promotion to students about the program also began during the planning phase. This mostly included flyers posted in key areas on campus identifying program elements, cost savings, etc. In addition, two students were recruited as "e-book ambassadors" to assist with building awareness with students and, ultimately, with assisting students with accessing and utilizing their e-book. E-book ambassadors were trained similarly to faculty and were also provided an iPad. Once the semester began, they were tasked with being available to visit classrooms for faculty to provide information to students and visiting common student areas such as the cafeteria to provide assistance to students as needed.

One additional educational element which was not anticipated was the need to educate publisher sales representatives as to what the program was, how it was structured, what the costs were, etc. There were several instances in which publisher representatives shared inaccurate information with faculty, and this created confusion within the program ranks. Although publishers had teams of digital content professionals, their ability to meet deadlines was often a challenge. This resulted in several of the e-texts being delivered late and not being available by the first day of classes.

E-Text Printing Service

A critical element of the program was that students have the ability to have access to a printed copy of their e-text. As part of the contractual agreement with publishers, students could first print the e-text in ten-page increments on their own printer, and second, publishers provided the university with the rights to have the e-texts printed by a third-party vendor. The cost of printing e-texts was the responsibility of the student who ordered the copy. All of the third-party copy service was on-demand. No inventory of e-text copies was kept.

During the initial year of the program, approximately 25% of students ordered a printed copy of their e-text. Favorable prices were negotiated with a well-known copy vendor for $.05 per page. This resulted in printed copies being available for between $12 and $30 – depending on the number of pages in the e-text. The original ordering process included a paper-based order form – completed and submitted to the university's business office (and paid for) – and at the end of the day, transmitting those orders to the vendor for production. In approximately 3–5 business days, the e-text hard copies were delivered to the university for distribution to students. In theory, the process was cumbersome but manageable. In reality, it was a nightmare. Students would order copies of e-texts for the wrong class, long lines in the business office to order printed copies were the norm, the vendor would not print the correct number of copies, and the vendor was not prepared for the huge demand for copies ordered during the first three weeks of the semester and accordingly would deliver the copies up to two weeks late and deliver copies that were missing pages. Program staff had to maintain inventory of printed copies (before students picked them up) and distribute them when students came to pick them up. This consumed valuable university office space for weeks. In addition, inventory management and distribution of copies to students consumed huge amounts of personnel time, and this effort was not sustainable. The choice of vendor originally was based on its reputation for producing high-volume, high-quality copies and their expeditious delivery process. Needless to say, a serious conversation with the vendor took place in a debriefing meeting after the first month of the program. While changes were made in an attempt to improve service to include online ordering and payment for students, ultimately, the program switched vendors for the second year, and the internal processes were changed to reflect a mail delivery of copies to the students' homes directly. This removed the university from being in the middle of the distribution channel.

Accessibility

As the program planning moved forward, it became evident that the program needed to ensure accessibility of digital content to students with disabilities. Many early e-books and digital readers did not provide digital content in a format that was accessible to all students. For this reason, the program coordinator was responsible for coordinating with the university's Disability Student Services (DSS) and the publishers to provide content in a format that was accessible. Often, this meant that the publishers needed to provide a hard copy of the e-text to the university's DSS service so that it could be made accessible. As the program grew and technology improved, the e-book platform and publishers began to offer content in audio and EPUB-3 formats which are now the program standard.

Applying Fees in the Student Information System (SIS)

Since A&M-SA was a new university, it shared a SIS with its mother university. This created countless issues with the adding of course fees. For instance, both universities had the same course numbers, and if a course fee was added to one of the classes, it was added to all courses. Therefore, it became necessary to add the fees at the section level (versus the course level). This created problems when new sections were added and when faculty switched sections. As a new university with double-digit enrollment growth, new sections were often added weeks before school started. If the fees were not placed on the section before the schedule was released to students, fees were not reflected in the student's tuition statement. This resulted in students being charged late and sometimes for students being dropped from classes due to unpaid balances on their account.

One significant benefit of adding the e-text fee on to course fees was that the fee became part of the students' tuition and fee statement paid for, in many instances, by their financial aid package. This resulted in all students having access to needed course material without having to make the decision about whether to buy textbooks or pay rent (for example). Prior to the e-text program, students would often not purchase needed textbooks and would often rely exclusively on classroom slide presentations, older textbook editions, or illegal copies of a friend's textbook.

E-Text Platform and Distribution of E-Texts to Students

One of the important characteristics that were important to the program was the ability of students to access their e-texts offline (i.e., the ability to download some or all of the e-text for offline reading). In addition, it was important that there be a central location for students to access all of their e-texts as opposed to having to go to a separate publisher proprietary platforms to access their e-texts. Because of this requirement, a third-party e-text platform was selected to provide access to students' e-text library. At the time, publisher proprietary platforms did not allow offline reading.

Ultimately, e-text access was incorporated into the university's Learning Management System (LMS) in the original year of the program, and access codes were sent to students in order for them to access their e-texts. Access codes were generated by program staff and Outlook Mail Merge was used to send the codes to students enrolled in individual classes. In many instances, these emails were trapped in junk folders, were not received, were not paid attention to, etc. This meant that a good number of students did not have the information needed to access their e-texts. While this was an ongoing problem for the first semester, the problem was quickly resolved if a student notified their instructor or program staff they did not have their access code. Before the beginning of the second year of the program, the vendor created a LMS building block that allowed the e-texts to be embedded into the students' courses. This removed the university from the responsibility of distributing access codes to students.

Campus Bookstore

By coincidence, A&M-SA received the FIPSE grant during the initial RFP process for a campus bookstore. With this in mind, by the time the campus was negotiating with the bookstore vendor, the existence of the e-text program was known. It was made clear to the bookstore vendor that the e-text program was going forward and an exception to their exclusivity clause would need to be established. Ultimately, the bookstore vendor agreed that as long as the e-texts were identified by a unique ISBN and that ISBN could not be bought or rented by students outside of the e-text program, this would be an allowable exception to their exclusivity clause.

Program Implementation and Evolution

As previously mentioned, approximately 50% of the full-time faculty adopted an e-text for their courses. Part of their motivation to adopt an e-text was due to their ability to obtain an iPad once they adopted an e-text for at least one of their courses. This meant that about 50% of the courses were established as e-text courses and about 50% of the students were enrolled in an e-text course. For the first semester in Fall 2010, the e-text program served about 1250 students, 30 faculty (including some part-time faculty), and 100 courses and issued 4,600 e-texts. The average course fee was $64 which represented 9.5% of tuition.

As the program launched its first semester, the program employed one full-time (100% FTE) instructional designer/information technology analyst, a 20% FTE administrator (who spent closer to 50% of their time managing and implementing the program), a 49% FTE student worker, two student ambassadors (who were fulfilling their duties as part of an internship course), and a dozen staff and student workers who had no official time allocated to the project but yet spent many hours in service of the program (via "other duties as assigned").

Technology

Given the demographics of the university and their general lack of access to technology, one common student complaint was that reading the e-text on a computer screen hurt their eyes. Specifically, the students worked all day long on a computer screen and were not happy with having to use a computer to read their e-text. Toward the end of the second year of the program, the university bought 150 iPads with remaining FIPSE grant funds and rented them out to students for a nominal fee. The fee was established to pay for device insurance, to help defray maintenance costs, and to establish minimal accountability for students. The iPad rental program was very popular, but by the end of year 5 (2015), most students had smartphones, iPads were getting old, and the demand for iPads was virtually nonexistent; the program was discontinued.

Program Staff

A&M-SA was one of the first public universities to adopt an institutional program. Originally funded via a FIPSE three-year grant, the program was institutionalized in 2011 which ensured its continuation beyond the FIPSE initial grant period. Once the initial phase was completed, planning continued to determine processes to improve the program, continue to keep costs low, and to serve students and faculty. Once the program was institutionalized and before the grant funds expired, a decision to add a flat $5 fee per course to the cost of each e-text to pay for a full-time program coordinator/instructional designer was approved. With the program issuing 6,700 e-texts a year in 2013, the additional fee was able to cover most of the salary expense. By 2017, the program was issuing 20,000 e-texts a year; accordingly, the fee was reduced to $3 per course. The monies generated, even with the reduced fee, were more than enough to cover the salary expense for the program coordinator. The management and oversight of the program rested with the program creator and original manager, the dean of the college of business, as part of her regular duties.

Shared Revenue and the Bookstore

As the university grew and a new chief financial officer (CFO) was hired, it did not take long before top leadership had to confront the issue of a loss of "shared" revenue from the bookstore. With the exclusivity clause exception, and about 50% of classes being serviced by the e-text program, the bookstore had become more of a "spirit" store than a bookstore as most of their sales revenue is generated by logo-based apparel such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, bags, etc. In 2013, a proposal for the e-text program to be consumed by the bookstore would have resulted in an increase in e-text costs to students of over $30/course representing nearly a 50% increase. At the heart of the argument, by e-text program champions, was that the university needed to decide which of the two perspectives was a higher priority:

1. To maximize income to the university for discretionary spending, or
2. To reduce the costs of higher education to students.

Ultimately, the bookstore's proposal was declined. With that said, modified proposals for a similar agreement have resurfaced two other times. As of the writing of this chapter, they have all been declined by university leadership.

E-Text Printing Services

By 2013, the program had grown to serve 2000 students, 76 faculty, and over 200 courses and issued 6,700 e-texts. One of the biggest challenges remained was the program's inability to provide a reliable printing solution for students. By the end of year five, a third printing vendor was employed as there were still substantial issues with providing a competitively priced, quality product, delivered in a timely manner. While each time a vendor was hired, program staff emphasized "there would be high volume" over the first three weeks of classes. Regardless, vendors never fully grasped the idea of what was meant by "high volume." By 2017, the e-text platform vendor begins to offer printed versions of the e-text, ordered on-demand via a link through the student LMS. This printed version was more expensive than the previous system, but it was a much more reliable quality, and it came bound for student convenience and was reliably delivered within two weeks after order, directly to students. In 2018, one of the publishers began to offer a full textbook rental program – delivered to students enrolled in an e-text course – for an additional $25.

Current Status

By Spring 2019, the program's ninth year, university enrollment has grown to 6,200 students (headcount) and 200 full-time faculty. It is estimated that the e-text program will issue 25,000 e-texts to 1315 classes (or 47%) during the 2019–2020 academic year which involves approximately half of the university's full-time faculty. The program utilizes 13 publishers, and the average e-text course fee is $65 including any electronic homework manager products. The range of prices are from $35 to $110 with the higher priced e-texts generally including two-semester courses such as Intermediate Accounting, General Chemistry, etc. The cost of a three-semester-credit-hour course is $1,081. This means that e-texts cost only 6% of tuition and fees during the 2018–2019 academic year. While there are still some differences in contracts from publisher to publisher, most publishers provide three years of access to their e-text. A few boutique publishers offer perpetual licenses which are indefinite and have no expiration. It is estimated that the program saves the average full-time student about $560 per year and the e-text program saves all A&M-SA students about $3.5 million per year over the cost of traditional textbooks (see Appendix A).

The reception of the program has varied by stakeholder group(s). For instance, business faculty and their classes often have over a 95% adoption of e-texts. This is likely due to the fact that in general, business textbooks are more expensive than most other disciplines. It is not uncommon for business textbooks to cost nearly $300. The e-text program provides for a dramatic reduction in costs. It is also possible due to the more acceptance and familiarization of business students with technology than students enrolled in other disciplines. Education students and faculty also are, in general, favorable to the e-text program – although to a lesser extent than business students. Historically, approximately 50% of education courses have adopted e-texts. The general acceptance of faculty and students in Arts and Sciences is mixed. Science faculty tend to embrace the program; humanities faculty tend not to be so embracing. Historically, approximately 25% of Arts and Sciences courses have adopted e-texts.

Lessons Learned

Going into the tenth year of the program, the e-text program has emerged as one of the leading programs in the country. The program's emphasis on academic freedom and to maintain low prices has led to the program's growth and success. Currently, it is one of the largest and most diverse e-text programs in the country. This success is due primarily to learning from mistakes, having a commitment to program excellence, and an allegiance to program goals among program staff.

In general, the lessons learned focused around seven major issues:

1. Pilot, pilot, and pilot,
2. Using access codes to distribute e-texts,
3. Delivering a quality e-text printing option,
4. Availability of technology (or lack thereof) by the student demographic group,
5. A lack of comparable programs to emulate,
6. A distinct resistance to change among students and faculty, and
7. A steep learning curve on the part of publishers.

Before the initial semester began, it became obvious that the program started too fast and too large. With the incentive of an iPad, faculty were motivated to adopt an e-text. Unfortunately, the number of faculty, classes, and students outpaced the capacity of the program's infrastructure. It took a full year before the program's infrastructure could catch up to the program's demand. In hindsight, the program should have started as a small pilot and built on success.

From the second day of the initial semester, the pursuit began for a solution to distribute e-texts that did not include access codes. Access codes were commonly used (and still are) by students to access content which is purchased at university bookstores and online. However, this type of e-text access system was not scalable. With the initial distribution of 4,700 e-texts, it quickly became obvious, this system was completely ineffective. It took an entire year for the e-text vendor to create and provide an LMS building block which issued access codes on the back end of the vendor's database. While there were additional hiccups along the way with this new access process, it was a much-improved system. A similar system, albeit refined and improved, is still utilized today.

As mentioned previously, a continuous attempt to improve the e-text printing service continued for six years. In the seventh year (2017), the e-text vendor took over the printing service, and while it was more expensive, the quality and delivery service was much improved. There are still occasional issues with the service, however these issues pale in comparison to previous renditions of the service. In recent years, some publishers have also begun to offer discounted options for regular textbook rentals to e-text program students and loose-leaf printed copies. As the program continues to progress and these kinds of programs become more common, other innovations by publishers are likely to develop and continue to improve and enhance this option for students.

A significant issue identified early in the program was the impact that a lack of technology had on some students being able to maximize e-text usage. While some students had broadband Internet access at home, a high percentage of our students did not. Although, the original platform provided an e-text download option for students, students often did not own laptops that would allow them to download the e-texts at school that would, in turn, enable reading at home offline. In an attempt to resolve this problem, the university started an iPad rental program during the second year, and this program continued until smartphones, tablets, and broadband Iaccess were available to most students 4 years later.

The lack of a comparable program to emulate essentially meant that everything in program development was untested. Each and every program element was new. This was exacerbated by the steep learning curve on the part of textbook publishers. At the time, publishers were also new to the idea of an institutional e-text program. Their ability to overpromise and under-deliver was uniform across the majority of publishers. This often led to e-texts that were of poor quality, delivered late, and edition mismatch when compared to textbook editions pushed by publisher representatives. By the beginning of the second year, quality control on the part of program staff became a significant part of the program service and continues today. Publishers have improved dramatically, but their relatively high employee turnover – by publisher representatives and technology staff – continues to impact service to the program and students.

Lastly, one of the biggest hurdles to program success at the beginning was the resistance to change on the part of both students and faculty. For students, it was common to field complaints during their first semester enrolled in the program. Complaints stemmed from their resistance to change related to their uncomfortableness with technology and their general dissatisfaction with their inability to purchase (or not) their own textbook from another vendor. However, many students changed their attitude to the program by the beginning of their second semester. The low-cost convenience that the e-text program offers is quickly embraced by most students. Year over year, the program receives a student satisfaction score over 70%.

Conclusion

A&M-SA's e-text program is an innovative program which provides an effective solution to an identified problem. The program reduces the cost of course content for students while maintaining academic freedom for faculty. While it has been a successful program, the landscape of inclusive access programs has evolved over this time period. Programs that emphasize Open Educational Resources (OER) are one example of a program that is becoming increasingly popular. OER and inclusive access programs are potentially viable programs that have both advantages and disadvantages. The solution identified should be driven by the goals of the program and not restricted to a narrow definition of the problem. For instance, A&M-SA's program is driven to reduce costs – not to issue e-texts. Because of this, a review of the price and availability of used textbooks is part of the program's service to faculty.

Two of the important takeaways to launch a successful program are the advocacy by faculty and support by administrators. Ultimately, administrators will need to decide how they will deal with a loss of shared revenue from the university's bookstore and how that may impact the bookstore and its services to students and other stakeholders. The potential cost savings to students is significant.