Teaching without Textbooks (TwT)

Benefits of TwT

- Saves students and the University money – no textbooks to purchase.
- “Popular” readings, written in less technical language and often in narrative form have broader appeal to the human condition and the real world. This is particularly beneficial to non-majors and other students new to the discipline. (see for example, Hiller, Kelly & Clinger, 2016)
- Multiple sources provide multiple perspectives, voices and genres. This can serve as a foundation for introducing students to the range of literature in a field or discipline.
- Supports sustainability as it is easier to update and modify portions of the content. This allows instructors to both personalize and share content across course sections.
- Allows more flexibility as course may be built around instructor’s vision and course learning objectives. Readings can be more focused on actual course content rather than the structure of a textbook.

Challenges of TwT

- Added level of accountability on instructor for finding and integrating texts to support learning objectives.
- Lack of text-supplied study support such as chapter review questions, quiz/text question banks, bolded terminology and definitions means instructor must supply.
- Instructors must find figures and graphics to illustrate concepts and connections. (Attribute using copyright and Creative Commons–see graphic)

Suggestions for TwT

- Provide opportunities for students to engage with content for credit and accountability. For example, require students to submit one thing they learned from the reading and one question they still have. These individual submissions could be addressed more broadly with the entire class and help the instructor see what concepts the students missed.
- Help students to see and reflect metacognitively about the connections between the course topic and their major, their program of study, their lives and their world.
- Post readings online in WorldClassRoom. Students can print if preferred.
- Be intentional about including terms and definitions in PowerPoint lectures. Give students the PowerPoint.
- To connect concepts, incorporate study questions every 10-15 minutes or every 10 slides that address students’ critical thinking/analytical skills. These questions ask students to apply the concepts from the readings to new situations or to other course content. Similar examples appear again on quizzes/tests.

Textbook Alternatives

- Library collections – your librarian can help!
  - Journal and magazine articles
  - Book and eBook chapters
  - Media and streaming videos
  - Case studies
  - New purchases
- Open educational resources (OER)
  - Open Textbook Library (new library resource)
  - Research Guides: Open Access and Open Source Textbook Projects
- Canvas Commons in WorldClassRoom (WCR)

Using resources

- Copyright and Fair Use (see below)
- Creative Commons licensing (see graphic)
- Best practices: Include full citation, link for electronic resource and copyright statement. Post in a secure environment, e.g. WCR.
- Access:
  - For links to library resources, include library proxy in URL (http://library3.webster.edu/...) to prompt login/authentication
  - If online content has access limitations (e.g. limited number of simultaneous readers for an eBook) talk to your librarian.
  - Library’s eReserves Coordinator can help you scan and post to WCR.

Copyright and Fair Use

The University considers the following to be fair use:

- A chapter from a book
- An article from a periodical or newspaper
- A short excerpt from a Web page
- A short story, short essay or short poem, whether or not from a collective work
- A chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon or picture from a book, periodical, or newspaper.

With these conditions for copyrighted works:

- If planning to use more than 25% of an entire work, ask your librarian.
- Out-of-print books have copyright protection.
- Restrict access to students officially enrolled in the course and prevent unauthorized further dissemination of the work.

For more info, see Copying and distributing portions of copyrighted works in the classroom or on the Web on the Copyright and Fair Use Research Guide.