

**Title:** Courseload – Improving Access, Affordability and Quality of Student Course Materials at Indiana University

**Challenge:** At Indiana University, textbooks account for an estimated 10 percent of a student’s total cost of attendance per year. Further, more than one-third of all students go without one or more required textbooks each year. Whether due to cost or perceived lack of engagement with the text, this delay (or absence) of course materials creates a barrier to learning that is often hard to overcome.

**Solution:** Courseload was selected as Indiana University’s sole digital content delivery platform across all campuses in an agreement announced in September 2011. This 3.5-year agreement was awarded to Courseload following extensive piloting over five semesters, research and an exhaustive RFP process conducted from February to July 2011. Courseload was selected over other solutions due to the unlimited access to various eContent sources (open educational resources, publisher, faculty-generated, etc.) it provides - from day one through the entirety of a student’s enrollment - its affordability versus a traditional textbook model and the improved quality of education it provides with advanced analytics and collaborative features.

**Learning Impact Outcomes:** The Courseload solution enables the following outcomes at Indiana University:

**Improved Access:**

- Provides immediate access to course materials for every student in a course, which allows learning to begin on day one of a semester.
- Students retain access to all digital course materials as long as they are enrolled as a student at Indiana University.
- Availability on any device with a modern web browser and agreements allowing printing capabilities.

**Increased Affordability:**

- Integration of free or lower-cost open source materials and self-generated content reducing reliance on more expensive proprietary content.
- Aggregated demand creating conditions for the lowest pricing for publisher and other proprietary content.

**Improved Quality of Education:**

- Enables instructors to provide contextual guidance through annotations within the digital course materials.
- Single platform allows instructor to view real-time engagement analytics with all text-based course materials and if warranted, trigger remediation efforts to enhance student retention and success.
- Turns a passive reading process into a more active process in which students interact with instructor and other students to co-construct knowledge.
- Collaborative features enable users of all abilities to take part in the active learning process.

**Return on Investment:** The results of Indiana University’s pilot program study have revealed that students prefer digital course materials (87% versus paper copy) due to factors such as an instructor’s ability to add and share annotations (69%), improved sustainability by reducing paper (67%), cost (64%) and reducing the weight of their backpack (61%). In addition, the study also demonstrated the following ROI:

- Cost Savings
  - The IU eText Fee Model guarantees publishers 100% sell through by charging a flat fee for the content to every student in an eText section. Courseload has pioneered an innovative pricing approach that is not tied to the underlying cost of physical content; the IU eText Fee is a flat per-student, per-course fee for using the Courseload platform, regardless of how many pieces of content or assigned pages are loaded in a course.
  - 55% savings versus previous semester of sample MBA course:
    - Total cost during previous semesters: \$655 (includes \$495 for articles and cases, \$125 for one custom textbook and \$35 for a critical thinking packet)
    - Total cost under Indiana University eText Fee Model: \$295 (includes articles and cases, two custom textbooks, a critical thinking packet and an online simulation)
  - \$25 per book average savings for students with Indiana University eText Fee Model.
  - \$100, 000 collective savings on course materials with Indiana University eText Fee Model.
- Improved Educational Outcomes
  - Roughly 84% of students reported that the instructor’s annotations were useful in their learning.
  - Study results also affirmed that annotations improved grades.
  - 23% said that the annotations shared by other students were useful to their learning.