

Textbooks Go Digital

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Digital textbooks are growing in popularity and the Tulane University Bookstore is keeping up with the times by offering its largest-ever selection of digital titles. Up from 54 last fall, the bookstore has 115 digital textbooks available this semester.



Small tags indicate which textbooks in the bookstore are available for purchase in the digital format. (Photo by Alicia Duplessis Jasmin)

"We expect a gradual evolution of students accepting the digital concept as more features and more titles are introduced," says Jade Roth, vice president of books for Barnes and Noble College Booksellers, Inc. "The visual experience is a very rich one, just as if you were reading the physical book."

Although the bookstore has offered digital textbooks since 2003, the majority of Tulane students have yet to try them. Roth believes that limitations, such as the inability to resell the book at the end of the semester, are often deterrents for potential users. To download the book, a computer or reading device like the Kindle, which has a starting price of about \$300, is also necessary.

"Students want to interact with their textbooks by highlighting and searching for things that will be on the test," says Roth. "We are aware that the transition won't happen over night, but we do believe that it will happen eventually."

Despite a few drawbacks, there are several benefits to using a digital textbook, she says. The price for the digital edition is generally about 40 percent less than its new, printed version. Some contain embedded audio and visual features that enhance the reading experience.

Textbooks available in the digital format are marked at the location of the printed version in the bookstore. Students may also log on to the [bookstore's website](#), click the textbook tab at the top of the page and follow the link that reads "[digital textbooks](#)" to search the catalog of available titles.

The Tulane University Bookstore is a Barnes and Noble college store location.