

Prepare to Teach

Breakout Session: Choosing a Textbook

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Advice

1. Request evaluation copies for free, or now at least e-versions... Some journals have textbook reviews
2. Look for "GAISE compliance" (concepts over recipes, use of real data, focus on communication and presentation of results)
3. George Cobb: Judge a textbook by its exercises
4. If the textbook choice is not your own, can still adapt to some degree, e.g., change order of topics (start with data collection?)
 - a. Is ok to ask students to read the book! But don't expect them to. Can develop reading quizzes/exit tickets. Add supplementary material but make connections to main textbook as clear as possible.
 - b. Make sure assessments emphasize what you think is most important.

Advice cont'd

5. Look for instructor resources, including exam banks

- a. Still need to be vetted
- b. Don't assume students don't have access to questions
- c. Options include: Use auto-graded questions for quick review, Use contexts from exam bank questions (but then convert to open ended)

6. Plan in-class activities for the most difficult topics in the course (e.g., sampling distributions)

- a. Don't just repeat textbook examples (e.g., flipped philosophy) - fill in blanks, bring alive, have students tell you
- b. Use starred homework exercises in class?

7. Don't feed into student distrust of the textbook...

- a. Help build student study skills
- b. Notes to yourself after each class session

Discussion questions

1. What most appealed to you as a student in textbooks?
2. How much did you use the textbook? How much do you think students today use a textbook?
3. Advantages and disadvantages to low-cost or freely online texts?
4. What aspects of a textbook adoption would be most helpful to you as an instructor?
5. What would you do differently if you were to write your own textbook?