

**Slide 9 Introduction****Slide 10 Journals versus textbooks**

- Paul has spoken about the history of journal publishing, and the impetus for open access journals, but there are some important differences when considering open access textbooks

|                   | Journals  | Textbooks   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Type of content   | New research and original theory  | Fundamentals of the discipline  |
| Audience          | Faculty, researchers, graduate students (seasoned professionals)  | Undergraduates (tend to not know much about how these things work and what the alternatives are)    |
| Primary incentive | Recognition, academic credit (good for encouraging open access because there is potential for wider distribution) | Royalties (not so good for encouraging open access because royalties are generally not forthcoming) |

**Slide 11 E-textbooks / digital textbooks**

- open access textbooks are generally digital textbooks, but not all digital textbooks are open access
- those provided by Amazon (e-textbooks), publishing companies, are more akin to traditionally-published textbooks with some extra capabilities
- limits on access
  - format limited — e.g. Kindle or browser, cannot be ported to other formats
  - time limited — accessible only for limited period such as one semester or one year
  - number of users — if library subscribes to e-textbook, perhaps can only be used by a certain number of users simultaneously, and subscription must be renewed periodically

- limits on use
  - technical restrictions on certain uses such as printing, loaning, reselling — things an individual can easily and lawfully do with a physical textbook
  - contractual restrictions against uses that may otherwise be permissible by copyright law (e.g. fair dealing)

### **Slide 12 Advantages of open access**

- none of the limits that may be found in proprietary e-textbooks — often can be found in different formats, or a basic format that can be ported to various devices
- no time limits on use and information can be quickly updated to reflect changes in the field
- authors can easily collaborate if it's in a modular or Wiki-type format
- instructors can mix and match resources freely — use supplementary materials without worrying about copyright infringement if they are making copies for students, or requiring students to hunt down the additional readings

### **Slide 13 Cost of textbooks**

- rate of inflation for textbooks is higher than rate of general inflation in Canada — in 2009 textbook costs rose 10x pace of general inflation (3.5% versus 0.3%)
- students are “captive buyers” — they do not choose which textbooks they would prefer to buy, they have to buy what is assigned — attempts to save money by buying used textbooks can be thwarted
- new editions of textbooks come out all the time, may render previous editions useless
  - fast-changing disciplines such as law will necessitate updates to textbooks
  - publishers may purposely cut into used textbook market to reduce demand for previous editions (and the used copies of them) — in disciplines such as calculus, the basics of the subject for first year students don't change, but new editions seem to come out regularly — publishers do this simply to cut into used textbook market, and

faculty don't necessarily check what's different in the new edition before assigning it — for example, a first-year calculus course is using 7th edition of Stewart text (cost \$200+), which has gone through seven editions since 1987 (average of once every four years)

- bundling of materials — addition of study guides, CD-ROM, passcodes for limited access to online version, etc. that may or may not be useful but can double the price of the textbook
- undergraduates can pay up to \$1,000 per year for traditionally-published textbooks (not only undergrads but also students in professional programmes such as law and medicine)

### **Slide 14 Government responses**

- no monitoring or regulation of textbooks prices in Canada
- response by Ontario government:
  - textbook tax credit of \$65 per month for full time students, \$20 per month for part time — not useful until student starts earning taxable income, if they don't pass the tax credit on to their parents
  - OSAP textbook grant of \$150 for those who qualify for Ontario Student Assistance — has been discontinued
  - result: as textbook prices rise, student aid will have to rise as well — taxpayers are subsidizing profits of publishing companies
- meanwhile, the response by British Columbia government:
  - <http://open.bccampus.ca/open-textbook-101/>
  - has partnered with BCCampus to create open access textbooks for 40 first- and second-year university courses
  - said they wanted to increase accessibility and affordability for post-secondary students
  - three titles so far since announcement in October 2012

### **Slide 15 Upshot?**

- 500,000+ university students in Ontario, not even including colleges, and last year the province said they wanted to open up 60,000 more spots for post-secondary students

- the province thus gives out textbook tax credits per year in the millions
- B.C. open textbook initiative cost: \$600k to \$1m per year — so you can do the math
- furthermore, it is less costly to update to new editions going forward
- quite apart from economic concerns, a commitment to supporting the development of open access textbooks shows that the government support use of technology in making information widely accessible, rather than leaving it in the control of commercial interests