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Contact: Stephanie Williams, Publicity & Promotions Manager (352) 392-1351, sw@upf.com

## **UNIVERSITY PRESS MAKES AFFORDABLE TEXTBOOKS A REALITY**

**Gainesville, FL**—Florida students will now have online access to textbooks free and can order bound printed textbooks for up to half the cost of traditional textbooks. Orange Grove Texts *Plus* (OGT+), a new imprint of the University Press of Florida, combines the strengths of a digital repository, an on-demand printer, and a traditional book publisher. This pilot project is designed to address the rising cost of textbooks by providing students and researchers with high-quality scholarship that is affordable, accessible, and adaptable to reader preferences. Orange Grove Texts *Plus* currently offers 120 textbooks and scholarly monographs free online, with more titles added on a continuing basis.

State University System Chancellor Frank T. Brogan has expressed support for this venture. “This entrepreneurial partnership is testing new waters in book publishing to offer flexibility for professors and less expensive textbooks for students. I’m proud that this innovation is coming out of Florida’s higher-education community, and I’m excited about the future possibilities this experiment could bring to how we manage textbook costs.”

Orange Grove Texts *Plus* delivers access to a wide range of textbooks in a choice of electronic or bound-book formats. These books are priced 40-50% less than similar textbooks purchased at retail outlets, including online discounters. For example, students anywhere can read online, download, and print some or all of the pages from *Elementary Calculus* by H. Jerome Keisler without charge on their own printers. Or they can use the site’s one-click ordering to have a copy of this 992-page book printed, bound, and shipped directly to their home for \$47.50 (plus shipping and handling). Even at the deepest discount, comparable textbooks retail for \$100-\$160. With OGT+, students don’t have to wait in long lines at the campus bookstore. Other books available through Orange Grove Texts *Plus* range in price from \$29.50 to \$54.50.

Though people are increasingly reading large amounts of text on-screen, not every student or researcher wants to read exclusively online. A recent survey found that the comfort level of students reading on a computer screen varied greatly.: 33% of students questioned were comfortable reading on-screen; 22% were uncomfortable; and 45% were in the middle. However, 75% said they would prefer a printed textbook to a digital textbook, and 60% said they would buy a low-cost print copy even if a digital book were free. Although other open-access repositories offer free online versions, Orange Grove Texts *Plus* is among the first to offer readers the option of a low-cost bound version in addition to unlimited free online access.

Dr. Willis Holcombe, Chancellor of the Division of Florida Colleges, heralded Orange Grove Texts *Plus* as “a much-needed resource which should have a significant and growing impact on the cost of textbooks and, in turn, overall higher education affordability for students in Florida.”

Recent statewide initiatives address textbook affordability at Florida’s 67 public and private colleges, universities, and community colleges. The Florida Distance Learning Consortium established The Orange Grove to serve as a repository of free instructional resources, including multimedia files. The Orange Grove’s role in this partnership is to house multimedia files and open access materials, providing the infrastructure to distribute access to scholarly resources. This repository offers Florida educators the flexibility to create and consume information presented in text, audio, video, or animation. Since its inception, The Orange Grove has gathered more than 1200 digital resources. Users have access to more than 80,000 items in other collections and repositories through federated searching. Thanks to this repository, open access textbooks are easily integrated into the traditional classroom or distance learning setting because these materials can be easily imported into the learning management system used by professors in Florida.

With the launch of Orange Grove Texts *Plus*, an additional number of University Press of Florida books will also be available, with more added on a continuing basis. Like the open-access textbooks, these books can be read at no cost electronically, output to personal printers, and ordered as bound books shipped directly to the consumer. For example, *Images of the Woman Reader in Victorian British and American Fiction* by Catherine J. Golden retailed as a hardcover book for \$59.95. A bound paperback of this same book is now \$29.50 and can be read online free. Orange Grove Texts *Plus* will eventually include a large selection of content from UPF's backlist of more than 1,600 titles and may eventually include books developed specifically for this imprint.

Booksellers and wholesalers will soon be able to order books from Orange Grove Texts *Plus* on a non-returnable basis according to a standard discount schedule specifically designed for the imprint. This print-on-demand model eliminates multiple shipments to retailers, warehousing, and vendor returns, making this a greener alternative to stocking and maintaining an inventory of titles.

Among open-access initiatives, the Orange Grove Texts *Plus* model offers a user-friendly interface aligned with reader preferences. Integrated Book Technology, the third partner in this paradigm-shifting effort, is a global leader in print technology, bringing to this venture the expertise to produce and ship single copies of bound books directly to the consumer at the click of a mouse. This technology even offers the flexibility to include color illustrations in books. The textbook *Calculus-Based Physics I* by Jeffrey W. Schnick includes graphs and charts made more readily understandable by the use of color. Students can choose to order the bound book in black and white for \$39.50 and view the color material on screen, or they can opt to purchase the bound book in color for \$49.00.

One of the great concerns about open-access licensing is the future of the scholarly monograph as a factor in academic careers. At the same time, departments now provide less funding for the purchase of books, and libraries increasingly rely on online content databases for similar information. OGT+ challenges the paradigm that in order for scholars to publish, publishers must underwrite the manufacturing expense for hundreds or thousands of books to recover overhead and developmental costs associated with the gate-keeping function so highly valued by administrators and tenure committees. By substituting on-demand printing for inventory runs, this imprint can expand the reach and breadth of scholarship in a manner that is fiscally responsible, while securing the sustainability of UPF's mission to sow the newest seeds of scholarship and preserve important voices from the past. OGT+ opens a new realm of possibilities for customized classroom material pulled from disparate sources, including items written by the instructors themselves.

Integrated Book Technology, founded in 1991, uses a variety of late-model digital presses (Xerox, IBM, OCE, HP, Xeikon) to print over a billion pages a year, which it binds into hardcover and softcover books on a state-of-the-art Kolbus bindery line. IBT also provides publishing services traditionally outsourced to other vendors: page composition and design, editorial services, digital prepress, color cover printing, and warehousing and fulfillment. Ongoing improvements in digital print technology have allowed it to become economically competitive with traditional offset manufacturers at larger print quantities.

For more information on Orange Grove Texts *Plus*, including resources on open-access publishing, textbook affordability in Florida, or the University Press of Florida, please contact Stephanie Williams (352) 392-1351, ext. 243, [sw@upf.com](mailto:sw@upf.com).

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