

Vital Source Questions

1. Please provide three years of sales history broken down by department or category (New, Used, Digital, Clothing, Etc.)
 - a. On the website
2. What are the top strategic priorities driving this RFP?
 - a. UA Monticello is always seeking to obtain best value for its students, the campus community, and Arkansas taxpayers generally. Consequently, it periodically re-solicits contracts to foster competition, to test the market for better prices, updated technology, and the best pricing available for the commodities and services it needs. Furthermore, Arkansas Procurement Law generally requires such competition for contracts no less than every seven years.
3. Has the Institution previously evaluated a virtual-only or hybrid course materials model? What are the key takeaways?
 - a. No
4. Is maintaining a physical bookstore seen as essential for tradition, or is there openness to repurposing the space for other campus priorities?
 - a. The bookstore is one of the first experiences has on campus and plays a crucial role in student success. The physical location provides access not only to education materials, but also an opportunity for students to purchase items of convenience while not having to leave campus. The bookstore is also a pillar to the marketing plan by the sales of merchandise and apparel throughout the year, but especially through large events on campus.
5. Would the institution be open to a pilot model (e.g., virtual-first or Equitable Access) before full-scale implementation?
 - a. The University is open to proposals by the vendor, any proposals will be subject to various approval prior to implementation.
6. How important is it for students to have day-one access to course materials regardless of location?
 - a. Very important
7. Does the evaluation team include digital learning, IT, or student success representatives?
 - a. Yes, evaluation team is a well blended group of representatives across campus.
8. What specific pain points or goals have led to exploring a change in course materials distribution?
 - a. UA Monticello is always seeking to obtain best value for its students, the campus community, and Arkansas taxpayers generally. Consequently, it periodically re-solicits contracts to foster competition, to test the market for better prices, updated technology, and the best pricing available for the commodities and services it needs. Furthermore, Arkansas Procurement Law generally requires such competition for contracts no less than every seven years.
9. How does the institution currently measure the success of its bookstore/vendor relationship?

- a. Success would be defined by excellent customer service, consistent delivery of education materials to students in a timely manner, value for the student, and increasing sales volumes during this time period.
10. What percentage of current sales are digital vs. physical? Has that mix changed over the past three years?
 - a.
11. Has the institution conducted any surveys or internal reviews to understand student preferences around course material delivery formats?
 - a. Not at this time
12. Given the rapid changes in the course materials industry, many institutions are transitioning to a digital-first model, with print materials delivered directly to students via student-choice purchases. Would your institution be open to exploring this model?
 - a. The University is open to proposals provided by the vendor.
13. Is the University open to adopting a modernized service model? Specifically, would the institution consider working with one vendor for course materials and a separate vendor for merchandise and brand management/growth and retail operations?
 - a. The University is open to proposals provided by the vendor.

Course Materials and OER

1. Please provide the booklist in Excel format for Spring 25/Summer 25/Fall 25 including course number/section/ISBN/enrollment/cap enrollment/required materials. Please identify any continuation of courses, if possible.
 - a. See Website
2. Is there a goal or strategy to adopt and utilize OER materials?

Student Financial & Access

1. Are students allowed to purchase merchandise with financial aid or campus cards?
 - a. Yes

Enrollment & Credit Hour Data

1. Please provide the annual attempted credit hours for all traditional students and separately all dual enrollment students. If possible, provide credit hours by term (Spring 25/Summer 25/Fall 25)
 - a. See Website
2. Please provide FTE for traditional students and separately all dual enrollment students.
 - a. See Website
3. What is the projected enrollment growth rate over the next five years?
 - a. University cant project out 5 years but would project a flat enrollment for next fall.

Satisfaction & Service Issues

1. Does the institution track student satisfaction with the Inclusive or Equitable Access program and access to course materials?
 - a. Not at this time
2. What student support issues or challenges have been most common?

3. What specific customer service or operational challenges have you experienced with the Equitable Access program or your current provider?
 - a. None

Procurement & Evaluation

1. What are the top 3 priorities you would like this RFP to address?
 - a. Access and Affordability
2. Who is on the RFP Committee, and what are their roles?
3. Please provide historical commission rates, minimum guarantee expectations, and other financial obligations (E.g., facility, sponsorships, scholarships).
 - a. Commission Rate
 - i. 12.75% of all Commissionable Sales, excepting Commissionable sales of digital course materials, up to \$1,000,000
 - ii. 13.75% of all Commissionable Sales, excepting Commissionable sales of digital course materials, over \$1,000,000
 - iii. And 7% of all Commissionable sales of digital course materials.
 - b. Facility
 - i. \$20,000 under current contract
 - ii.
 - c. Scholarships
 - i. \$5,000 annually in textbook scholarships

Equitable Access (EA) Program

1. Does your institution currently have an Equitable or Inclusive Access program for course materials, or are there plans to implement one in the near future? We are keen to understand your position on this and whether you would be open to a proposal that includes pricing for such programs. Our goal is to help reduce cost for students while improving overall academic outcomes.
 - a. The University is open to proposals by the vendor.
2. If so, What percentage of traditional students participated in the Total Access program for the past 3 semesters?
3. Are dual enrollment students participating in the Total Access program?
4. If so, what percentage of dual enrollment students participated over the past 3 semesters? Who currently pays for dual enrollment course materials?
5. If not, how do dual enrollment students receive their course materials?
6. How many high schools are part of your dual enrollment program?
7. Does your SIS identify dual enrollment students with a unique code or flag?
8. Do traditional students and dual enrollment students have access to BightSpace?
9. Will items such as kits, lab materials, supplies, or non-textbook software remain excluded from the Equitable Access program?