

What's in a Syllabus?

Analyzing Subject Department Syllabi to Identify Opportunities for 'E-textbook' Provision, Research Instruction, and GenAI Instruction

Ed Remus, Jackie Zook, Chris Straughn
Northeastern Illinois University

Who we are: Ed Remus

- Associate Professor
- Social Sciences Librarian
- Instruction Coordinator

Who we are: Jackie Zook

- Assistant Professor
- Music and Art Librarian
- Technical Services Coordinator

Who we are: Chris Straughn

- Assistant Professor
- Continuing Resources Librarian
- Government Documents Coordinator
- Liaison to Linguistics, Philosophy, and TESOL
- Interim Librarian for the College of Business and Technology

How we came together: Assessment

- Context: NEIU Libraries Assessment Working Group
 - Charge: demonstrate library value to campus administration
- Initial idea: assess Pell Grant recipients' use of print textbook reserves
 - Goal: address textbook affordability, a campus priority
 - Problem: print textbook reserve usage incredibly low!

How we came together: Assessment

- New idea: create electronic textbook (“e-textbook”) collection
 - Benefits: usage data easy to gather, likely to be impressive
 - Problem: which textbooks can we provision as ebooks?
 - How can we shift our “responsive” model of provisioning e-textbooks (relying on faculty to request unlimited user ebooks, which are typically unavailable) to a “proactive” model?

What we did: Syllabus review

1. Solution: conduct syllabus review to proactively provision e-textbooks
 - a. Partnered with department chairs in History, Political Science, Art, Music, Computer Science, and English to secure current-term syllabi
 - b. Identified & purchased textbooks available as unlimited-user ebooks
 - c. Identified textbooks we already licensed as unlimited-user ebooks
 - d. Provided instructors with ebook access links to share with students

What we did: Syllabus review

- With syllabi in hand, we secured department chair permission to also:
 - Review syllabi to identify independent research assignments
 - ...to target instructional interventions to student research
 - Review syllabi to identify generative AI (GenAI) policies
 - ...to target faculty receptive to GenAI instruction

Outline of our presentation

- Jackie (10 minutes)
 - Syllabus review for proactive e-textbook provisioning
- Ed (10 minutes)
 - Syllabus review for instruction to support student research
- Chris (10 minutes)
 - Syllabus review for instruction related to GenAI
- Q&A (15 minutes)

Shift Happens!

Changing the Face of the Reserves Collection

- Technical Services Considerations - TIMING!
- AY 2025 E-book and Print Purchasing
- Barriers
- Future implications

Timeline of Academic Year 2025

Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Total Subject	Academic Year 2024-2025
Inaugural Departments	Changes/Additions/Deletions	Syllabi Represented	Total E-books Purchased
Art & Design - 38	Art History/Education - 5	Art History/Education - 43	Art History/Education - 1
Computer Science - 0	Dance - 2	Dance - 2	Dance - 1
Dance - 0	English - 15	English - 15	English - 3
History - 20	History - 14	History - 37	History - 25
Music - 23	Music Hist/Theory/Educ. - 7	Music Hist/Theory/Educ - 30	Music Hist/Theory/Educ. - 3
	Political Science - 16	Political Science - 16	Political Science - 3

The 'Tech' in Technical Services

Prioritizing platforms (YBP), E-book models, Cost, Availability, Pilot tracking

eBooks in Minutes - URL within 1 hr.:

EBSCO *
Taylor &
Francis *
Wiley
Rittenhouse
3M Books
IGI Global
Cambridge *

24-hour window:

Brill
Bloomsbury
Gale
JSTOR *

24-48-hour window:

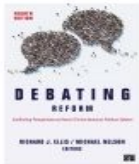
Cairn
DeGruyter
Oxford *
Project
MUSE
Manchester
Univ Press
Wolters
Kluwer

5-7 days:

Elsevier
SpringerLink
World
Scientific

The 'Tech' in Technical Services

Prioritizing platforms, E-book models, Availability, Cost, Pilot tracking



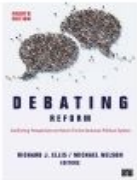
Title: DEBATING REFORM: CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES ON HOW TO FIX THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM
Editor: RICHARD J. ELLIS
Publisher: CQ PRESS
Pub Year: 2021
ISBN: 9781544390178
Place of Publication: THOUSAND OAKS
Country Of Origin: US
Pagination: 386 P.
Binding: eBook
Edition: 1st; Textbook--Intro.
Content: Textbook--Intro.
YBP Select: Supplementary
Language: English
Focus: US

[shipped to library \(3/12/2025\)](#)
[alt-ed returned by library \(3/7/2025\)](#)
[GobITween \(2 Books/8 Slips\) ▾](#)
[alternate editions \(1P/2E\) ▾](#)
[library activity \(14 sold\)](#)
[table of contents](#)

Supplier	Purchase Option		List Price	Status	Library Availability	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	1 User					
+ EBSCOhost	3 User					
		NON-RETURN/NON-CANCEL YBP				
+ EBSCOhost	Concurrent Access (365 uses)		232.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	Unlimited User		290.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	Unlimited User		348.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	1 User		232.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	3 User	Yes	290.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	Non-Linear	Yes	348.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	Unlimited Access	Yes	348.00 USD ▾	Available	Contract on file	Preview

The 'Tech' in Technical Services

Prioritizing platforms (YBP), E-book models, **Cost**, Availability, Pilot tracking



Title: DEBATING REFORM: CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES ON HOW TO FIX THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM
Editor: RICHARD J. ELLIS
Publisher: CQ PRESS
Pub Year: 2021 **ISBN:** [9781544390178](#)
Binding: eBook
Edition: 4TH ED.
Content Level: GEN-AC
LC Class: JK274.D398 2021
Subject Headings: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION--UNITED STATES.
YBP Interdisciplinary Topics: Political; Public Policy
Approval Note: AUTH: WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY.
Format: New Edition; Textbook--Intro.
Geographic Focus: US
Language: English

Place of Publication: THOUSAND OAKS
Country Of Origin: US
Pagination: 386 P.
YBP Select: Supplementary

[shipped to library \(3/12/2025\)](#)
[alt-ed returned by library \(3/7/2025\)](#)
[GobiTween \(2 Books/8 Slips\) ▾](#)
[alternate editions \(1P/2E\) ▾](#)
[library activity \(14 sold\)](#)
[table of contents](#)

Supplier	Purchase Option	Library DF	Price	Availability	Library Availability	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	1 User		232.00 USD ▾		on file	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	3 User		290.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	Concurrent Access (365 uses)		348.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ EBSCOhost	Unlimited User		232.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	1 User		290.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	3 User	Yes	290.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	Non-Linear	Yes	348.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	Unlimited Access	Yes	348.00 USD ▾	Avail	on file	Preview

Library Note: [Add...](#)

Title: DEBATING REFORM: CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES ON HOW TO FIX THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

348.00 USD ▾ Avail returned by library (3/7/2025)

The 'Tech' in Technical Services

prioritizing platforms (YBP), E-book models, Cost, Availability, Pilot tracking

Language: English

Supplier	Purchase Option	Library DDA	NON- Status	Library Availability
+ de Gruyter	Unlimited User Access DRM-free		Available	Request Contract

Library Note: [Add...](#)

Language: English

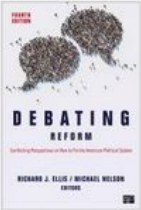
Supplier	Purchase Option	Library DDA	Status	Library Availability
+ EBSCOhost	1 User		Available	Unavailable in your country
+ EBSCOhost	3 User		Available	Unavailable in your country
+ EBSCOhost	Concurrent Access (325 uses)		Available	Unavailable in your country
+ EBSCOhost	Unlimited User		Available	Unavailable in your country
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	1 User		Available	Unavailable in your country
+ ProQuest Ebook Central	3 User		Available	Unavailable in your country

Library Note: [Add...](#)

The 'Tech' in Technical Services

Prioritizing platforms, E-book models, Cost, Availability, Pilot tracking

... Change Bib Reference Reopen Edit



Debating reform : conflicting perspectives on how to fix the American political system / Richard J. Ellis and Michael Nelson, editors. (Ebook Central Titles - AutoHoldings), Thousand Oaks, California :, CQ Press, 2021, 1544390599, ISBN

PO line owner: Main Library

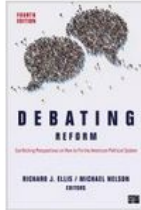
Vendor/ Yankee Book Peddler/yankee/DDA Ebook Purchase
Account: s/8007-55
Funds: DDA Purchases (100.0%) (FY-2025)

Electronic Title - One Time Closed Alerts (2)

Syllabus Project S25

PO line: POL-115102 / PO: PO-115102 (Closed)

... Reopen Cancel Save



Debating reform : conflicting perspectives on how to fix the American political system / Richard J. Ellis and Michael Nelson, editors. (Ebook Central Titles - AutoHoldings), Thousand Oaks, California :, CQ Press, 2021, 1544390599, ISBN

PO line owner: Main Library

Vendor/ Yankee Book Peddler/yankee/DDA Ebook Purchase
Account: s/8007-55
Funds: DDA Purchases (100.0%) (FY-2025)

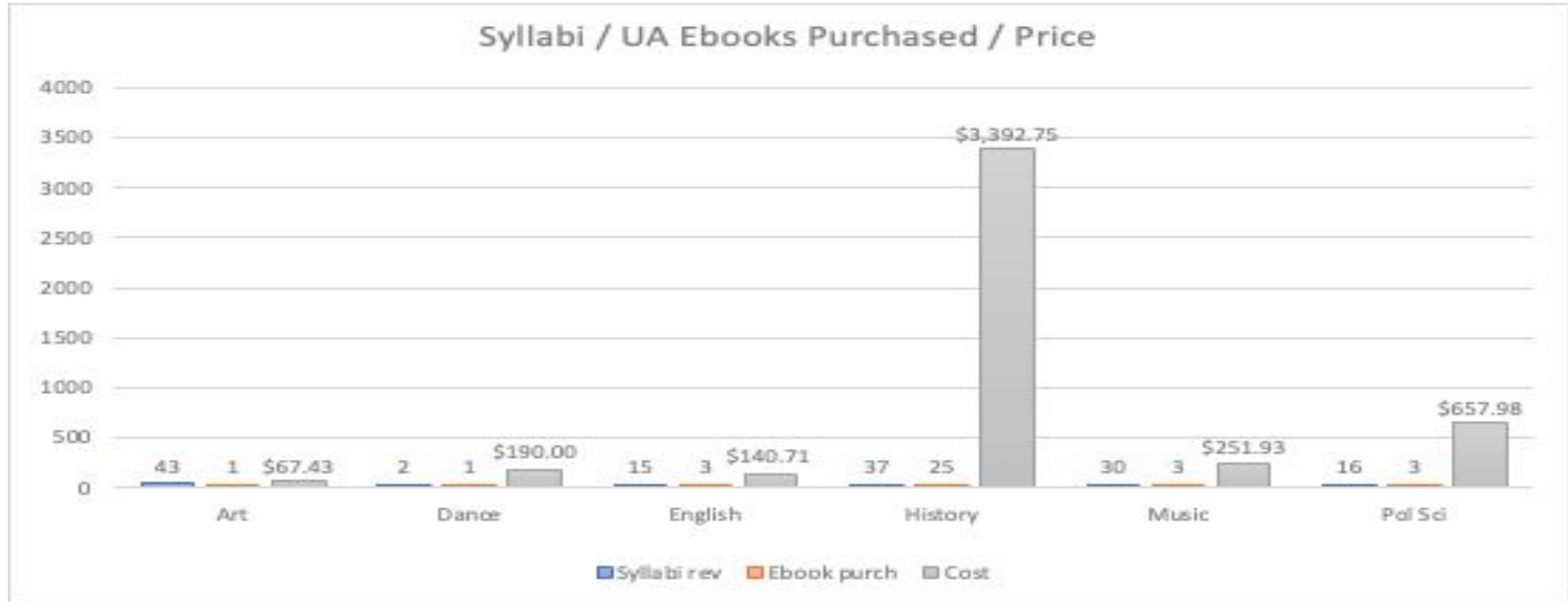
348.00 USD

1 Electronic Title - One Time Closed Alerts (2)

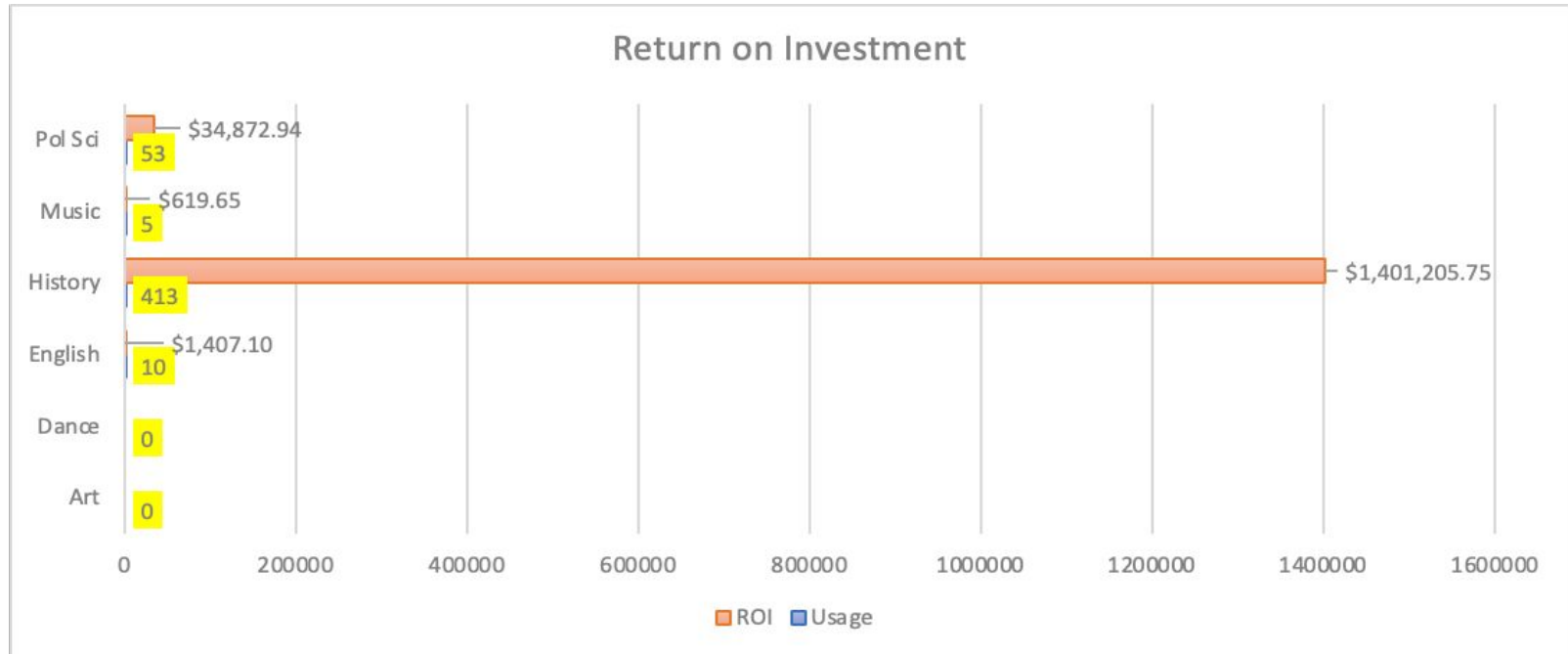
Syllabus Project S25

PO line: POL-31121 / PO: PO-1151002 (Closed)

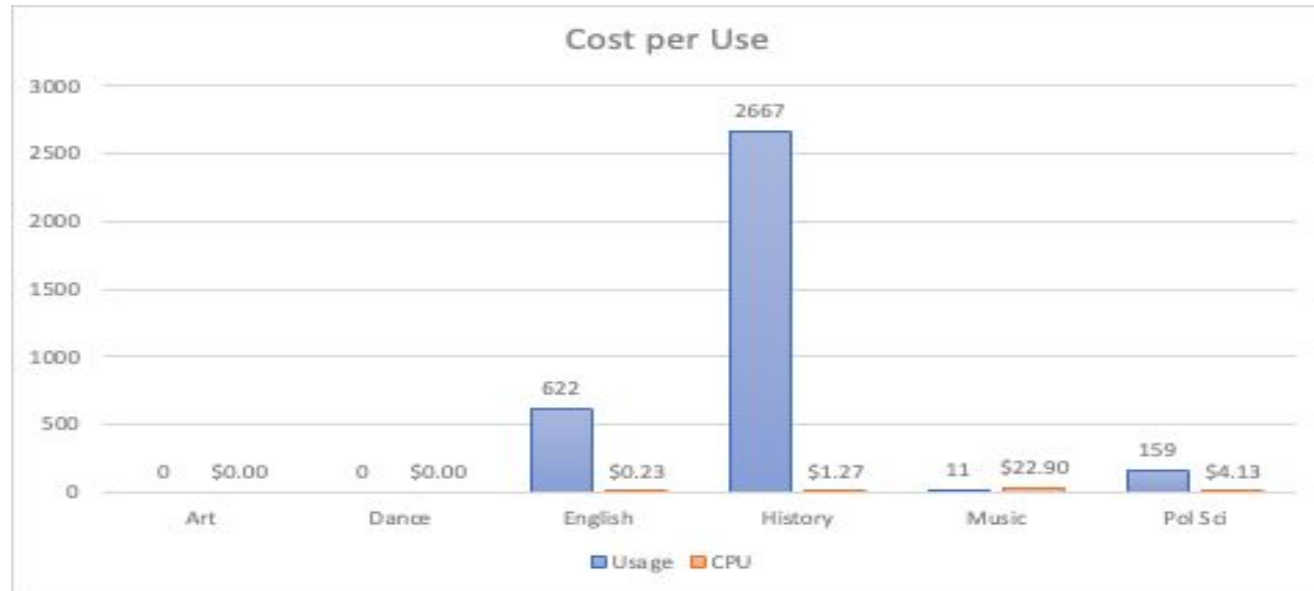
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



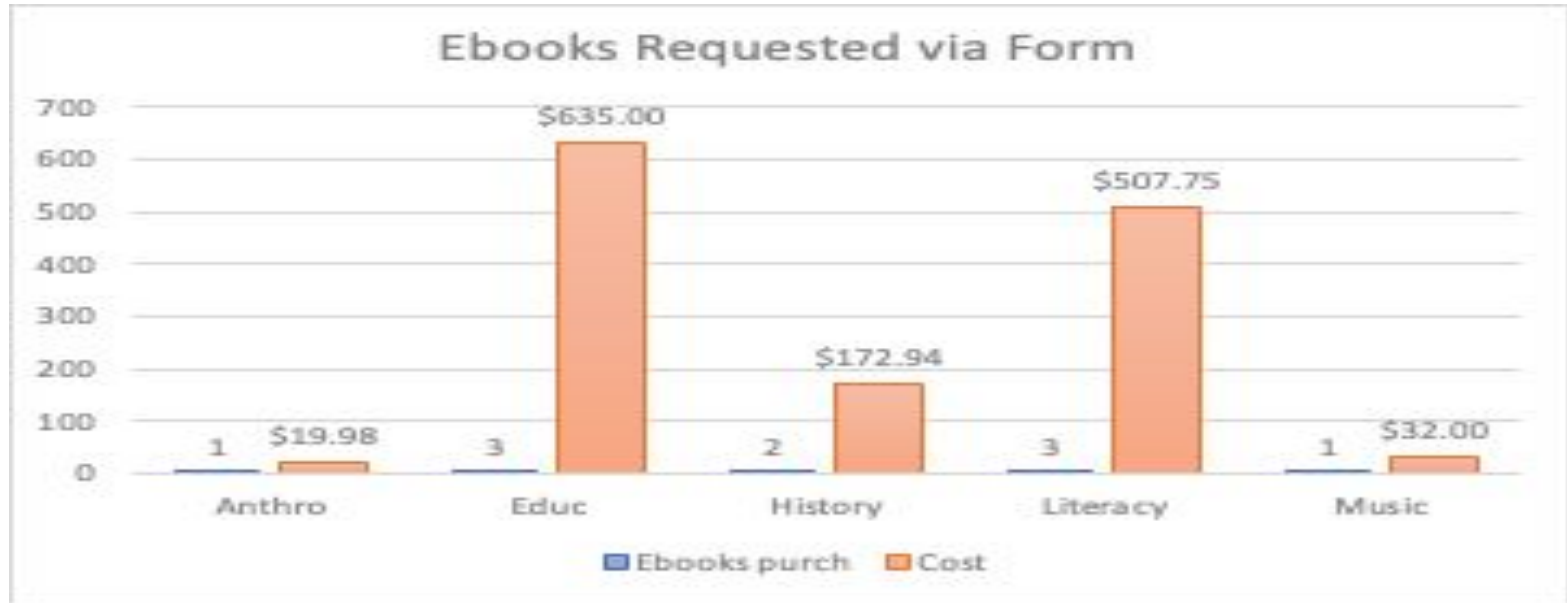
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



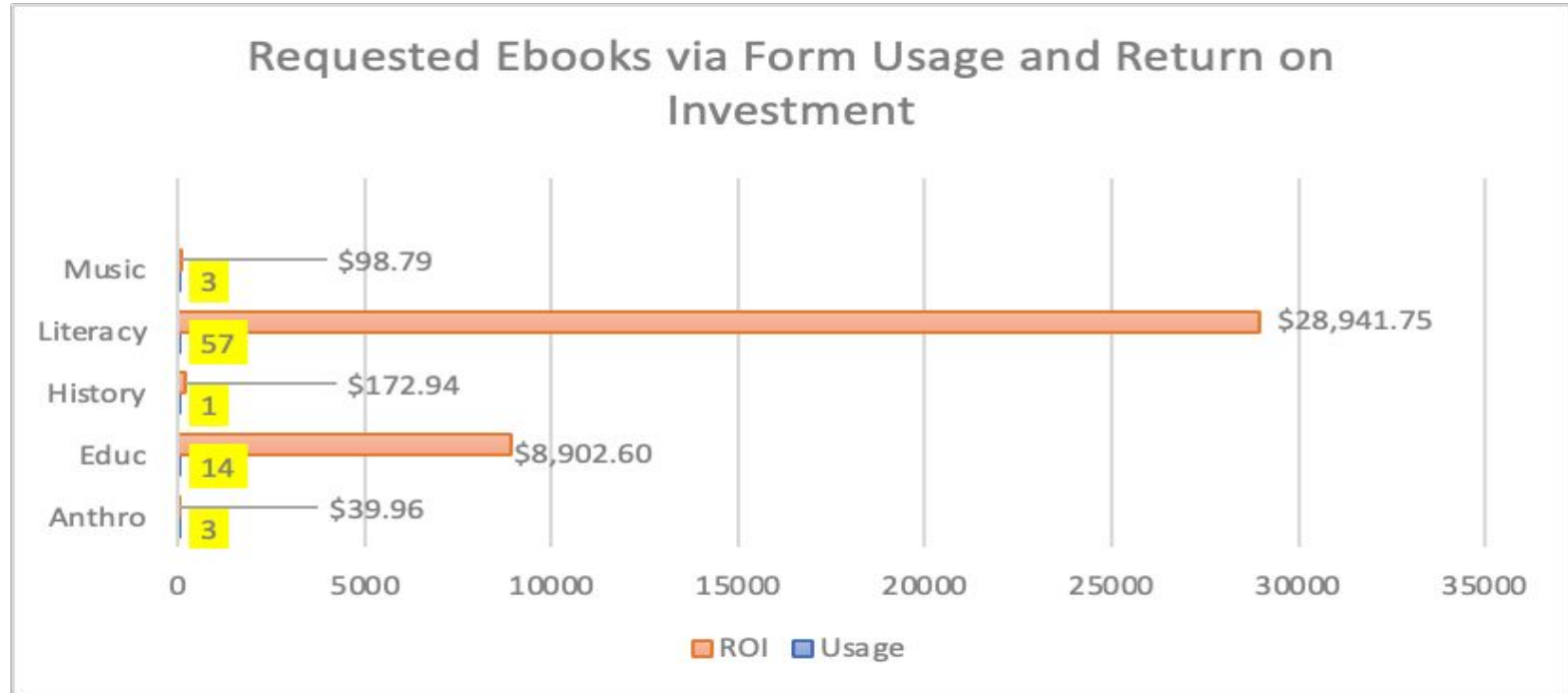
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



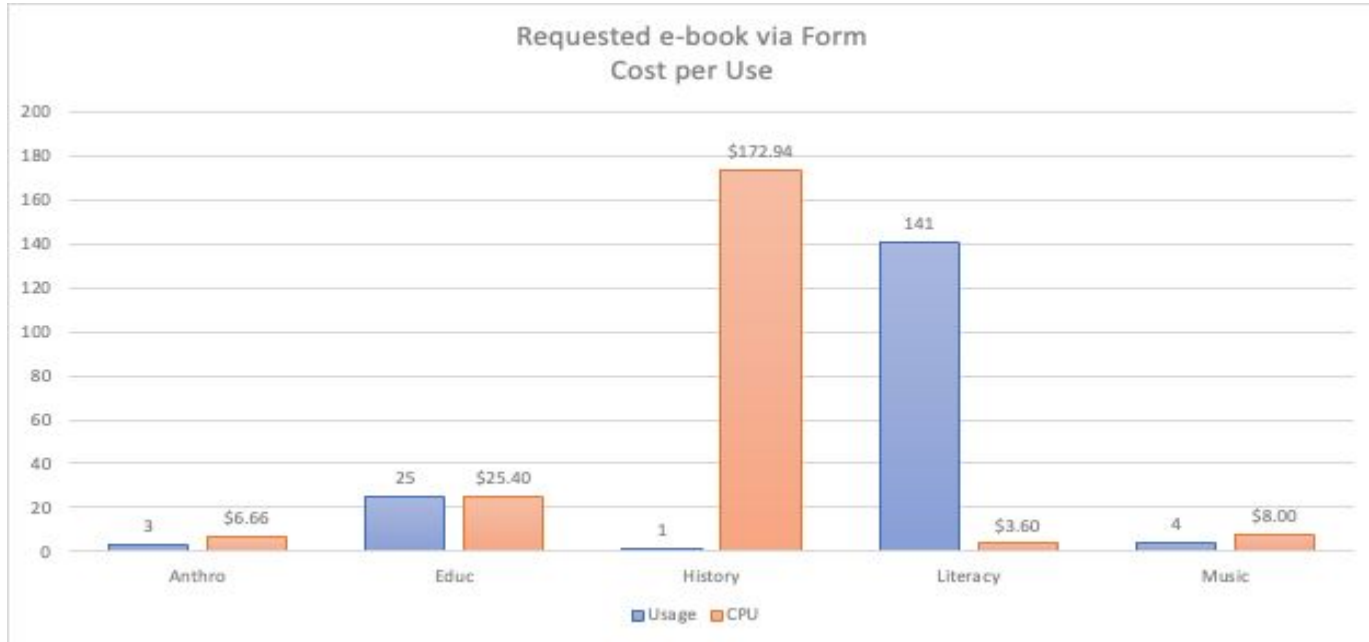
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



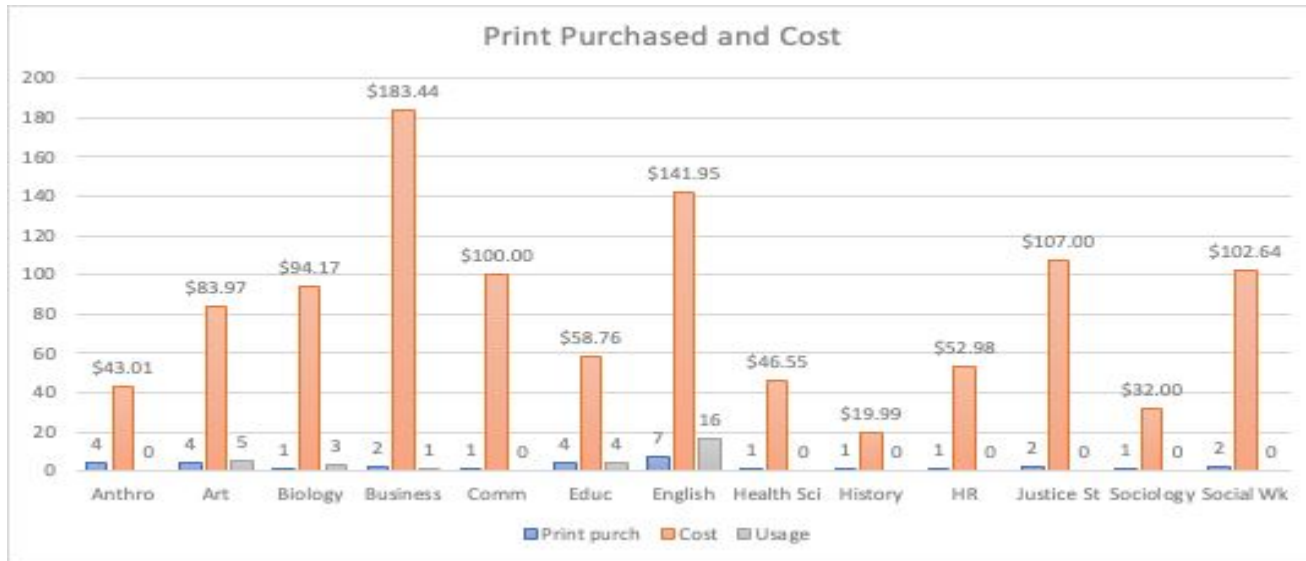
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



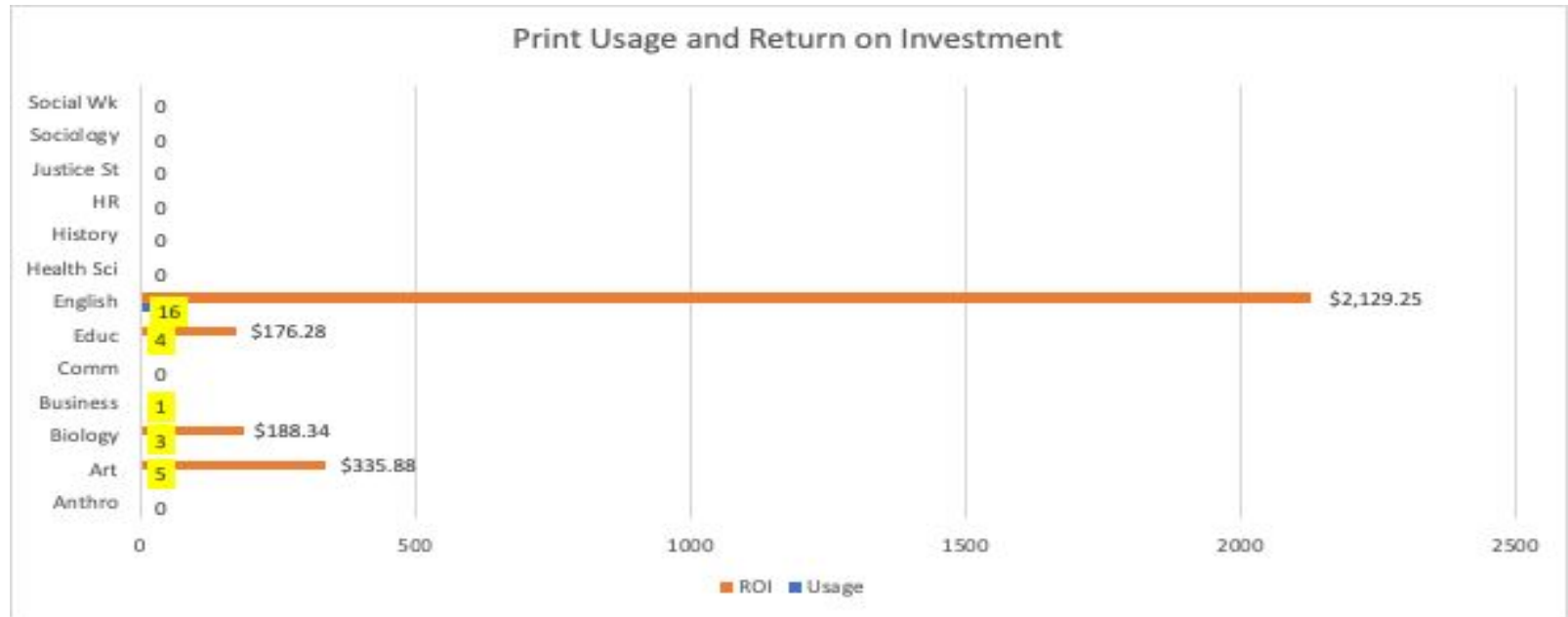
AY2025 E-book Cost Analysis



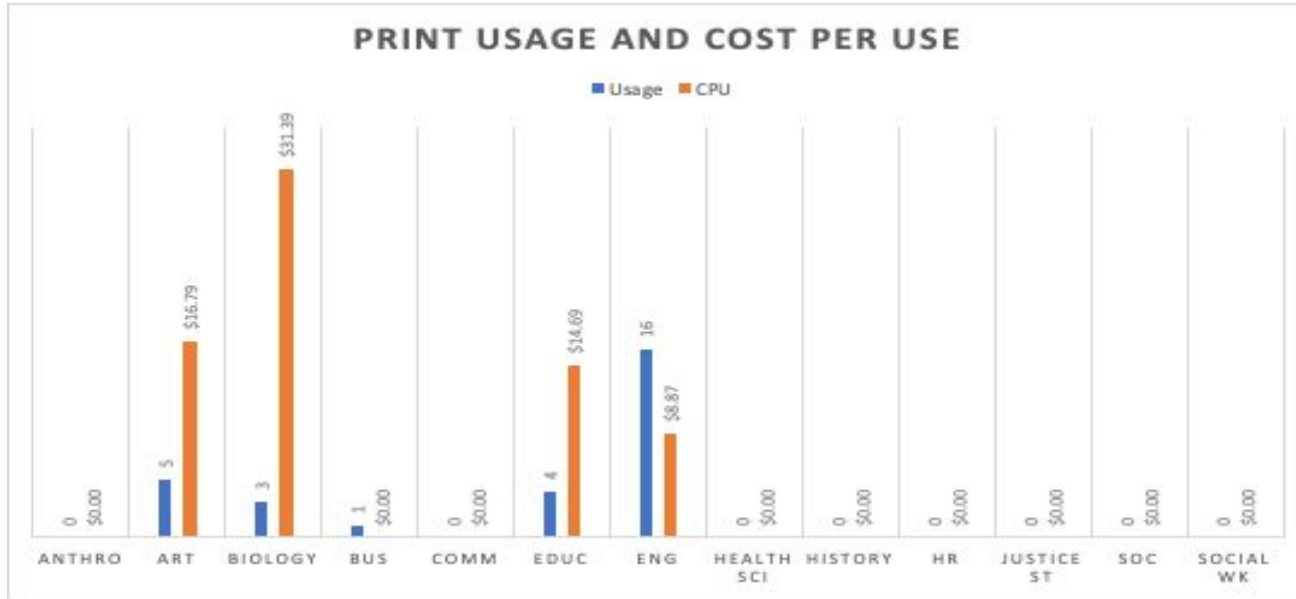
AY2025 Print Cost Analysis



AY2025 Print Cost Analysis



AY2025 Print Cost Analysis



Summary of AY2025 Reserve Purchasing

Electronic

E-books purchased	46
Total cost	\$6,068.47
Usage	3633
ROI	\$1,476,261.48
Total CPU	\$245.13
Cost per use:	\$1.67

Print

Purchased	31
Total cost	\$1,066.46
Usage	29
ROI	\$2,829.75
Total CPU	\$71.74
Cost per use:	\$36.77

Conclusions

- Electronic per cost is the winner
- Unlimited access varies
- Certain publishers (textbook market) limit availability
- If purchasing 1- or 3-user models, limit loan period to 2 hours

Barriers

- Getting faculty/departments on board with deadlines
- Last minute campus book orders or course cancellations
- Small campuses = Small budgets
- Access issues
- Flawed data

The Future of the Reserves E-book Pilot Program

- TIMING!
- Liaison commitment to subject departments
- Aggregator and publisher availability/pricing
- Sustainability

In search of the research assignment

Syllabus review for targeted instructional interventions

My Fall 2024 & Spring 2025 instruction by subject

	F24 Group Inst.	F24 Consultations	S25 Group Inst.	S25 Consultations
Counselor Ed.	5	17	6	16
Geography	0	2	1	3
History	2	0	3	0
Political Science	0	7	0	8
Psychology	5	93	6	55
Other	1	11	1	11

Counselor Education and Psychology: Successful curricular integration

VI) Research Strategy Meeting (10 pts.)

Make an appointment with Mr. Edward Remus (e-remus@neiu.edu) before **Brief Psychological Research Report Presentation** to discuss your research topic. The session lasts approximately 15-30 minutes. **Submit a meeting log** (1pg).

Library Services:

- *Research materials:* NEIU's library has a full list of [databases and online resources](#). Use the library website to request materials, which must be requested ahead of time.
- *Research consultations:* [set up an appointment with our subject librarian, Ed Remus](#)

History and Political Science: Incomplete (at best) curricular integration

- History
 - 2-3 group instruction sessions each term
 - Zero individual research consultations each term
- Political Science
 - Zero group instruction sessions each term
 - 7-8 individual research consultations each term
- Who am I missing?
 - In which classes is independent research being assigned?

Syllabus review: rubric

- Course number
- Independent research assigned?
 - Yes / No / Unclear or unlikely
- Library group instruction integrated?
 - Yes / No
- Librarian contact info and/or appointment scheduler integrated?
 - Yes / No

Syllabus review: clear-cut (and other) cases

Annotated bibliography and outline. About 2 pages. List no fewer than 6 separate academic sources you will use for your paper. Describe each source and its relevance to your research question. Outline your paper's structure. Due no later than **April 1st.**

You are to use only the assigned readings. It is crucial that you have and read the same version of each reading as the rest of the class.

You are not to consult secondary texts or the internet when doing these assignments. If you feel the need to, you do not understand the requirements of this course, and you should definitely talk to me as soon as possible. Any outside consultation, however, must be cited to avoid plagiarism. So, no outside sources whatsoever should be used.

3. Presentation. 100

Each student will create one oral/visual presentation related to a course reading. You will present the main argument of the text and then offer some commentary/supplemental research on how the reading relates to/informs contemporary issues. (approximately 15 mins. and use of visual/written aids required)

Results: group instruction

- History, Fall 2024
 - **Independent research** clearly assigned in 4 out of 19 classes (**21%**)
 - **Group library instruction** integrated into 2 of those 4 (**50%**)
- History, Spring 2025
 - **Independent research** clearly assigned in 5 out of 17 classes (**29%**)
 - **Group library instruction** integrated into 3 out of those 5 (**60%**)
- Political Science, Spring 2025
 - **Independent research** clearly assigned in 6 out of 17 classes (**35%**)
 - **Group library instruction** integrated into 0 out of those 6 (**0%**)

Results: research consultation support

- History, Fall 2024
 - Librarian contact info/scheduler integrated in 0 syllabi (0%)
- History, Spring 2025
 - Librarian contact info/scheduler integrated in 0 syllabi (0%)
- Political Science, Spring 2025
 - Librarian contact info/scheduler integrated in 0 syllabi (0%)

Instructional interventions

- Attend upcoming History, Political Science department meetings
 - Briefly showcase e-textbook usage data (to gain goodwill)
 - Identify classes in which research is assigned; ask instructors to...
 - Integrate my contact/scheduler info on their syllabi
 - Provide a ready-made model they can use
 - Consider one-shot group instruction as a possibility

What's NOT in a syllabus? Towards University-wide syllabus integration

LIBRARY SERVICES:

For the latest information on The Ronald Williams Library services please view the [NEIU Libraries Operating Plan](#).

- The NEIU Library has a full list of [databases and online resources](#) for your research needs.
- Use the [library website](#) to request materials. ALL items must be requested ahead of time.
- Allow up to 3 days for NEIU items and 8-12 days for I-Share items to be processed and ready for pickup. Extended delivery times are the result of the required book quarantine times. Do not come to campus until you get an email that your items are available.

What's NOT in a syllabus? Towards University-wide syllabus integration

Tutoring at the Learning Support Center (LSC)

Another excellent resource you can use is our peer tutors in the LSC. Our tutors are available online and can help with a range of concerns, like motivation, academic engagement, brain-based habits for college learning, and learning strategies for note taking, textbook reading, and test taking. Tutors are graduate and undergraduate students who are carefully selected on the basis of their own academic achievement by faculty and given supervision, training, and support to serve as tutors, mentors, and academic coaches. For more information, visit [the LSC website here at this link](#) or, to schedule an appointment with a tutor, call 773-442-4568.

Generative AI and Syllabi

Expanding Opportunities for Library Instruction

Background:

Increased discussion of AI on college campuses, including ours:

- 2024: NEIU College of Business and Technology introduces a college-wide AI policy
- 2024: NEIU librarians create LibGuides on AI
- 2025: NEIU Academic Affairs asks all colleges to create AI policies
- **2025: NEIU librarians create a lesson plan centered around AI and research**
- 2026: NEIU plans to create a university-wide AI policy

NEIU Libraries AI Lesson Plan

Covers:

- Effective prompting
- Evaluation of outputs
- Limitations of generative AI

Includes ethical guidance:

- How to cite AI
- Upholds instructor's right to allow or prohibit the use of AI in the classroom

Survey of Syllabi for AI Policies

- 48 syllabi
- English, History & Political Science*
- All from Spring 2025

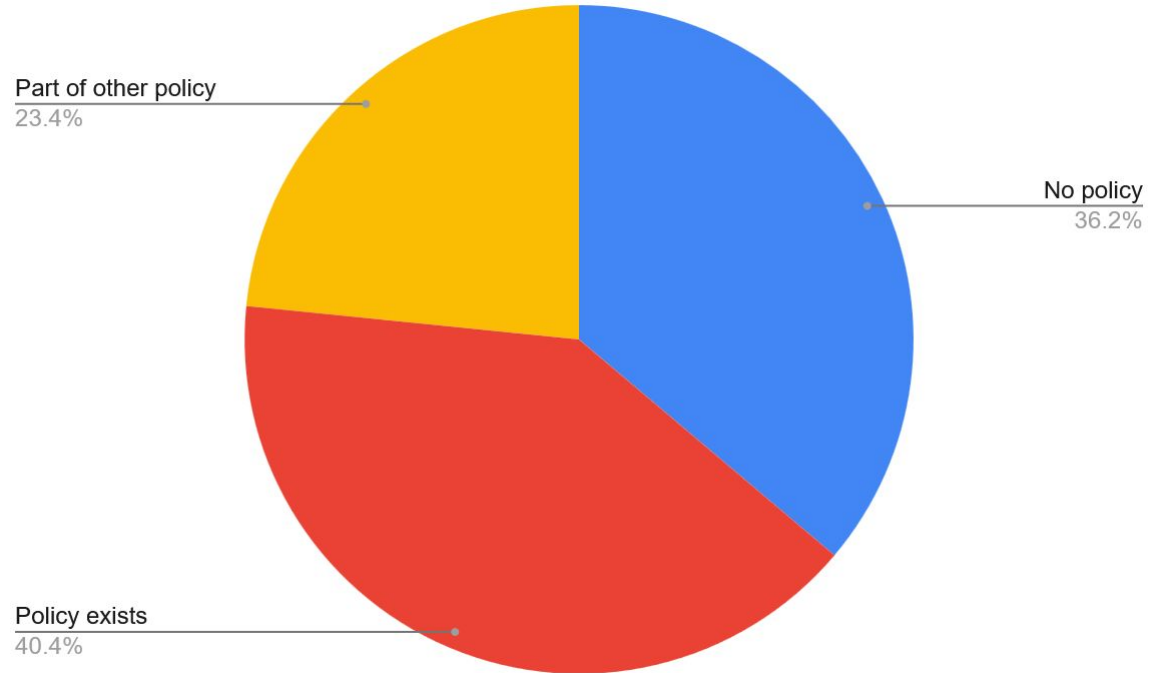
**Only 1 Computer Science faculty member had a policy*

Coded for two variables:

1. AI Policy
 - a. None
 - b. Policy exists
 - c. Part of another policy (usually academic integrity)
2. Policy type
 - a. Do not use
 - b. Cite if used
 - c. Use with permission
 - d. Use for background research only

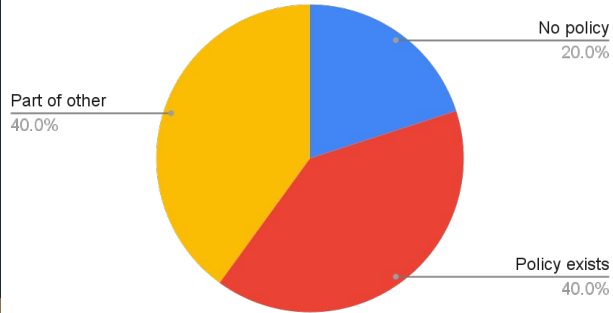
What classes have AI policies?

- 17 had none
- 19 had an explicit policy
- 11 mention AI elsewhere in the syllabus

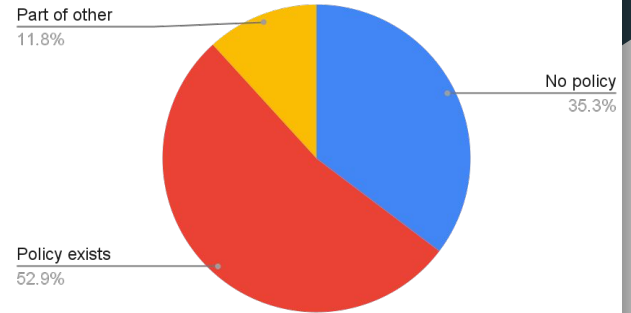


What departments have policies?

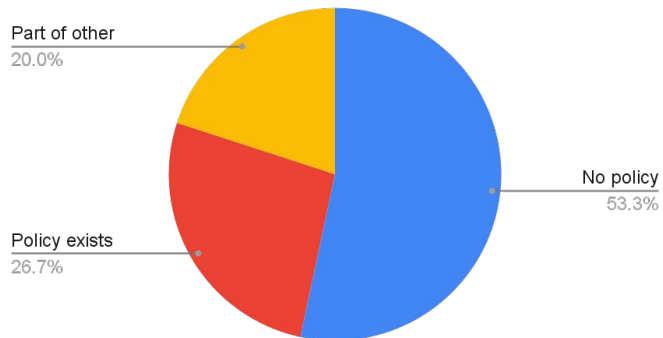
ENGLISH



HISTORY

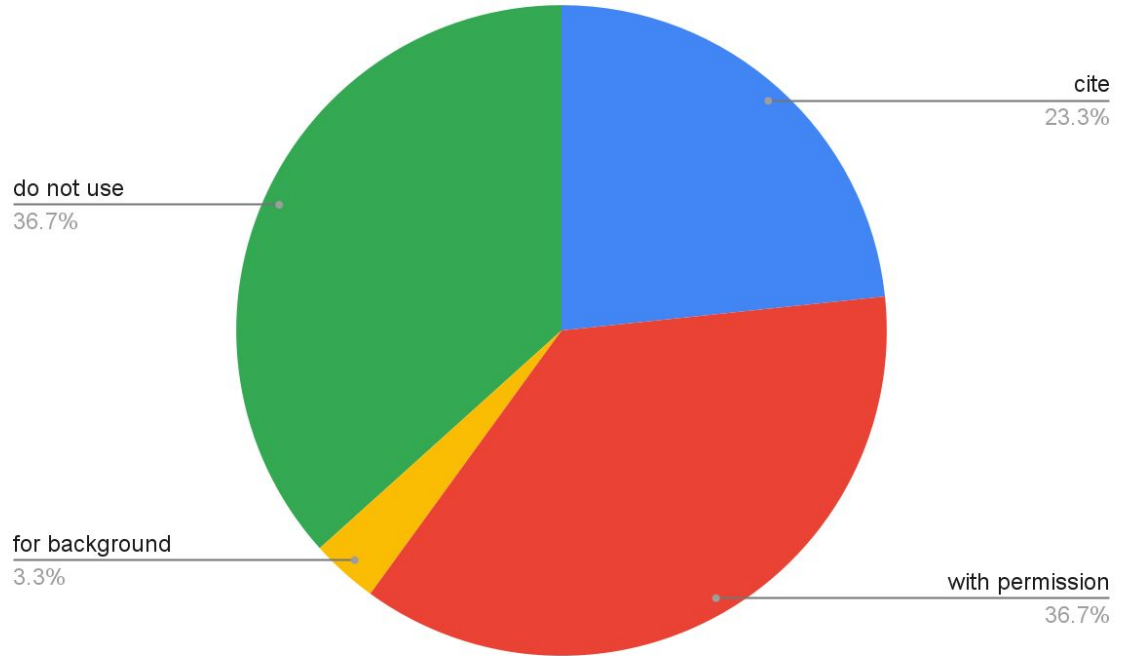


POLI SCI



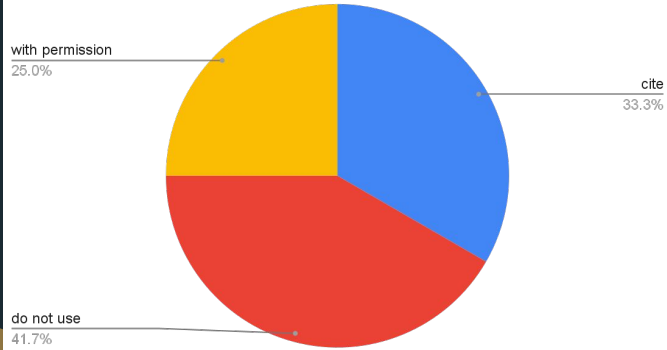
What kind of policies do classes have?

- 7 - cite if AI is used
- 11 - use AI only with permission
- 1 - use AI only for background research
- 11 - do not use AI

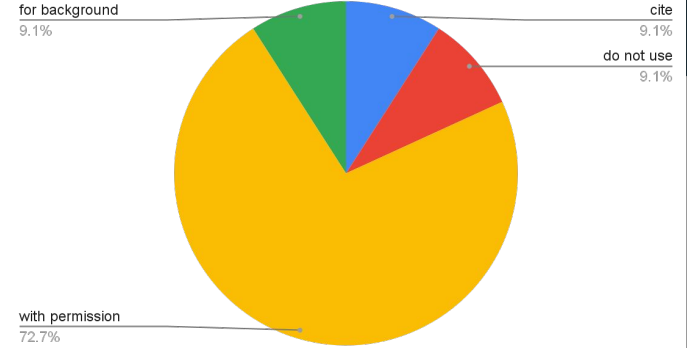


What kinds of policies do departments have?

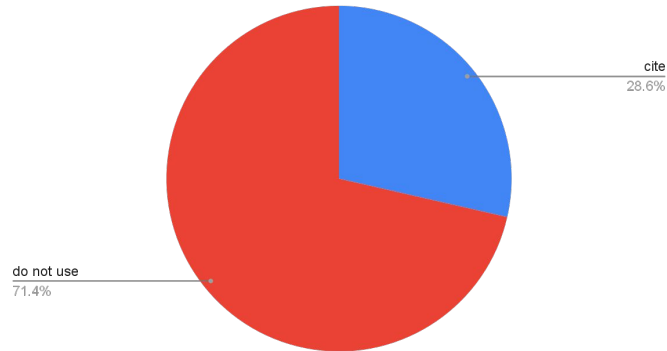
ENGLISH



HISTORY



POLI SCI



Going Forward

- Examine policies in other departments, especially in classes with a known research component
- Continue to publicize the library's AI & research lesson plan

Key takeaways

- If you are wondering...
 - which textbooks your library can provision as unlimited-user ebooks
 - which classes are assigning independent research you can support
 - which faculty are receptive to library instruction related to GenAI
- ...then we hope you will consider conducting syllabus review!

Thanks for coming! Any questions?

Ed Remus - e-remus@neiu.edu

Chris Straughn - castraughn@neiu.edu

Jackie Zook - jjzook2@neiu.edu