

How UCCS Built and Branded TAAP: A Student-Centered Course Materials Program

Impact by the Numbers

Since launching TAAP (**Textbook Affordability and Access Program**) in Fall 2022, UCCS has seen measurable gains in participation and affordability.

\$9.1M+
in estimated student savings (through Fall 2025)

83%
average student participation per term

89%
of participating students cited convenience as one of their top reasons for staying in the program

The Vision: At the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS), access to course materials has always been about more than books. Since it serves a high percentage of first-generation, non-traditional, and military-affiliated students, the campus understands that convenience, affordability, and day-one readiness shape how students show up to class.



“We have a responsibility to our students to provide the course materials they need, and to do it in a way that actually works for them.”

— Paul Deniston, Director of Retail Services, UCCS

In recent years, UCCS explored multiple ways to make course materials more affordable and accessible. Shifting student expectations, accelerated digital adoption during COVID, and declining campus store margins soon made it clear that incremental change was no longer enough. With that clarity, UCCS set out to design **TAAP, the Textbook Affordability and Access Program**, a **Total Access** course materials program (also known as Equitable Access) that provides students with all required course materials at a single, predictable price.

Journey: TAAP was intentionally built as a campus-wide effort, with early alignment among academic leadership, faculty champions, and campus partners. Before the launch, a dedicated communications committee met weekly, faculty voices were incorporated early, and presentations to the Dean’s Council, student government, and campus leaders supported that shared alignment.

Communication quickly emerged as both a priority and a challenge. “Email fatigue was a big barrier for us, so we had to be creative in how we reached students,” notes Justine O’Neil, Director of Auxiliary Marketing. “We had to meet students where they already were, not just rely on email.” As a result, TAAP messaging appeared across digital signage, bus kiosks, student-created social content, the UCCS app, and existing student systems, including the learning management system (LMS). As Deniston notes, “Getting something about TAAP in our LMS was huge.”

Branding played an equally important role early in the process. The name TAAP came together in a single meeting and stuck immediately.

The Outcome: TAAP launched in Fall 2022 as a fully managed, format-agnostic (print and digital) course materials program. UCCS oversees program strategy, while Akademos by VitalSource supports the course materials lifecycle from adoption through delivery, preserving instructor choice and predictable pricing with day one access.

To reinforce transparency, the team focused on clearly communicating how TAAP pricing compares to individual course materials costs. Not every student stays in the program, and that choice is intentional. Convenience, accuracy, and access matter just as much as price, and the program was designed to respect those trade-offs.



“If the program doesn’t work for a student, then they have the option to opt out.”
— Paul Deniston, Director of Retail Services, UCCS

Impact: What began as a way to rethink course materials access has grown into a predictable, student-centered experience at scale that has resulted in an estimated **\$9.1M+ in student savings** from inception through Fall 2025. In student feedback, 89% of participating students cited convenience as one of their top reasons for staying in the program.

For students, the impact has been immediate. Required course materials are available at the start of the term, which eliminates delays and uncertainty. **One graduate student shared, “I wish my previous school had this. I am so excited, this is amazing!”**

The program’s influence extends beyond the classroom. TAAP has strengthened collaboration across campus, with orientation, admissions, advising, and campus tours now referencing the program as a benefit of attending UCCS and reinforcing its place in the broader student experience.

What’s Next: UCCS continues to evolve TAAP with a focus on insight and refinement. Upcoming initiatives include sharing course materials usage data with instructors and expanding student feedback loops to inform adoption decisions, reduce unnecessary costs, and fine-tune communication and support.



VitalSource + University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Bringing course materials strategy, campus collaboration, and intentional communication together to better serve students.