

How Grand Valley State University Delivers Affordable, Digital Access for Every Student

Impact by the Numbers

\$4.2M
in student savings

231,620
student enrollments

8,531
course sections

77%
of GVSU students
with at least one
SAVE course

93%+
student participation
since 2020

70+
participating
departments

Average course
material costs dropped
by **more than 39%**
from 2019 to 2024.

The Vision: At Grand Valley State University, the Laker Store saw more than rising course material costs. They saw a growing barrier that stood between students and their success. Instead of accepting the status quo, they partnered with instructors and administrators to imagine something bigger: a flexible, scalable model that could transform access across the entire campus.

Their goal was bold and clear: deliver a seamless, consistent digital experience for every student and every instructor. To bring that vision to life, the Laker Store teamed up with VitalSource and combined campus insight with powerful technology and integrations. The result is **GVSU SAVE, a course-by-course access program** that ensures students have the materials they need from day one, affordable, reliable, and ready when they need them.

“We wanted to create something that worked for everyone: faculty, students, and the institution. GVSU SAVE gave us a single, consistent solution to do that.”

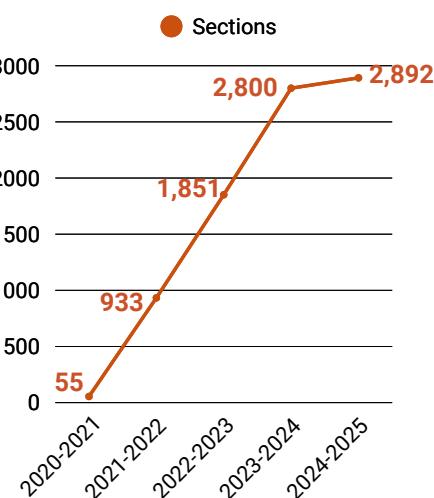
— Tom Bevington, GVSU Laker Store

The Journey: GVSU SAVE began as a small pilot in 2020. Through transparent communication and faculty collaboration, participation grew steadily. Today, more than 70 departments use SAVE, representing every college on campus.

Growth of Participating Departments



Growth in SAVE Course Sections



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The Outcome: GVSU SAVE demonstrates strong results in affordability, access, and student engagement, saving students more than \$4.2M and reducing average course material costs by over 39%. With participation across every college and more than 93% of students engaging in SAVE courses, the program now plays a central role in the GVSU learning experience. Students value its transparent pricing, predictable costs, and immediate access in their LMS, Blackboard, and instructors rely on the consistency it brings. GVSU plans to continue expanding SAVE into additional disciplines and strengthening communication and analytics to support accessible, affordable course materials for all learners.



"We built strong relationships across campus. Our focus has always been on helping students and faculty feel confident using the program from day one."

— Chris Boerma, GVSU Laker Store

The Impact: Students value SAVE's affordability and ease of access through Blackboard, as well as the transparency and predictability it provides around course material costs each term.



"GVSU SAVE has been very important to me as a low-income student. It makes sure that I can get the materials I need without breaking the bank."

— Riley Gessler, Junior, Nursing Major



"GVSU SAVE offers students an affordable option that ensures access to course materials from day one. Students value this convenience and have even come to expect online access."

— Maureen Wolverton, Senior Affiliate Faculty

What's Next: GVSU continues to expand SAVE into new disciplines while refining communication and analytics to support future growth. The program's success demonstrates how collaboration, flexibility, and shared vision can make digital access work for everyone.



VitalSource + Grand Valley State University
Delivering affordable, accessible learning for every student