

Politician suggests college student rent school text books instead of buying

BY [RACHEL MONAHAN](#)
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Sunday, August 16th 2009, 4:00 AM

For rent: Slightly used textbooks on the cheap.

A study by [Councilman Eric Gioia](#) found that books will account for nearly 20% of [CUNY](#) students' school expenses this fall.

To lessen the burden, the Queens Democrat is calling on school officials to create a textbook rental program.

"Especially now as people are struggling for every dollar, the cost of textbooks could be the tipping point preventing working people from being able to afford college," said Gioia, who recalled working as a janitor to pay for books while attending [New York University](#).

The average student coughs up \$536 during their first semester at 10 CUNY campuses surveyed, according to the Gioia study.

"With tuition going up, we need to find a way to make college more affordable rather than less," he said.

Book rental programs have sprung up across the country, including one beginning this fall at [SUNY Buffalo](#).

CUNY spokesman Michael Arena said reducing the cost of textbooks "has been a longstanding concern" with a new \$2 million program begun this summer to cut prices. It's not a rental program, but will include electronic books and more text books at libraries.

rmonahan@nydailynews.com