

To: Faculty Senate

From: Lynn Shepherd

Date: January 10, 2006

Re: Ad Hoc Committee on Textbooks

The committee met with Sara Hagen and Tom McBrien on 9th. Sara and her assistant, Tia Anderson, provided an information packet that included Perceptions of Value, What Can Faculty Do to Ensure Best Value, How Does the Adoption Time-line Facilitate Value? prepared by them, along with printouts from the National Association of College Stores: Your Students Think They Don't Need Textbooks and FAQ on Bundles.

The bookstore has to cover its operational costs from sales, so it has to add 25% to a publisher's quoted price for a textbook.

We identified common objectives: enable the bookstore to offer more used textbooks while preserving a sufficient profit margin to cover operating costs.

If a faculty member could make a written commitment to use a textbook for more than one academic year, then the bookstore could afford to buy back, store, and re-offer used textbooks, rather than outsourcing buyback to a vendor. However, the bookstore's investment in offering used textbooks needs to be protected. Therefore, a Dean would need to sign off on any agreement by a faculty member to use a textbook for an extended period of time.

If a faculty member were to agree to use a textbook again, then the bookstore could identify that book at the time of sale as having potential buyback value. A faculty member could remind students towards the end of term that the bookstore will buy back texts.

Sara has a list of core classes where recent data show that a text has been used in successive terms. The committee will propose a process for negotiating and approving titles for re-use > one term on a title-by-title basis, and Mike Boyer will get feedback on the proposal from department chairs before bringing the proposal to the Senate.

Sara's information packet may be reformatted for posting at the bookstore's website to increase faculty and student awareness of issues. The upcoming deadline for submission of Fall textbook titles is March 1st. Any faculty member who is willing to commit to using the same textbook for the next 4 years should get in touch with Sara now, so she can arrange for buyback at the end of Spring term.