

MEMO TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads

FROM: Warwick A. Arden
Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

SUBJECT: Textbook Adoption and Costs

DATE: November 16, 2009

It is time again to choose your textbooks for the spring semester. The early deadline of October 15th has passed, but there is still plenty of time to submit textbook requests. For reporting purposes, the Board of Governors has established that any textbook request received prior to the start of final exams will be counted as “on-time.” For spring 2010 adoptions, this date is **Friday, December 4, 2009**.

The cost of textbooks continues to rise at much higher rates than other costs. Escalating textbook costs are concern both nationally and at NC State. President Bowles has identified reducing textbook costs as a central theme of his administration. Each institution must demonstrate satisfactory progress toward lowering the cost of textbooks, or it will not be allowed to request increases in tuition and fee rates. The NC State Bookstore’s staff, and our standing committee on bookstores are working along with you to reduce textbook costs. The combined efforts have met with some success:

- The NC State Bookstores’ Guaranteed Buyback Program (GBP), which was created in 2007, guarantees that all students who purchase a program title will be paid half of the current new textbook price when the book is sold back. To maximize the amount paid to the students at buyback a GBP title must be adopted for four to six consecutive semesters. Since its inception, the Guaranteed Buyback Program has resulted in \$600,000 of savings to students.
- Higher on-time adoption rates have allowed the bookstore to re-purchase books from students at higher prices because we know there will be a market for books in the upcoming semester.
- Your attention to our “Best Practices” suggestions (attached and available on the bookstore website) continues to yield cost savings for our students.

The recent emphasis on textbook costs across the UNC system has created a greater sense of urgency to submit timely textbook requests. The campus wide effort to improve adoption rates has resulted in an increased supply of used textbooks and higher buyback prices for students. Please know that the Bookstore staff is available to answer any questions related to textbook adoptions, cost reduction strategies, or any other inquiries.

There are several ways to submit textbook requests to the NC State Bookstores. Please submit requests online on either of the bookstore faculty adoption sites shown below, or email the course and book information to:

Anthony_sanders@ncsu.edu or Isaac Pomper ilpomper@ncsu.edu if you prefer.

<http://ncsu.collegestoreonline.com/ePOS?store=432&form=faculty.html>
(requires account login)

<http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsubookstores/Departments/Textbooks/requests.html>

If you have questions or additional ideas for effective management of textbook costs, please contact me (provost@ncsu.edu), anthony sanders (Anthony_sanders@ncsu.edu) or Richard Hayes (Richard_hayes@ncsu.edu).

Attachment: Best Management Practices for Textbook Adoption and Use

cc: Chancellor Woodward
Executive Officers
Richard Hayes
Anthony Sanders
Vicki Pennington

Best Management Practices for Textbook Adoption and Use

- ❑ Thank you for considering the costs of textbooks in your strategy for textbook adoption and use of other materials in your courses. YOUR STUDENTS APPRECIATE YOUR CARE!
- ❑ All teaching faculty are to submit their book lists to the NCSU Bookstores by its established deadlines (Fall = April 5; Spring = October 15; Summer = March 15). Departments are encouraged to set their own deadlines for submissions that precede the dates specified by the Bookstore.
- ❑ Review Academic Policies and Regulation #02.20.10 entitled “Listing of Required Course Materials with the NCSU Bookstores” (http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/academic_affairs/pols_regs/REG205.00.18.php).
- ❑ At the same time faculty submit their book lists to the NCSU Bookstores, we encourage using the NCSU Libraries Book Reserves to make reserve copies available to students (<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/reserves/faculty>); 515-2597.
- ❑ Unless specifically requested to do otherwise, NCSU Bookstores will
 - order unbundled texts whenever such are available,
 - encourage faculty where applicable to use texts in the same edition used previously,
 - work with faculty to adopt the least expensive textbook that is pedagogically sound.
- ❑ Require a textbook only if it will be used in a substantial way in the course. Students’ end-of-semester course evaluations can inform instructors’ decisions regarding perceived value of selected course texts.
- ❑ Whenever practical, we encourage providing students with supplemental materials to update textbooks rather than requiring new editions.
- ❑ Faculty-authored texts, required for purchase by enrolled students, must be approved through the process defined in the author’s Conflict of Interest statement.
- ❑ We encourage faculty to work with textbook publishers to develop more economical materials that may include low-cost on-line alternatives to traditional textbooks.
- ❑ We encourage faculty to donate desk copies they receive from publishers to the NCSU Libraries as reserve copies of the textbooks for their course.
- ❑ We encourage faculty to consider potentially lower cost text options such as electronic reserves and/or digital access to materials that are appropriate to course objectives.
- ❑ Faculty and departmental textbook coordinators should regularly review the section of the NCSU Bookstores website titled “How to save your students money!” (<http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsubookstores/faculty.html>) and other cost-related information (<http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsubookstores/textbooks.html#pricing>).