

MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, Directors, and Department Heads

From: Warwick A. Arden 
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor

Date: December 2, 2015

Re: Textbook Adoption and Costs (Spring 2016)

It is time to choose your textbooks for the spring semester. The continued emphasis on textbook costs across the UNC system has created a greater sense of urgency to submit timely textbook requests. Although the early deadline of October 15th has passed, there is time to submit your textbook requests. The bookstore accepts requests at any point, but timely requests help them lower student costs in several ways.

Early adoptions allows the bookstore:

- To buyback eligible textbooks thereby returning more money to our students
- A greater opportunity to obtain low cost used books from the open market, internet and wholesalers
- To have enough time for materials to be delivered, stocked and available to students before the first day of classes.
- To resolve any issues between publishers and or wholesalers that might delay course material availability for student purchase

Mandates of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, as well as the UNC Board of Governors, also specify that the bookstore must be notified if instructors or departments adopt materials not supplied by the bookstore or do not use any texts at all. As the main point of contact for students, it is important the bookstore know what materials an instructor is using (or not using) so that it can relay accurate course information.

The continuing rise in the cost of textbooks is a concern to everyone in higher education. Reducing the cost of learning materials will take a combined effort of the NC State Bookstore, faculty, departments and the Administration. If you have questions or additional ideas for effective management of textbook costs, please contact me (provost@ncsu.edu) or Anthony Sanders (Anthony_sanders@ncsu.edu).

Thank you for your time and attention.

Attachment: Best practices in textbook management

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 NC State Bookstores by its established deadlines (Fall = April 5th; Spring = October 15th; Summer = March 15th). 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 NC State Bookstores”

(<https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-07-10-02>).

At the same time faculty submit their book lists to the NC State Bookstores, we encourage using the NCSU Libraries Book Reserves to make reserve copies available to students. Be aware that the bookstore now provides a copy of each required textbook directly to the library each semester. (<https://reserves.lib.ncsu.edu/>); 515-2597.

Unless specifically requested to do otherwise, NC State 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 NC State Bookstores website titled “Faculty Resources” (<http://go.ncsu.edu/facultyresources>).