MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Department Heads

FROM: Warwick A. Arden

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

SUBJECT: Textbook Adoption and Costs Spring 2017

DATE: October 17, 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 17th has passed, there is still 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. This in turn reduces the cost of books to our students.
* 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 if no educational materials are required. 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 NC State. 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 at provost@ncsu.edu, Anthony Sanders at Anthony\_sanders@ncsu.edu or Christopher Walsh at crwalsh@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 cost 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[).](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/).
* Unless specifically requested to do otherwise, NC State Bookstores will
  + order unbundled texts whenever such are available, with an emphasis on acquiring used textbooks first,
  + 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 publishers to develop more economical materials that may include lower cost online alternatives to traditional textbooks. We also encourage faculty members to consider potentially lower cost options such as digital access, Open Educational Resources (please see below for more information about OER) and loose-leaf editions.
* We encourage faculty to donate desk copies they receive from publishers to the NCSU Libraries as reserve copies of the textbooks for their course.
* Faculty and departmental textbook coordinators should regularly review the section of the NC State Bookstores website titled “Faculty Resources” (http://go.ncsu.edu/facultyresources).

**OER Materials at NC State Libraries**

* The library currently sponsors the Alt-Textbook project which awards grants to faculty members to provide lower cost alternatives to textbooks, (http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/alttextbook).
* The library also lists available OER content (https://www.ncsu.edu/it/open\_source/#Content)