

# **Bookstore Advisory Committee**

Report submitted by Thomas J. Linneman, Department of Sociology

## **Primary Concern: Textbook Ordering Schedule**

The problem seems to be a conflict between:

- 1.) Faculty Interests: placing textbook orders later in the semester
- 2.) Student and Bookstore Interests: getting used (and therefore cheaper) textbooks

Example of how the bookstore would like to see this occur:

- 1.) March 18<sup>th</sup>: Professor places order for **50** copies of a textbook by this date, the store's deadline (only 4% of orders were placed by this deadline; as of 4/21, 30% of order were in)
- 2.) Early May: store able to buy back from students **12** copies of textbook
- 3.) Late May: store places order for additional used copies from a national used-book service
- 4.) June 29<sup>th</sup>: store finds out that **15** additional used copies were found
- 5.) June 30<sup>th</sup>: store places order with publisher for remaining **23** new copies needed

This schedule is similar, though much more condensed, at the end of the fall semester.

Steps bookstore has taken to improve process:

- 1.) store sending e-mail confirmations to faculty
- 2.) store will send e-mails in early July when publishers tell bookstore that books are out of print or out of stock (this ball was dropped in December)
- 3.) store using earlier deadline with used book service (6/29 instead of 7/6)
- 4.) store places orders for foreign titles and new editions of books by 6/1

Other possible improvements:

- 1.) Get faculty to understand they can place partial orders
- 2.) Have department administrators coordinate orders (as Education and Law do)
- 3.) Working on sharing databases with other B&N stores w/ regard to used books

## **Secondary Concern: Look and Feel of Store**

Problem: store overwhelmed with "stuff": t-shirts, tchotchkes, etc.

This development may have resulted from a recent change: the front of the store now contains nothing but books, which pushed a lot of the other stuff towards the back of the store. But, when asked, Steve Babbitt (general manager) admitted that it was also due to an increase in the number of non-book items. This comes from the store having to serve very different communities: faculty, students, community, and tourists.

## **Other News:**

New Virginia law that requires schools to post booklists on school website goes into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>, but college may not be required to act until January.

There is also concern over the possibility of a new bookstore (another Barnes & Noble) as an anchor of the High Street development.