

# Cabrillo College Bookstore

## Text Buyer's Report to Faculty

September 24, 2004

Dear Faculty Member,

Hi! My name is Steve Miner and I am the new (sort of) Text Buyer at the Cabrillo College Bookstore. As I finish my first fall rush (and my first six months) it seemed like a good time to pass along some thoughts and statistics.

In the four-week period August 16 to September 11 the bookstore sold approximately 81,000 books. We stocked approximately 850 titles for 1000+/- sections. 64% of the requisitions we received were returned to the bookstore on time. 99.5 % of books for which the requisitions were received on time were in stock before the first day of class. 96.1 % of books for which requisitions were received late were in stock before the first day of class. I want to thank all of you who have gotten your requisitions in on time. It is a significant benefit to both the book buying process and the students.

To improve our service to the students, we established a new information table outside the store during the busiest weeks. This table was staffed by our student text workers to assist those with questions about textbooks (and almost everything else!). We also provided binders with the booklist on tables outside the store. This increased the number of booklists available to the students from one to five. We continue to have software difficulties which have prevented us from putting the booklist on our website. Solving these difficulties remains a high priority. We received many comments from students that the process felt smoother and more organized this time around.

As I am sure most of you are aware the requisition process for winter and spring semesters has already begun. The requisitions have been delivered to the Division Offices. Winter semester requisitions are due back to the Division Offices on September 27, and spring semester on October 11. We have made some changes to the requisition forms. When these changes were reviewed by the faculty representative on the Bookstore Committee the response was, "No one will read this". I hope that's not true, as we have added basic instructions and information concerning the processing of requisitions directly to the back of the form. A few minutes spent reviewing these changes will help to insure smooth processing of your requisition.

Along the same lines I intend to send out a set of "Frequently Asked Questions" with responses to assist in your understanding of the acquisition process for texts. Some of the topics I plan to address include: How do I deal with publisher packages (bundles)? Old versus new editions? Why is it so important to get requisitions in on time? What are the Bookstore's return policies? Why don't we always order full class loads of books? If there are other questions you would like me to address please let me know.

This next topic is difficult but I feel strongly that it needs to be addressed. This fall, in a small number of sections students were told by their instructors that the “Bookstore screwed up” when subsequent investigation showed that in fact the problem was of the instructors own making. The problems fell into three categories. The most common was the instructor being convinced they had turned in a requisition but neither their Division Office nor the Bookstore had any record of it. The second was failure to read emails I had sent months earlier indicating that books were out of print, out in a new edition, the publication was delayed, etc. Finally, we had ordered and had in stock exactly what had been requested on the requisition but it wasn’t what the instructor expected. Publicly blaming someone else for your own error is unethical and unprofessional.

I have and will “screw up”. When I do you have every right to expect me to acknowledge that and to correct the problem as quickly as possible. I will, at your request, visit your classroom to explain to your students what occurred. If there is a problem with a book for your class I would expect you to determine the cause first so that you can give your students an accurate report.

Those of you who have taken the time to stop by or call with a kind word I deeply appreciate. As I have learned my duties, the IDA’s who assist with textbooks have been patient, kind and always helpful. I hope you will join me in taking the time to thank them for the great work they do.

If you have any questions or comments, please let me know.

Thanks,

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