

MJC BOOKSTORE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
Friday, January 18, 2008
1:30-2:30 p.m.
YCCD Board Room

Present: Wendy Byrd, Roe Darnell (Chair), Rhonda Green, George Railey, Doug Smith, Jeff Whalen, Taylor White (ASMJC), Carrie Sampson (recorder)

Absent: Michael Adams, Tobin Clarke, Susan Kerr, Jim Sahlman, Teresa Scott, Arbella Solhkhah, Gary Whitfield

This special meeting was called by Chancellor Roe Darnell regarding the statewide Textbook Summit Taskforce, which has been organized to focus on identifying possible solutions to the problem of increasing college textbook costs. The Chancellor stated that it had been his intention to inform the group that the Textbook Summit Taskforce would be holding its next meeting at YCCD on February 1. However, due to certain circumstances, this meeting will not be held at YCCD. The Chancellor said he still would like to discuss with the MJC Bookstore Advisory Committee how it could help the mission of the Textbook Summit Taskforce and to propose a restructuring of the purpose of the MJC Bookstore Advisory Committee.

Textbook Summit Taskforce

Roe said the Textbook Summit Taskforce is made up of a college Chief Executive Officer; a college Chief Business Officer; and student, faculty, and publisher representatives. He said that he has been appointed as the college CEO representative based on his background with the textbook rental program at Taft College. Taft College started its rental program in 1977 and made a commitment to maintain the program. Textbooks at Taft College are rented at 10% to 20% of the retail cost. The Taskforce has identified that the college textbooks market is a broken market. That is to say, the seller (publisher) does not market directly to the consumer (student). Publishers market textbooks to faculty, even though the books are purchased by the student. The Taskforce has identified some possible cost cutting alternatives to the current textbook purchasing practice. These include the following:

- *Textbook rental* – Issues include expenses for initiating the program as well as lost revenue for the bookstore. Some colleges are attempting this on a pilot basis with selected textbooks. There also would need to be a penalty in place for students who do not return the books as agreed.
- *Textbook and/or class materials available online* – Textbooks could be read online or printed off at the students' expense. There are copyright issues that would need to be considered. It would be necessary to use books out of copyright or in the public domain.
- *Common adoption* – This would require that faculty agree to adopt the same textbook across sections and throughout the District. Academic freedom does not allow administration to dictate which textbooks an instructor chooses. However, a dialogue regarding this topic should be established with faculty in order to describe the advantages of common adoption.
- *Bookstore markups* – The typical bookstore markup throughout the state is 25% on new books and 33% on used books. This can vary slightly depending on circumstances at individual bookstores.
- *Custom publication* – Certain publishers will enter into agreements with colleges in which commonly adopted textbooks are published under a college cover at a significant reduction in cost. Book buy back is limited to college use only, and the publisher will not accept returns.
- *Open source textbooks* – This is used at Foothill-DeAnza CCD. Teaching materials are gathered from different sources from the public domain and written by various faculty persons with expertise in the topic. The work cannot be copyrighted. These materials cannot be sold for profit. They can be sold in the bookstore for duplicating costs, such as \$30 each, or they can be made available online for students to download and print at their own expense.

Roe noted that it is unlikely that any single alternative would be the answer to reducing textbook costs, but rather a combination of the above might succeed in lowering textbook costs to students. However, he noted, that faculty must be informed and supportive in order for any of these possibilities to work.

New Charge for the MJC Bookstore Advisory Committee

The Chancellor stated that he would like to have this Committee take on an additional charge of recommending which alternative might work for YCCD, and how to gain faculty support. For instance, he suggested a Textbook Economics flex workshop at Institute Day. He further recommended that the Committee be expanded to include Columbia College faculty and student representatives.

Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 8, 2008, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. The new charge for the MJC Bookstore Advisory Committee would be placed on the agenda. Other agenda items may be forwarded to Carrie Sampson.