

MJC BOOKSTORE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, March 25, 2005
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
MJC Morris Building, Conference Room A

Present: Michael Adams, Michelle Christopherson, Rhonda Green, Susan Kerr, George Retamoza, Gina Rose, Gary Whitfield, Carrie Sampson (Recorder)

Absent: Wendy Byrd, Todd Guy, Frank Johnson, Jim Johnson, Teresa Scott, Douglas Smith, Arbella Solhkhah

Gary Whitfield opened the meeting in Teresa Scott's absence. He said that in a reorganization of Fiscal Services his title was changed to MJC Chief Operations Officer and Auxiliary Services was moved under him. Gary noted that since no agenda items were submitted for this meeting, the previous year's agenda was used. Since these items may no longer be pertinent, he suggested that Rhonda Green give an update on Bookstore operations and then open the meeting to discussion.

MJC Bookstore Update

Rhonda said that there has been improvement in the availability of textbooks on the first day of classes. This semester there was 95 percent availability. Textbook Buyer retention has been a problem since many of our Buyers are able to find higher paying jobs elsewhere. The Bookstore now employs two Buyers in the hopes of preventing problems that may arise with an inexperienced Buyer. Rhonda also noted that the deadline for instructors to submit their requisition for summer session was March 17 and only 55 percent have been received. The requests for requisitions for fall semester will go out around April 1, and the deadline for receipt by the bookstore is May 15. There is much to be done by staff in ordering textbooks, and it is important to receive the requisitions in a timely manner in order to insure availability on the first day of classes. It was suggested that the cost of the textbooks when last ordered be included on the announcement to faculty to submit their textbook requisitions.

Other

Online Sales: The Bookstore continues to see a decrease in sales due to students ordering through various online sources. The Bookstore had \$1.2 million in unsold books at the end of last semester. Rhonda said that while the Bookstore has seen a decrease in sales, its online sales have seen an increase. They are considering setting up vendor accounts on such websites as Amazon.com and EBay in order to sell textbooks. Students may feel they are receiving a better deal through these websites. George Retamoza suggested promoting online ordering to the students. Rhonda noted that for in-house sales, the cashiers check student registration; however, there is no way of checking student schedules for online sales unless the student picks up the books at the Bookstore. It is therefore possible for students not registered in the class to purchase the books.

Mark-ups: George asked about the mark-up on textbooks, especially used books. Rhonda explained that the Bookstore marks-up new books 25 percent. Used book prices are based on the mark-up of the highest return cost paid by the Bookstore. Michelle Christopherson said faculty feel that the Bookstore should not be marking up books at all. Rhonda and Gary explained that Auxiliary Services (Bookstore and Food Services) does not receive any state money. There is no subsidy from the District or MJC other than providing the

facilities. The mark-up barely covers staff salaries and benefits. George suggested that the Bookstore consider increasing their retail sales, which Rhonda said was currently about 10 percent of total sales.

Editions: Michelle asked if there was anything that could be done to prevent the sale of wrong editions. Occasionally, faculty order an old edition to match their course syllabus, but the book that arrives is a later edition. Rhonda said they have no control over which edition the publisher sends. She said the best way to deal with this problem is to meet with the publisher representatives on Publisher Rep Day. It will be held April 6 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Faculty need to inform the publisher reps that this is a problem. Michelle said she would make that announcement at the next Academic Senate meeting. Rhonda said another way faculty can make sure the correct book was received is by visiting the Bookstore as soon as the books are on the shelves. Books go on the shelves three weeks before the start of classes, plenty of time to correct the problem. Michelle said faculty feel that once the books are on the shelves it is too late, because some students may have already bought them. Rhonda pointed out that barely 5 percent of books are sold before classes start. She said staff could send out an email to faculty as soon as the books are on the shelves. Susan Kerr asked if Bookstore staff could check the edition number when the books are received. Rhonda said that incorrect edition numbers is a small percentage of the problem. The greater problem is the incorrect ISBN which the instructor put on the requisition. Bookstore staff cannot determine if it is the wrong book if the ISBN is the same. Only the instructor would know. However, Rhonda said since student workers mainly check the books in, she would consider hiring seasonal contract workers with better skills to check the books in and notify instructors of a problem.

Canceled Classes: After discussion it was determined that the Instruction Office should be responsible for notifying the Bookstore of canceled classes. It is best to return books from canceled classes early before the publisher has been paid.

Communication: Gary noted that communication is the most important factor in the smooth operation of the Bookstore in providing service to the students. New adjunct faculty need to be trained in processes used at the Bookstore.

Next Meeting/Future Agenda Items

The next meeting will be during the Fall Semester on Friday, September 30, 2005, 10 a.m. – Noon in District Conference Room B. Anyone having agenda items should contact Carrie Sampson.