

## **MJC BOOKSTORE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, October 17, 2003, 3:30 p.m.

YCCD Conference Room B

Present: Mike Adams, Michelle Christopherson, Rhonda Green, Todd Guy, Jim Johnson, Gina Rose, Teresa Scott, Doug Smith, Arbella Solhkhah, Gary Whitfield, Judy Groetsema (Recorder).

Absent: Wendy Byrd, Frankie Johnson, Susan Kerr.

**History and Introductions:** The meeting was opened at 3:30 p.m. Teresa thanked everyone for coming and asked them to introduce themselves giving their name, position, and representation. Teresa remarked how beneficial it has been to have representation from the Academic Senate, students, deans, Bookstore managers, and administration on the committee. Following the introductions she briefly explained the history of the Bookstore Advisory Committee. The committee was formed at the direction of the Chancellor in response to an Academic Senate resolution adopted in 1997. Teresa serves as the chair person and the committee has met every semester following rush. Teresa explained that there were many issues raised and discussed at the first meetings. Over time, most of them were satisfactorily resolved. Due to several factors including the compressed calendar, personnel changes, increasing number of titles, growth in volume and dollars, etc., this semester some old problems resurfaced and some new problems arose. Teresa also distributed the Bookstore Advisory Committee Mission Statement developed in 1998 for review and comment.

**Approval of Minutes from April 4, 2003 Meeting:** Some members did not receive the minutes, so Judy was asked to send them out again.

**Availability of Textbooks on the First Day of School:** Michelle said many instructors informed her that their books were not available at the beginning of the semester. She emphasized how this adversely affects the instructor, the students, and the college. Rhonda explained that 66 percent of the book requisitions were received before the deadline. Thirty-four percent were not. Of the 1,400 titles ordered, 1,280 titles were on the shelf the first day of school. Rhonda emphasized the importance of requisitions being submitted timely. Rhonda further explained that books are on the shelf three weeks prior to the beginning of the semester if requisitions are received on time. If instructor's will take the time to drop by and check on their books during that time, it is very helpful to the Bookstore staff and if problems are discovered there still may be time to solve them before school starts. Rhonda further explained that publishers send new editions after they run out of older editions. The Bookstore does not know what edition they will get until the books arrive. Publishers do not notify the Bookstore in advance if they are updating the edition. Rhonda explained that the Bookstore has little clout with the publishers because they know they are the "only game in town." But, she gave an example of how one instructor bargained with the publisher representative for books at lower than listed prices. This instructor then forwarded this information to the Bookstore so they could verify that the books were billed at the promised price. This kind of dealing can only be effective when done between the instructor and the publisher representative. Doug suggested that something be sent to instructors informing them how to work with publisher representatives. He also suggested a "helpful rep"

day. It was also discussed that students might find bargains on-line, but they will find one or two books; not the 50 or 60 or 100 needed by the Bookstore. In addition, other book sellers pick and choose what they will offer. Rhonda emphasized that students would really suffer if the Bookstore was not there for them. Regarding staffing, Rhonda said two people are being trained to head a team of customer service people and a couple more are being trained to help with on-line orders. Both of these areas were under-staffed this semester. She and Arbella both emphasized that people cannot be brought in the last minute and be effective. Training is very specific to the software and the situations. Another issue brought up was the on-line ordering system used by instructors to order their books. Several people found the program hard to use. Rhonda explained that the program had been programmed by college graduates from exclusive schools and asked that her staff not be held responsible for its inadequacies. She and Arbella will work with the providers and request it be made more user friendly.

**Realistic Textbook Order Amount:** Teresa produced a copy of the procedure that was approved in December, 1997. It was decided the procedure was good except, because of the new compressed calendar, only two semesters of sales history should be used when cutting the orders. In summary the procedure will be: For orders of 50 books or less there will be no cuts. For orders of 51 books or more, Bookstore staff will review sales for the preceding two consecutive semesters and recommend to division deans cuts when order quantities are ten percent higher than sales history. Division deans will communicate with faculty who will respond back to the Bookstore within ten working days. To be most effective, Bookstore staff need to be notified if more sections are being taught or if instructors are expected to teach larger classes. Gina asked to have this information before her division meeting next week. Further discussion suggested that instructors be notified how many texts are sold for each of their classes in comparison to their order.

**Textbook Markups:** Rhonda says they mark new books up 25 percent which she explained is the industry standard and used books 33 percent. Used books carry a higher risk because the Bookstore might not be able to sell them back to used book sellers if there is no more demand for them. Rhonda distributed a textbook price comparison she conducted showing Bookstore prices were the lowest in seven cases out of ten, and Doug suggested that she print it in the Pirate's Log.

**Communication.** *Texts arrived and on Shelf:* Rhonda encouraged faculty to take the time during the three weeks before classes start to check the books for their classes to see if there are any problems. If a problem is discovered in this time, it might get solved before the start of school. She also noted that new staff did not realize that the shelves should be checked every evening to see if all offerings were stocked. This caused problems, but should not happen again.

*Appropriate Editions:* As explained, the Bookstore is not notified of an edition switch until they check the order against the arrival. This is something that instructors can negotiate with publisher representatives.

*Current Syllabi:* Rhonda says the problem of old syllabi being sold will not happen in the future because new syllabi are being given a new number instead of the same number as the previous years' syllabi. She also explained that syllabi can only have a handling fee added; they cannot

be marked up more than that. She also said that Duplicating has been very cooperative and will duplicate five or ten copies at a time--and within 48 hours. This eliminates large amounts of leftover stock.

**Requisitions Due Date Issues:** It was discussed that with the compressed calendar instructors hardly have time to assess the effectiveness of their texts before it is time to order for the next semester. It was suggested that instructors try to meet the deadlines, but if they have extenuating circumstances, they should let the Bookstore know. In addition, the Bookstore should print a disclaimer stating that they cannot guarantee delivery of textbooks ordered after a certain date.

**Respect and Consideration:** It was reported that some faculty have been verbally offensive to Bookstore classified staff. It was noted that faculty operate from a position of power, and it is very unprofessional to do this. Unhappy faculty should deal directly with Rhonda. This message will be relayed through division dean meetings and Academic Senate meetings.

**Other:** It was pointed out that the mathematics division usually adopts texts for a longer period of time than other disciplines. This semester they ordered new editions. Rhonda said the new textbook buyer did not realize that more math books would be sold because they were new editions; therefore, there was a shortage of math books.

**Summary:**

- Rhonda and Arbella will rework and reissue the Frequently Asked Questions pamphlet.
- Rhonda will work on arranging a publishing house representative day.
- Rhonda and Arbella will update the order cutting procedure as suggested in the discussion today.
- Rhonda will work on the telephone issue so that Bookstore customers can expect a quick and knowledgeable response. She is considering having three numbers staffed during rush periods.
- Rhonda will also evaluate other staffing and determine the training needed and implement the training process.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.