

## MEMORANDUM

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To: Larry Czarda Vice President of Administration  
Greg Toney Executive Director, Administration  
From: Benn Crandall Director, Auxiliary Enterprises  
Date: March 27, 2009  
Subject: Spring 2009 textbook issues

### Background

I have just finished reviewing the available data from this spring semester. I have also conducted interviews with the Textbook Manager, Textbook Assistant, Store Manager and Regional Manager.

The problem is not limited to the Bookstore staff. We (the University) have just as much trouble predicting enrollments. For the fall 2008 semester, our Academic Departments predicted an average enrollment figure that was 25% higher than the actual enrollments. For the Spring 09 semester this number was 20% higher. Keep in mind, the Bookstore then tries to predict their own actual enrollment projection while monitoring the "real" actual enrollment from the Registrar's office. Of course then they have to try and predict how many books will actually sell.

### Findings

I have come to the same conclusion we found when we discovered the original textbook shortages. The error was in fact a human error. No procedures (other than carelessness) were by-passed, no policies were broken.

I wish I could tell you that we will eliminate all human errors in the future. As much as the Bookstore strives to achieve perfection for all 3000+ courses, I'm afraid perfection is fleeting. The fact is that the despite advances in technology the process still depends on human input for accuracy.

### Recommendations

- 1) I will continue to monitor the Bookstore staff to ensure they are constantly checking enrollment numbers.
- 2) Barnes and Noble has agreed to provide an additional textbook position to assist the Textbook Manager during the Textbook ordering cycle.
- 3) The Mason Bookstore staff has agreed to utilize a report, that can be produced from the existing software, that will identify courses either missing textbook information or has "changed" textbook information. It will be cumbersome in the beginning and will require hours of manual input to identify the differences, but it will be worth it if it can prevent the same problem from occurring again. They will continue to produce this report until the start of the semester.
- 4) The Mason Bookstore staff has also agreed to modify their formula for predicting how many textbooks will be sold in order to lessen the number of reorders required to meet the demand for the book. This will result in more texts being available at the start of the semester.
- 5) My office (University Administration) has agreed to partner with Barnes & Noble to develop a long term solution that will automatically download (from Banner) the current enrollment figures AND compare those numbers to the number assigned to the course in the Bookstore program. It will then produce an exception report that will report any discrepancies between numbers.