I. Background

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire has had a textbook rental system since the school was founded in 1916. The current rental program policy was written in 1990 and can be found on the University Bookstore website beginning at: http://www.uwec.edu/bookstore/faculty/order.htm

This rental program (Instructional Resource Rental Department) is a tremendous value to our students who currently pay, through their segregated fees, $90.00 per semester for access to the IRR Department. This department is managed on a day-to-day basis by our bookstore contracted partner, Barnes and Noble. Decisions regarding the Instructional Resource Rental Department are made by the Instructional Resource Rental Committee, comprised of five University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire instructional faculty/staff (appointed for three-year terms); five students (appointed annually); and four ex-officio and non-voting members. The functions of this committee include:

- Recommend policies concerning instructional resource rental materials and services that support the curriculum and academic programs of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.
- Monitor the practices and procedures of the Instructional Resource Rental Department and the requests of the instructional staff.
- Review the Instructional Resource Rental Department budget.
- Make final decisions to add materials to the IRR inventory based on the available budget.

II. Federal Requirements (Response)

1. Plans are in the works to meet the mandated deadline for the University Bookstore’s website and the University’s student class schedule to list the ISBN numbers and retail price information of required and recommended college textbooks.
2. We also plan to include in the Internet course schedule the author, title, publisher and copyright date for all required and recommended college textbooks or supplemental material.

III. Policy (Response)

A. We currently have early deadlines (mid March for summer and fall and mid October for winterim and spring). Many faculty/instructional staff and departments meet
these deadlines but many do not. To achieve this goal we will need the support of the Provost, Deans and Department Chairs to assure orders are received in a timely manner which would allow students time to order textbooks from competitively priced sources. However, the University Bookstore must still maintain inventory on all texts ordered as many students lack transportation to shop for books elsewhere and truly like the convenience of shopping on our central campus.

B. We currently provide faculty and instructional academic staff who are placing book orders with current information about the retail price of selected course materials.

C. It will take the support of the Provost to encourage faculty and instructional academic staff teaching the same course for multiple semesters to use the same textbooks and course materials for multiple semesters. The University Bookstore management has tried for years to work toward this solution with little success.

D. Many of our faculty and instructional academic staff do try to stay with older editions whenever possible. The problem we run into as a rental campus is that the publisher no longer has the older edition available if we need to reorder it.

E. With the Provost’s assistance we would hope to encourage faculty to request unbundled versions of textbook and course materials. Again, many times the publisher will not allow us to order individual pieces of a bundle and the instructor may not request an unbundled package because the publisher has promised to provide ancillary teaching aids to the instructor or the department if the bundled package is ordered.

F. NA – we have an outsourced bookstore

G. I have a concern with faculty and academic staff encouraging students to purchase electronic versions of textbooks or textbooks available for purchase online. As part of our contract with Barnes and Noble, our University Bookstore pays commission on sales and that commission benefits the University.

H. The UW-Eau Claire bookstore has increased the amount of used books available to students and custom publishing for course materials to help lessen the financial hardship of college textbook purchases. In addition to that, the University Centers, who develops the IRR Department budget, works very hard to keep the Seg. Fee amounts down.