

Title: Solicitors on Campus -- Independent Textbook Buyers

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Introduction

Independent textbook buyers are a fact of life on every college campus. They solicit faculty members directly, seeking to purchase the complimentary copies of books that accumulate when considering texts for adoption, as well as the desk copies of books no longer used in courses. They then sell these texts to wholesale used book sellers, who, in turn, sell them back to university bookstores. These textbook buyers do not represent the interests of faculty, students, or textbook publishers. In fact, due to the high volume of complimentary/desk copies being sold to these independent buyers, textbook publishers are now beginning to balk at honoring legitimate complimentary/desk copy requests from faculty. Moreover, the loss incurred by publishers from these sales is being passed on to students by way of inflated textbook prices.

Definition

Textbook buyers are independent operators, and they share no affiliation with textbook publishing/buying companies. It is important that these individuals not be confused with the publisher representatives seen regularly on campus for there exists a critical distinction between the two: Independent textbook buyers do not provide a service and are motivated strictly by personal gain, while publisher representatives are employees of established companies who serve the vital function of providing faculty with the most relevant, up-to-date textbooks for use in courses.

Policy

It is the policy of Boston College to ban all independent textbook buyers from campus, and to discourage their dealings with faculty and staff. When approached by such solicitors, faculty and staff are strongly urged to decline to sell them any books, to inform them of this policy, and to ask them to leave the campus. Individuals may choose, however, to ask the Boston College Police to handle the matter fully. In any case, the Boston College Police should be notified if a solicitor refuses to leave the campus after being asked to do so.

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