

**Report of Bookstore Committee
Annual Report for 2003/04**

Davis Baird, Philosophy, Chair

For the Committee:

Greg Carbone, Geography;
Daniel DiCecco, Foreign Languages;
Jeff Persels, Foreign Languages;
Randall Rose, Business;
Ernest Wiggins, Mass Communications

Introduction: After the previous year's torrid pace of work; this past year was a slightly quieter year for the Bookstore Committee. We met as a full Committee twice (9/17/03; 2/19/04), and the Chair of the Committee met once with Helen Zeigler from USC's Business Affairs Office to discuss ways to streamline the book adoption process and to move from the current paper-form system to an online system (9/16/03). The Chair of the Committee also worked with Helen Zeigler and Bookstore personnel to handle several complaints or concerns that arose during the year.

Specific Complaints: The specific complaints that the Chair of the Committee handled this year included: (i) availability and pricing problems for a chemistry text (resolved to be the publisher's error); (ii) availability of texts in an English class (resolved by ordering overnight additional copies); (iii) the—argued—inappropriate presence of a television in the magazine section of the bookstore (resolved as a matter of different tastes). In each case the complaint/concern was dealt with through email between the Chair of the Committee, Bookstore personnel and Helen Zeigler.

Trade Books: One additional complaint about the trade book section of the Bookstore deserves more extended comment. Specifically the complaint was that the trade book section was woefully inadequate and that this inadequacy undermined the educational efforts of the University. (For example, philosophy does not consist solely of works of Eastern mysticism, although a student might have gotten that impression from the philosophy trade section.) A meeting of the Bookstore Committee and representatives from each unit on campus was held at the Bookstore (9/17/03) with Tim Higgins, the Central Barnes and Noble Director of Trade Books. This was a very useful meeting. The Bookstore—and specifically Amanda Booth, abooth@gwm.sc.edu, 777-7430, who manages the trade section here—are very happy to have input from faculty and staff about trade books. Departments are encouraged to suggest titles for important (in print) books that should be carried in the trade section. The Bookstore also is willing to provide lists of trade books they carry at other B&N College bookstores by way of a resource for picking books for USC's store. Finally, the USC Bookstore would be very happy to carry for sale copies of every (in print) book by a USC faculty member.

New Manager: The other meeting (2/19/04) of the Bookstore Committee was convened to meet the new Bookstore manager, Andy Shaffer. After a very demanding time both renovating the space of the Bookstore and the reputation of the Bookstore with the faculty, Mike Comisky wanted to move on to different pastures. I can say for myself, Mike was a great person to work with. He took my concerns seriously and worked very hard to improve the service of the Bookstore. Andy Shaffer has big shoes to fill. But his work so far has continued in the service-orientation the Mike pursued with such vigor. I might also take a moment to point out the dedicated and productive service toward improving the Bookstore on the part of Helen Zeigler. She did most of the work toward rectifying problems and moving the Bookstore's relationship with faculty members forward.

Committee Changes: Two members of the committee—Greg Carbone (Geography) and Davis Baird (Philosophy)—rotate off the committee at the end of summer 2004. They are being replaced by Elizabeth West (South Caroliniana Library) and Richard Clodfelter (Retailing). Ernest Wiggins (Mass Communication) will take over as chair of the committee.

Comment: I repeat here, with minor changes, a comment I made in my last report of the Bookstore Committee: When I took over as chair of the bookstore committee—after a year when the committee never met—I was told that the committee's charge was to meet in response to faculty concerns. I believe that most faculty members do not know that complaints should be sent to the bookstore committee (if they cannot be handled directly with the bookstore). This changed marginally during the most recent year, but I still believe that most faculty members do not know that there is a Bookstore Committee to handle their problems, nor how to contact the Committee. Thus, I might also suggest that a better means to advertise the existence and purpose of the Bookstore Committee among the faculty would considerably help the committee pursue its mission of improving bookstore service for faculty.