

## **Policy Proposal: Textbook Adoption and Library Copies**

30 March 2007

**Situation:** There is demand from students for the Library to make available copies of textbooks used in courses at the university. Currently, the UBC Library must purchase copies of textbooks from the collections budget. This is a considerable expense given the growing cost of textbooks, the rate at which new additions appear, and the need to have multiple copies in the case of large-enrollment courses.

**Proposal:** Departments in the Faculties of Applied Science and Science should include the requirement that a publisher donate an appropriate number of textbooks to the Library when a textbook is adopted.

(Question for discussion by LAC: what is an “appropriate number”?)

### **Discussion:**

1. Publishers currently send dozens of complimentary copies to faculty members “on spec” to try to sell their textbooks.
2. Publishers already provide desk copies for all instructors teaching a course.
3. UBC has many courses with hundreds of students and typically adopts textbooks for several years at a time.
4. There are a very small number of textbook publishers. UBC is a large account for all of them. Even though the publishers might argue that any individual department is “small,” if we have a united front, we gain a lot of leverage.
5. We might consider an arrangement where there is a fixed total number of complimentary copies sent to the university for any given text we adopt. This would include complimentary copies to faculty, desk copies for instructors, and the library copies. Essentially, it may be reasonable to take the approach of gaining permission from the publishers for individual faculty members to donate their complimentary copies to the library, for example.

### **Things to consider:**

1. Is this a good idea? The LAC should debate this proposal. It may be that it should go to departments for some discussion as well.
2. Perhaps we should start with large-enrollment courses in first and second year. The advantage is that there are large numbers of competing texts for most of these courses and the total numbers of texts sold are very large. This is the richest profit area for these publishers.