

August 11, 2014

Dear GW Faculty Member:

Through your school's listserv, you may have received a letter about the use of the GW bookstore for the distribution of course materials. Since that letter was sent, several faculty members have raised questions. We want to clarify some points that were not accurately conveyed and make sure that there are no misunderstandings.

The university's agreement with Follett does give it the exclusive right, free from any alternate source endorsed, licensed, or otherwise approved or supported by the university, to operate a bookstore on campus (including by catalog or through electronic commerce). As we discuss below, however, that right does not mean that students or faculty members cannot obtain or provide information about other sources for texts.

Over the years, Follett has been an excellent university partner and has made required course materials readily available for students. Follett has reduced the cost of texts through rental and used book programs. Follett also annually provides support for our financial aid program by subsidizing campus bookstore purchases for a small percentage of our students who need additional aid. In short, the university is firmly committed to keeping texts and other educational materials as affordable as possible, and we believe that this exclusivity arrangement with Follett has had a positive impact on its pricing of texts. We recognize, however, that students – including those receiving financial aid – have many choices of sources from which to purchase or rent texts, and we welcome their exploring those choices to make the one that best meets their needs. Indeed, the university (through the assistance of Follett, which collects course material information provided by faculty members) publishes information for each course, including all required and recommended course materials, consistent with the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, so that students may compare prices and options. Members of the faculty should continue to provide Follett with a list of all required and recommended course materials. Individual faculty have discretion as to what information they put on their syllabus, including any options available to students to obtain texts.

We will continue to look for ways to be even more cost conscious about how course materials are delivered to students. It is imperative that we provide students with the information they need to make informed choices. We believe Follett's service has been excellent and that having a vibrant campus bookstore enriches our campus.

Follett and the GW Campus Store are prepared and fully capable of supporting the textbook and digital learning technology needs for your courses.

We apologize for any confusion our original note may have caused. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding any of the information in this letter or the original letter, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Nancy M. Haaga
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