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## STUDENTS FIND BOOK DEALS ONLINE

*Lower prices available*

### Amanda Schaefer

The News Record

Students can buy many textbooks from overseas for less money than local stores, but some publishers are working to discourage it.

In the aisles of the bookstores around campus, it is not uncommon to hear a gasp and complaint from a student glancing at the price of a text needed for a new class.

Many students prefer to look online.

In comparing prices of three selected texts, results varied depending on the availability from vendors overseas and whether there were used copies available.

Through comparisons, however, it became apparent that overseas suppliers often offer some cheaper rates.

The best price for a used copy of The Norton Anthology of English Literature can be found for \$10.09 at abebooks.com, \$18.50 at Amazon.com, \$43.91 at Amazon.co.uk or \$44 at the UC Bookstores. For a new version, the best price can be found for \$46.78 at Amazon.co.uk. UC bookstores offered a new copy for \$58.65, which is cheaper than a new copy from Amazon.com.

In the second comparison using the text Chemical Reaction Engineering, 3rd edition, Alibris.com charged \$12.45. Abebooks.com listed a used copy for \$27.29. UC bookstores did not have used copies available.

New versions, of course, are more expensive.

Half.com listed new copies for \$53.78, compared to Amazon.com that listed the book for \$106.95 and UC Bookstores that priced the book for a few dollars more than Amazon.com.

Amazon.co.uk has used copies starting at \$7.65, Amazon.com at \$29.99. ClassBook.com, CampusBooks.net and a1techbooks.com all offer better deals than our local bookstores.

The book used for UC's human sexuality class usually sells at the UC Bookstores for \$55.25 used, and \$73.35 new. Amazon.co.uk has used copies starting at \$7.65, Amazon.com at \$29.99. ClassBook.com, CampusBooks.net, and a1techbooks.com all offer better deals than our local bookstores.

As soon as publishing houses realized the overseas loophole, however, they did their best to discourage it.

This happened to Richard Sarkis' and David Kinsley's new Web-based company, BookCentral.com, according to a recent article in The New York Times. This Internet business buys textbooks overseas and sells them to students for the cheapest possible prices.

A number of publishers took measures to prevent the company from sourcing its books from overseas, according to Sarkis.

A bill introduced to the House of Representatives Nov. 20 calls for the General Accounting Office to investigate how publishers price textbooks. A spokesman for Representative David Wu (D-Ore), who introduced the legislation, told the Washington Daily on Nov. 20 that costs circumstances suggest price gouging may be involved.

Linda Gindele, Director of Retail Services for UC Bookstores, said they shop for competitive prices when purchasing and go by standard markup, which is 20 to 25 percent to cover their operational costs. The National Association of College Stores has contacted publishing houses about the current markup on texts, she said. Publishers contend that they can't sell to foreign countries for the same prices because consumers in these countries can't afford it, according to Gindele.

On some campuses, students are attempting to create a textbook rental system.

On UC's campus, this idea is beginning to take shape. Some individuals want to set up a book depository for all student use. They plan to offer more money than the bookstores for a used book, in order to entice students to come to them instead.

Top sites that offered consistently lower deals are: half.com, a1techbooks.com, abebooks.com, Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk.

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