

# FEATURES

## Rising textbook prices hide larger issue of possible tuition increase

Erik Spencer  
STAFF REPORTER

Over the last few months, a textbook committee at Winston-Salem State has met twice to discuss the issue of textbook prices. Laine Goldman, a mass communications instructor and the chairperson of the textbook committee, has led the effort to examine the costs associated with textbooks.

Goldman, a passionate advocate for her cause, is quick to explain the mission of the textbook committee.

"It's designed to lower the cost of textbooks," she said.

The textbook committee was formed in response to a mandate by Erskine Bowles, president of the general administration of the UNC system, which requires that colleges show a commitment to lowering school expenses.

Textbooks have generally been the target of most efforts to stop school expenses from rising. On average, college students spend \$900 a year on textbooks, according to a 2006 U.S. Department of Education report.

The amount of attention being given to textbook prices has only left larger issues to loom in the background, like the overall rising cost of tuition. Goldman thinks that it has become all too "easy to blame textbooks."

The mandate that Bowles enacted last year is aimed at reducing immediate expenses such as textbooks and supplies, but there may be an ulte-

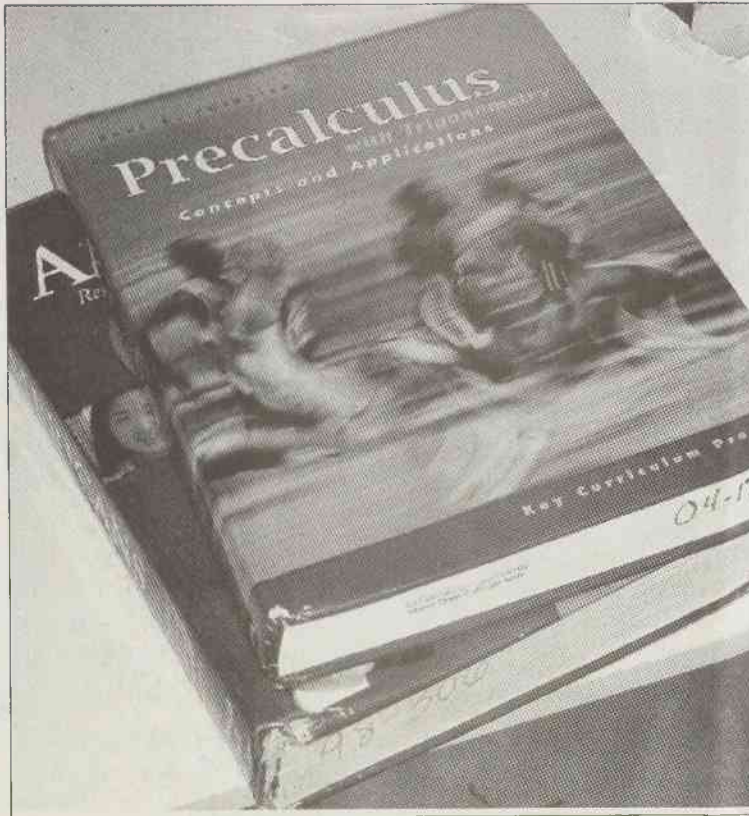


Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.com

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rior motive. Namely, a college or university that has shown commitment to lowering local expenses like textbooks, has cleared one of the major hurdles toward raising school tuition.

Many believe that incremental tuition increases are necessary to help attract high-quality teachers, and to keep current teachers from looking elsewhere for higher salaries. Higher tuition and fees also helps develop new facilities for

colleges.

Even with the textbook committee actively pursuing the rising cost of textbooks, some students feel that not enough is being done.

"I think that the type of organization [eFollet bookstore] set up in this school is not designed to help students save money," said Phillip Horne. "They're only here to make a profit."

John Ray, who manages the campus bookstore and is a

member of the textbook committee, says those remarks are "one-sided," and that everyone is entitled to their own opinion.

"When you come to the bookstore, it's sort of a shock to the system," he said. "Are my books that expensive?"

The answer to that question for many is yes. The amount students spend on textbooks per year has nearly doubled in the past 20 years, with textbook prices rising at a steady rate—faster than inflation.

"I think price is a big part of it," Ray said. "The best possible way to keep textbook prices down is to use the book for two to three years."

Ray's idea may be ideal, but each semester many teachers adopt new editions, leaving students to pay the cost. Teachers, who often receive textbook copies for free, are often oblivious to the price of each textbook. Almost all of the review copies that teachers receive do not have a sticker price.

However, this may soon change. The Higher Education Act of 1965 originally required that colleges and universities provide financial assistance to students in higher education. The Higher Education Act has since been reauthorized every five years, and most recently on Feb. 7, 2008. The reauthorization will require publishers to inform colleges about prices for textbooks, in hopes of saving students money.



Photo by Grant Fulton

Dr. Elva J. Jones currently serves as chairperson of the computer science department.

## Jones continues to serve her alma mater

Stephanie Douthit  
NEWS EDITOR

If any person ever lived up to the Winston-Salem State motto "Enter to Learn and Depart to Serve" it's Dr. Elva J. Jones.

Jones is chairperson of the WSSU computer science department. The Elva J. Jones Computer Science Building is named in her honor.

Jones grew up on a farm in Louisburg, N.C., in terms of education, Jones' parents were not very strict, but she knew what was expected of her.

"It was implanted in all of us, we were going to college," she said.

WSSU was Jones' top college choice because her oldest sister attended the school. While at WSSU, Jones majored in business because there was no computer science department. Her love of math and science led her to work with computers.

Jones was a student worker in the campus computer center. Working there as a student led to her receiving a job offer upon her graduation in 1970. Jones accepted the job offer and worked at WSSU part-time as a computer programmer while attending UNC-Greensboro to earn her master's degree in operations research.

She also attended North Carolina State University (NCSU) full-time to earn her doctorate in engineering and computer studies. She completed the task while caring for her only son, Eugene, who also attended WSSU.

When she was pursuing her master's degree her husband, former band director, Emory Jones, also a WSSU graduate, was working in Winston-Salem at the time so she was the primary caretaker for their son.

All in all, Jones enjoyed her experiences at NCSU because she said they were "fun, exciting, and challenging." At all of the universities Jones attended she formed close bonds and relationships with people that continue today. Her motivation to pursue her doctorate was to teach on the college level.

After receiving her doctorate, Jones was offered a job at NCSU, but declined the offer and returned to her alma mater, WSSU.

"I felt a very close affiliation to the school, [and] I wanted to give back," Jones said. She returned as an instructor of computer science.

Jones also she also leads the ARTSI (Advancing Robotics Technology for Societal Impact) project with Dr. Rebecca Caldwell, associate professor of computer science. ARTSI is an education research project focused on robotics for health-care, the arts, and entrepreneurship.

Jones is dedicated to her students and advises them to set goals and work toward them.

Willie Frazier, lecturer and undergraduate program assistant in the computer science department and who has known Jones for a number of years, speaks highly of the chairman.

"Dr. Jones is a regular person just like everyone else."

"Dr. Elva Jones is a great person to work with in the computer science department," said Dr. Rebecca Caldwell, assistant professor of computer science. "She is always willing to share her time, resources, and expertise. I have learned a lot from her as a faculty member in the computer science department."

Outside of teaching, Jones loves sports, especially basketball and baseball. She often frequents Charlotte Bobcats games. Jones also has a knack for learning new things, crafts, and garden. She also likes to sew.

"There is no student that cannot learn," Jones said. "WSSU has a tradition of giving students an opportunity to excel."

## Review: Hickman's book surprises

Stephanie Douthit  
NEWS EDITOR

"Unexpected Interruptions" by Winston-Salem State alumna Trice Hickman is definitely what the title implies, unexpected. Following the journey of Victoria Small, a woman that men love and women envy, she is beautiful, intelligent, and successful.

Victoria grew up in an affluent family, was educated at top American universities, and she is the youngest senior executive in her corporate job. She seems to have it all, but one thing is missing, the undeniable love and affection of a companion.

The only thing in her life that is not worth envy is that she goes home alone everyday, and this has been the case for over a year. Scarred from a hard past involving a tough relationship, love has been out of the question. But lately her love life and professional life have been changing.

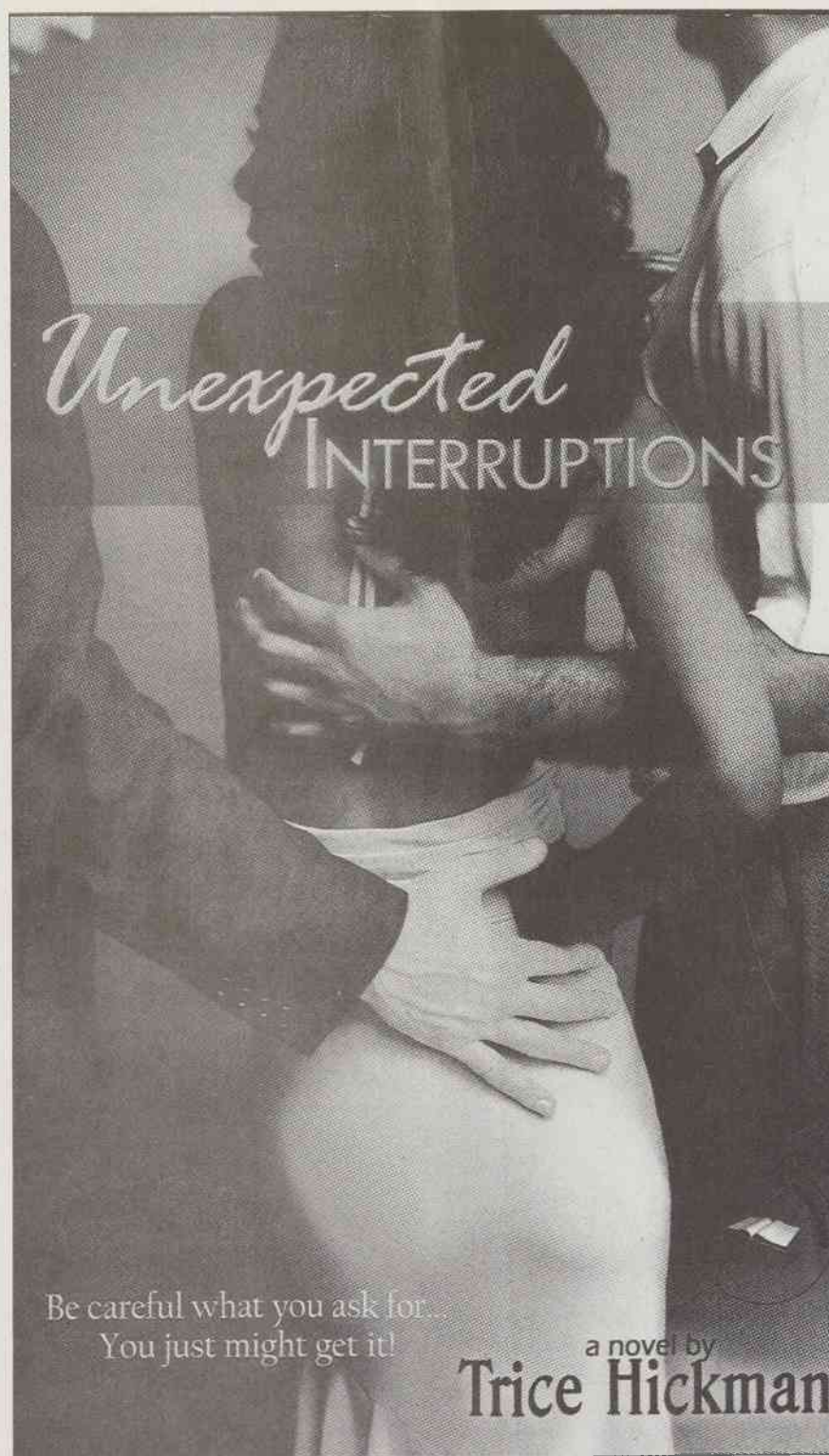
In fact, she has found someone who fell deeply in love with her, but there is someone else who also has her attention.

Parker Brightwood, a successful surgeon that showers her with love and exposes her to some dark parts of the past, and Ted Thornton, a millionaire CEO heartthrob that adores her and opens her eyes to dating Caucasian men, are both catapulting her life into an unfamiliar territory.

She has even decided to leave her job with great benefits and six figures to pursue her dream of owning her own event planning business. Her new love interests have sparked a desire to push herself where she has not pushed herself before.

Victoria takes her readers through the twists and turns of interracial relationships, distant lovers, friends and foes, and all the "taboo" topics of family, culture, class, and intimacy. Readers become anxious to know, who will she choose? Can she be in love with two different people at the same time? Will she choose the right person?

A must read, putting the book down is optional. Learning the end result of Victoria's long journey without interruption will be most gratifying.



Be careful what you ask for...  
You just might get it!

a novel by  
**Trice Hickman**

Photo courtesy of Trice Hickman

WSSU alumna Trice Hickman's (class of '91) first novel came out last fall.