

**BUYBACKS**

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transition from student customer to store merchant brought perspective to the process.

"It's an eye-opener knowing now how the system works," Saunders said. "There are certain things we can control, but we don't have a lot of control over what the publishers are going to charge us. So that's the frustrating part."

Most Chapel Hill vendors pay students half the retail price for used books that professors have requested for the coming semester.

"If we know we can use the books we'll pay the students 50 percent of the retail cost," said John Jones, director of Student Stores.

The retail prices sometimes are determined by the publisher and are based on the wholesale prices that stores pay, which usually fall between 80 percent and 75 percent of retail value, Jones said.

If publishers do not specify a retail cost, Jones said stores generally will print a price tag of 25 percent more than what the store paid.

Textbook merchants say students often have the misconception that differences in prices mean store owners are stuffing their pockets with profits.

"It's hard because students think that it's the bookstore that's ripping them off, but it's a lot of other factors," said John Lindo, store manager at Tarheel Book Store, at 119 E. Franklin St.

One reason buybacks do not drive up profits is because not all of the

books will be repurchased, said Steve Thurston, manager of Ram Book & Supply, at 306 W. Franklin St.

"It's a good part of our business, but it doesn't directly affect profits," Thurston said.

High prices have pushed some students to alternative venues.

In 2003 UNC-CH alumni Andrew Synowiez, a former staff member of The Daily Tar Heel, and Kevin Webb developed the textbook trading Web site, www.carolinaswap.com. Synowiez, who graduated in May, said he and Webb started the site because they were not satisfied with their textbook experiences.

"We just felt like we weren't getting our money's worth," he said.

Registration for CarolinaSwap is free, and the site gives student-vendors suggested prices based on the listings on Amazon.com and at local bookstores.

Students searching for books will be shown how many units are available, and if they want to make a purchase an e-mail will be sent to each student seller. After that it's up to the students to decide the nature of the transaction.

In its first semester, Synowiez said, CarolinaSwap saved students \$10,000. Student government has plans to help promote the site.

The textbook industry has attracted much recent attention as already high prices continue to rise.

In November UNC-system President-elect Erskine Bowles expressed interest in creating textbook-rental programs across the system, similar to those at Appalachian State University and other system

schools. Students pay a fee to rent textbooks for the semester.

Reasons for peaking prices vary. "It used to be when a new edition came out that edition would be good for two to three years," Lido said.

Now, he said, editions often are good for only a year.

Supplemental materials, such as access codes to online resources, also keep students from buying used books.

The access codes that come with many science books only can be used once, forcing students to buy new.

"It's a huge problem in the industry because it's the way that the publishers are keeping used books (from) getting back into the market," Lido said.

Although the Chapel Hill vendors say online stores have not negatively affected their profits, the potential remains as the online industry keeps spreading.

Richard Davies, spokesman for Abebooks Inc. — an online book merchant based in Victoria, British Columbia — said textbooks have become the largest industry in book retail.

"Used textbooks are the fastest growing segment of the whole U.S. publishing and book-selling industry," he said.

*"It's hard because students think that it's the bookstore that's ripping them off."*

JOHN LINDO, BOOKSTORE OWNER

The company sells books through professional vendors who pay a fee to use the site. Last January, Abebooks sold about \$5 million worth of new and used textbooks, Davies said.

International online distributors also have jumped into the market, often offering comparable content, but with cheaper production.

Because the large market drives prices down, Davies said the online merchants keep prices level.

He said the U.S. textbook market will continue to hit students hard as long as publishers have the upper hand.

"They just don't want to let go because it's unlike any other book market in the U.S. — a captive audience that keeps on coming back."

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**GRIFFIN**

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— high enough for employees to afford a living in Chapel Hill.

"What we have to do is continue to work with the University to make things better for staff," said Patterson, whose leadership will be augmented by groundskeeper David Brannigan, who was elected forum vice-chairman.

Griffin's years as forum chairman were marked by a dedication to expanding the role.

"I think Tommy Griffin's legacy is not just making it a larger player but providing it with respectability by showing we can responsibly share the co-governance and can responsibly come up with ideas, suggestions that make the University better," Patterson said.

As the forum moves on, leaders are looking to further expand on the foundation laid during the last several years.

Patterson said forum leaders have expressed interest in expanding the committee structure to allow both more participation and a broader focus on employee issues.

The focus on a stronger voice for employees is a continuation of a recent trend within the forum.

Forum bylaws were revised earlier this year to give voting power to all members of the forum.

"This whole process will allow

people to take ownership in the responsibility they've accepted," Patterson said.

Under Griffin's tenure employees were given a place before the UNC Board of Trustees. Time is now allotted during board meetings for comments from the forum chairman.

The forum also secured a monthly meeting with the provost, as well as administrators in finance and human resources, and lobbying legislators has become an avenue of effecting change for the forum.

"We've carried our story to them personally," said Griffin. "If you hear about somebody in a disaster area, you say, 'Well that's real bad.' But until you see that person ... it hasn't touched home."

Patterson said the forum will continue on the path forged by Griffin.

"We've done a wonderful job. What's the next step we can take?" Patterson asked.

For example, he said, the forum should take a look at the programs implemented by the chancellor's task force for a better workplace, which was founded in 2003 to provide more benefits to employees.

"What we need to do is take a look at that as a forum and figure out how we want to work with the administration and propose the next step."

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**STUDENT CODE**

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He said that while it doesn't need rewriting, it does require attention.

For example, Title I, the Student Constitution, and Title III, the judiciary section, call for differing structures of the Student Supreme Court.

Drew Erteschik, former chief justice of the Court, said justices have considered Title III to be the authority.

"It has been governed by Title III, but if nothing else it sort of creates some confusion," he said of the discrepancy.

Kleinschmidt, on the other hand, said Title I should serve as the governing rule.

"Title I rules always. You cannot have another provision conflict with Title I, because every part of Title I was voted on by the student body," he said. "The Student Congress acting alone cannot contradict the will of the student body."

Though not all Code issues are as glaring, Riley said the quantity of minor errors is a problem.

"There are just tons and tons of clerical errors and inconsistencies in format," he said.

Earlier this semester Riley proposed congressional legislation to create a constitutional convention to review Title I.

He envisions students familiar with the Code taking the opportunity to examine the document and propose formal changes.

"The idea is to look at what students really want, the direction student government wants to move and apply that to the Code and see what would happen if that were the case," he said.

The convention proposal has been tabled at least until January.

It would not be the first time in recent years the Code has been revised for inconsistencies.

Last year, then-Solicitor General Matt Liles, now a UNC law student and DTH columnist, undertook a Code revision, but he said that it still is in need of further assessment.

"I still believe that we passed a reasonably wholesale revision to make it cohesive last summer," he said. "(But) as we see this year, we found even more places where the Code is inconsistent."

In addition to Riley's focus on revising Title I, there are other movements under way to revise specific sections of the Code.

The rules and judiciary committee of Congress voted Tuesday to establish a special session in January to address revisions of Title VI, which governs student elections.

Erteschik said he stepped down from his duties as chief justice in

November to be able to propose changes to Title III, which he was not allowed to do under provisions in the title that prohibit sitting justices from amending the Code.

Because there is no single movement to comprehensively overhaul the Code, Speaker Pro Tem Kris Gould, District 6, said changes will be easier to implement.

"There's just more red tape and obstacles in place when it's a formal process," he said. "I think it can be an informal process."

While Code revisions are being addressed in Congress, members emphasize that it is an important issue for students to be aware of.

Kleinschmidt said students might not realize how the Code affects their lives at the University.

"Most students don't think about how the Code affects them on a day-to-day basis," he said. "Of course it does. It's really important to determine how student fees are distributed."

Riley said he wants students to "use Congress as a forum for debate and not just as a tool for allocating money."

His vision of a revised Code would affect student funding.

"The Student Constitution needs to be broader in scope so that students are given more discretion," he said.

"Student Congress needs to fund not only on permissibility, but what we should do is say, 'We are allowed to fund your event, but we don't like your event so we won't give you money,' or 'We like your event, so we'll give you a little more money.'"

Riley said that while he is not advocating discrimination against campus groups, Congress should use its representative powers to reflect the student body's opinion.

"We are representatives of the student body," he said. "I think that we should reflect popular opinion on campus to some extent."

Regardless of how substantive the revisions prove to be, Gould said the process will be gradual.

"I don't think it's an issue of stopping everything now and working on each change until the Code is completely updated," he said. "It has to go through in phases."

Kleinschmidt said he hopes Congress bears in mind the importance of its task.

"It's almost a sacred document," he said. "I only hope that students today recognize how important it is to defining the culture of what it means to be a student at the University of North Carolina and that they continue to protect the integrity of the Code."

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**DEPRESSION**

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of different distributors.

People can use the light boxes while sitting around watching television or doing homework, Landers said.

Hamrick said that at CAPS they prescribe anti-depressants and psychological therapy the most often but do not hesitate to help students engage in light therapy.

"Some people opt to use light therapy," he said. "We don't have the boxes, but we can help people find them. I know a number of students who use them."

Because of the geographical location of Chapel Hill, cases of SAD are less severe than they are

farther north.

"People in the North where the days get shorter would have more trouble than schools farther South," Glick said, but she added that there is not an overload of cases at UMICH.

She said it is important for students to recognize that this disorder can be treated and that they should get help.

Students need support from professionals as well as a support group of their peers to help them get through the winter months, experts say.

"Depression can make it really hard to function on a college campus," Glick said.

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