

University Bookstore



Co-operative bookstores are on the wane, according to Gerald Henson, manager of the University of Oregon Bookstore, Inc., and on July 1 the University Co-op gave in to the trend by changing its rules along with its name.

"For the past 53 years it's been operating as the Co-op, but on July 1 we became the University Bookstore," Henson said. "The change was voted on last spring by Co-op members and was approved five to one."

The change came about because the board of directors felt there were too many inequities in the co-operative system. The rebates given to members were low due to inflation and high taxes.

"Only one third of the student body joined the Co-op," said Henson, "but under regulations of the Bureau of Internal Revenue profits made from non-members couldn't be distributed among members. Money accumulated, and the board didn't know how to dispose of it."

"As the University of Oregon Bookstore, Inc.,

we intend to reduce the price of textbooks by around 10 per cent. We'd like to discount everything, but the book price reduction alone will wipe out most of the profits."

Henson remarked that the past five years have posed some trying times and bookstores have been forced to operate on less, while the profit margin on texts remains the same.

"The average life of a textbook is short, about a year or so," he said. "New editions are constantly appearing and at a liberal arts school such as the University, texts become obsolete quickly. The bookstore can buy back very few used books, making it hard on both students and the store."

"Many students tend to look at books as a ripoff. Texts are expensive," Henson admitted, "but what the student spends on books—which play such an important role in his education—is just a fraction compared to the total cost of his schooling."

Jamie Hartshorn



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