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PUBLISHING

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extract more money from students by packaging textbooks in plastic bundles so students have to buy extra materials — like CD-ROMs, workbooks and study guides — when all that is wanted is the textbook.

Johnson added that publishers have a habit of frequently releasing new editions of textbooks, which is financially harmful to students.

"A new edition of a textbook is put out every term and the sole reason is to prevent students from buying a used textbook," Johnson said.

Collecting student surveys is only the first part of the campaign. Johnson and Douglass said the second part entails speaking with professors to determine what their methods are for selecting textbooks. Johnson said they also plan on protecting students from high-priced textbooks by promoting a book-swapping Web site: www.campusbookswap.com.

"The fact is we're college students; we're going to need books, but that doesn't mean we need to pay an exorbitant amount of money," Johnson said.

After OSPIRG collects all the data, Johnson said the group plans to write a report and use the research to convince publishing companies to stop business practices that inflate the price of textbooks and take advantage of students.

"Students were really enthusiastic about telling us what bothers them the most about how they're spending money on textbooks," he said, adding that more than 150 students filled out surveys Monday, the first day of the campaign.

Despite these efforts, a campaign to curb textbook costs will not lead to prices as low as those in the trade book market, University Bookstore General Manager Jim Williams said.

TEXTBOOK DOLLAR BREAKDOWN

- \$0.32:** Paper, printing and editorial costs
- \$0.15:** Publisher's marketing costs
- \$0.12:** Author income
- \$0.11:** College store personnel
- \$0.10:** Publisher's general and administrative costs
- \$0.07:** Publisher's income
- \$0.07:** College store operations
- \$0.05:** College store income
- \$0.01:** Freight expense

SOURCE: National Association of College Stores

Sean Hanson Senior Graphic Designer

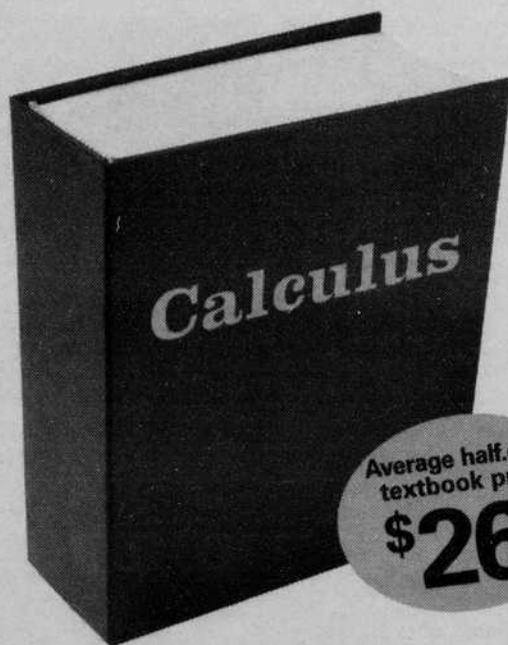
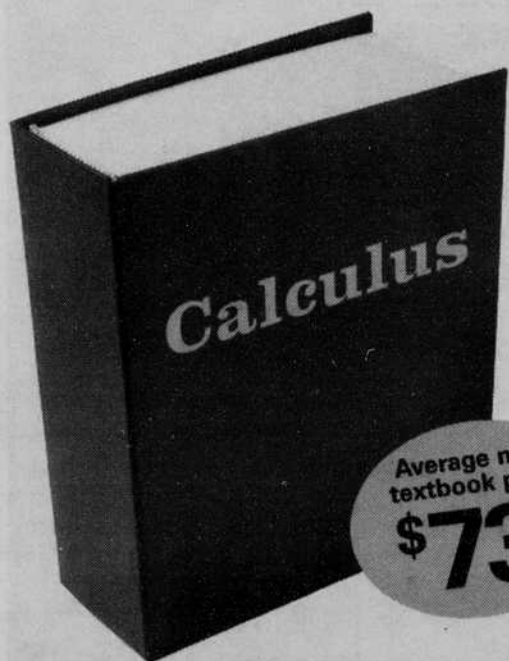
The textbook dilemma is one that has been building for a long time, Williams said. Publishers are continually losing money due to the increasingly efficient used-book market, Williams said, and the biggest mistake publishers ever made was failing to carve out a chunk of that market for themselves 30 years ago.

"Now there's just a handful of publishers controlling the marketplace because others couldn't survive financially in the long run," he said.

While Williams said some publishing practices are unfair — such as making minor changes to a book in order to put out a new edition every year — books do cost money to make, and publishers need to be able to recover their expenses.

"I think that publishers should have to justify their price," Williams said. "There are reasons books are expensive. (But) there is a value to the book that needs to be determined as well."

Contact the news editor at jenniferbear@dailyemerald.com.



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