

Responses from Faculty about Barnes and Noble:

After sending an email to all full-time faculty at Indiana University East, I received several emails about book-store problems.

The only recurring theme was that the bookstore apparently does not order enough books. Numerous faculty members reported that some students are left without textbooks for the first week (or two) because the bookstore is out.

One faculty member writes:

“There are always glitches with their not being enough books, which wouldn't bother me so much if I didn't teach the same comp classes every semester with essentially the same books. Typically, 1/4 of my classes do not have their books when classes start because of bookstore issues. Given that we have to have our orders in now a full three months before the semester starts, I'm uncertain why there is always a deficit of available texts.”

Another one notes:

“The bookstore is running short on books more often than in the past. It used to be a rare occasion, now it is happening often on classes that get fully enrolled.”

Some faculty expressed their frustration that the bookstore apparently does not stock books from one semester to the next, even though they know that these books will be needed. One faculty member writes:

“A few months ago I spoke with the bookstore and was told that B & N policy is that the bookstore is prevented from keeping textbooks in stock from one semester to the other and that they must return unpurchased texts, whether they are new or used each semester (only to repurchase them again the following semester). This strikes me as inappropriate and surely probably adds to the cost of textbooks (with repeated shipping in and out every semester). Given that some courses are offered every semester, this seems a ridiculous (even costly) policy.”

Another faculty member reports that Barnes and Noble refuses to buy back “special edition” textbooks, even though her department has committed to using the same textbooks the very next semester. She writes bluntly:

*“A student came to my office tonight and informed me that our bookstore told her they did not want to buy back her P-103 textbook (**WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY 2nd Edition** by Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo) because it was a "special version made especially for IUE".*

***That's bull!** Yes, the publisher offered to include some special study skills pages in the books we got this Fall, but that is no reason to prevent students from selling back their book to our bookstore so next semester our students can take advantage of buying used texts. All sections of P-103 at IUE will be using **What is Psychology 2nd edition** by Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo again this Spring, and Summer and next Fall and next Spring and students should be able to sell their books back to the bookstore so students next semester can take advantage of a used versions of the text to save money.*

Frankly, I compared my desk copy to the student's version and found NO significant difference (despite the fact that there were completely different ISBN numbers on the back of the text). They both had 15 chapters with end of chapter activities (concept checks). I saw nothing special in the student's copy (and certainly nothing specific to "IUE").

Some faculty members expressed frustration about the ordering procedures of the bookstore (the fact that orders are due three months before the beginning of the semester) and that the bookstore is not helpful in creating course packages:

“My biggest complaint about B&N taking over the bookstore is that we can no longer create coursepackets cheaply and on-site: I tried using XanEdu when they first came and they not only kept me from photocopying most of the materials, but they would going to charge about 4x as much as normal for about ¼ of the materials. Coursepackets were my way of keeping costs low, education high, and reading convenient: now I don't have that option any more.”