

## Texas State University San Marcos Cross-Campus Partnerships

*University Bookstore at Texas State University San Marcos reinvests earnings back into university programs, departments, facilities, and services that ultimately enhance the quality of life for students and the entire campus community.*

### About Texas State University San Marcos



University Bookstore is the official bookstore of Texas State University

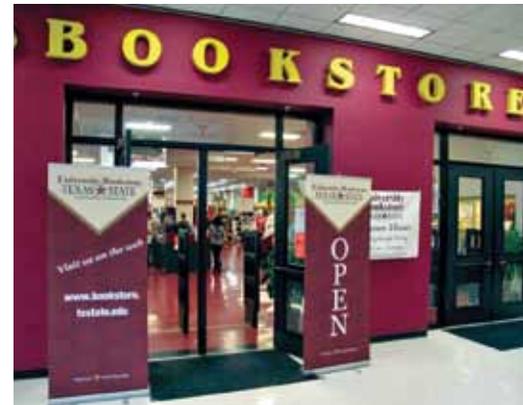
San Marcos. Owned by the University, the store serves some 28,000 students, most of whom are commuters. University Bookstore develops and maintains relationships across the entire campus, and redirects all earnings back to the university.

### The Challenge: Demonstrating the Store's High Value in a Competitive Environment

University Bookstore faces strong competition from three bookstores near campus. Although commercial competitors don't have the same overhead costs that a university store has in supporting the university infrastructure, University Bookstore maintains the same low margin on course materials and other merchandise as the off-campus stores.

To help keep course materials as affordable as possible, nearly 50% of the books offered at University Bookstore are discounted used books, and e-books were introduced

recently as another low-cost option. But, says Jackie Slaughter, University Bookstore general manager, it's been a challenge to get students and the university community to understand the many steps University Bookstore takes to ensure course materials affordability and support the entire campus. "The value of the college bookstore is not only the textbooks that we sell, but the information about the course materials that we provide," Slaughter explains.



### The Solution: Cross-Campus Partnerships that Benefit the Entire University

While saving students money through used books and fair prices has always been a focus of University Bookstore, the store's management team realized that building strong partnerships with other units on campus could positively impact awareness of the unparalleled value the store delivers to the university and the support it provides to students.

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National Association  
of College Stores

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The store has undertaken a variety of partnering initiatives over the years and now supports more than 60 organizations and campus departments. Partner initiatives include:

**Book Scholarships:** Each year, the store gives 10% of annual net earnings to the Associated Student Government (ASG) to distribute in the form of \$300 book scholarships. ASG determines how the money will be distributed through such activities as a student essay contest. Over the last three years, the store has given ASG more than \$100,000. ASG publicizes University Bookstore as the source of the scholarships and recommends students shop there. “It’s a win-win situation – if we do well, ASG does well,” Slaughter says.

**Athletic Department Partnership:** University Bookstore manages the athletic department’s web site for selling collegiate apparel, saving the department a tremendous amount of time. The store also gives the department an annual flat fee, an amount that is always greater than what would be achieved through commissions on sales. In addition, the store manages apparel concessions at games and gives the department a commission on all sales made at those events. In return, University Bookstore enjoys publicity at the athletic events and the department lends its mascot, Boko the Bobcat, to the store for special events.



**Orientation Leader Training:** University Bookstore educates student orientation leaders about textbook buyback, its used book program, e-book opportunities, where store earnings go, and how the store supports the university.

In turn, the leaders share this valuable information with new students.

**Faculty Outreach:** Store staff schedule face-to-face meetings with faculty members to educate them about issues related to course materials adoption and pricing.

### **The Results: Strong Relationships that Benefit the University and Students**

Partnerships on campus create goodwill and positive publicity for the store, produce sales that benefit students, and help the store’s staff build rapport with students and faculty.

“Through outreach, we get to tell our story over and over to many people – students as well as department staff members who pass the information along,” Slaughter observes. “We are proud to be an integral part of the Texas State community, and we will continue to dedicate ourselves to selling students what they need, when they need it, at the best price possible. Any time there is an opportunity to try new things that will keep course materials prices down, we’re going to take it.”