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Buying textbooks at the beginning of the semester can do some damage to your wallet, but there is a little glimmer of hope at the end of every semester when a bookstore sales associate says the bookstore will likely buy your book back. This only happens if they haven't filled up the inventory already, if classes aren't canceled for the following semester or if classes for next semester are getting a new textbook.

Students get tricked into spending hundreds of dollars on books through the on-campus bookstore, especially incoming freshmen. They usually get the newest books because the used textbooks are taken already by upperclassmen who have learned the trick of buying books early. Although the on-campus store hands you money over the counter, they fill up on inventory and only hand you back your book. You usually get more money for lab and science textbooks and they are usually not too hard to sell back. If you look hard enough, there's a link to find the textbooks you'll need for your courses, and buying online is much cheaper.

Many of the books in the bookstore have CDs or codes in them that make them impossible to sell back, but our suggestion is to try selling them online. Chances are that there has to be a student somewhere in another state that needs the book you own even without the access code.

You can compete with other sellers by lowering your price and selling faster and you get paid within days. They don't take much of your profit and it's easy and free to set up an account and start selling. Amazon.com, ebay.com and Half.com are all websites students can use to buy and sell books. Although running back and forth to the post office to ship out a book can be a hassle, we truly think that this is the best way to get rid of books that weren't taken back by bookstores. It keeps old books from piling up as just wasted money.

Renting books has become a new trend in the bookstores around Radford and at least those you can give back, but you don't get money back. On the bright side, you didn't pay as much for them in the first place.

This sounds like a good idea, especially for classes that you're only taking for general education credits. Some of the classes for your major encourage you to keep the textbooks for future reference.

Between the on-campus bookstore and the off-campus Book Exchange, it's hard to compare and judge whom you get the most money back from. The Book Exchange does have deals like for every \$50 or so you sell, you get an additional \$10, which is something the bookstore doesn't usually offer.

Even if you don't get as much money back as you'd hoped for from the Book Exchange, you still have a better chance of selling them back in general.

You can also try to buy and sell books through friends. They have control of the cost, but at least you're getting it right away. You'll learn to save more money each year through experience with the bookstores.