Job title: Bookstore General Manager
Department: Enrollment and Student Services
Reports to: Division Director of Budget and Administration

Summary of Position:
The Bookstore General Manager is responsible for the strategic leadership and operations of the Western Associated Students (AS) Bookstore. The Bookstore supports the educational mission of the University by providing academic resource materials for students and faculty using a competitive model that strives to provide affordable course materials and accompanying academic support materials as well as art, school and office supplies.

The General Manager is responsible for facilitating and promoting the store as a resource for students and faculty. Market analysis and strategic marketing of all store merchandise is a key priority for the General Manager in their role. The General Manager is responsible for implementation of new ideas and processes to strategically lead the Bookstore in a diverse and evolving market. They will be expected to utilize industry best practices and metrics to improve performance.

The General Manager creates a team atmosphere among the staff and student employees, utilizing a collaborative management approach encouraging contributions from all employees toward organizational goals, and the employees’ growth and development. The General Manager practices a strong and clear communication style that engages employees and allows for transparent decision-making, while ensuring that there are open and continuous feedback and assessment opportunities.

Primary Responsibilities and Tasks:

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the Bookstore by keeping abreast of industry trends and innovations, implementing enhancements and new initiatives, and incorporating the store’s mission and service philosophy into store policies, operations and management.
- Integrate the bookstore’s services with partners on campus in ways that support the University’s strategic plan in areas such as enrollment, student retention and success, equity, inclusion, diversity, interdisciplinary approaches, and sustainable practices.
- Actively partner with faculty and technology services to adopt methods and best practices in providing course materials and related goods and services for students’ academic success and development.
- Maintain an operation that is sensitive to the unique cultural aspects of a university environment and that relates and responds to a diverse and inclusive campus.
- Monitor industry trends and store performance utilizing system data and feedback mechanisms.
• Produce annual reports including benchmarking, trend and management analysis. Utilize the information for transparent communication and decision-making.
• Communicate service and fiscal results to the campus community.
• Participate in and utilize resources of regional and national college store professional organizations to keep abreast of legislative trends and industry best practices.
• Establish positive rapport and implement mechanisms for effective communication with faculty and responsiveness to academic needs.
• Collaborate with other campus departments to effectively integrate services to enhance business sustainability, support student success, and serve campus needs.
• Actively utilize the partnership with the Associated Students to solicit feedback and gather input on store recommendations regarding policies and goals, and implement mechanisms for student support and promotion of the store.

PERSONNEL LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE 30%

• Provide leadership and direction to store personnel, reinforcing and integrating the store mission and responsibility to the campus community into employee roles.
• Recruit, hire, train, mentor/coach, and set goals and expectations for staff and student employees to ensure excellent customer service, continuous improvement and business efficiency.
• Develop coaching and mentoring relationships with the staff leadership team and between the leadership team and their direct reports to support the professional growth of all staff and student employees.
• Model and support a team approach with partners across campus and within the store to create positive synergy toward common goals.
• Using a collaborative management approach, create a responsive organizational structure whereby staff and student employees freely contribute to store goals, and transparent communication, analysis, feedback and assessment processes inform management decisions.
• Develop and maintain an effective, efficient staffing structure. Ensure sufficient personnel resources for the store to effectively position itself and achieve its objectives, including cyclic planning for temporary staff and student employment during peak workloads.
• Clearly articulate roles and responsibilities among staff, ensuring fairness and accountability in personnel management. Perform regularly scheduled performance reviews and recognize accomplishments.
• Foster professional development by encouraging connection with University resources and professional organizations. Support opportunities for cultural competency education.
• Consult advisory focus groups or other mechanisms for obtaining constituent feedback and input for the store and the employee team.
• Ensure institutional policies and procedures are understood and followed. Regularly review and update internal departmental policies and practices with the staff team, using them to meet store operational philosophy and goals.

RETAIL MANAGEMENT & PRODUCT SOURCING 20%

• Develop operational policies and procedures to ensure responsible use of resources while providing a high level of service and responsiveness to campus needs in a constantly changing environment.
• Leverage current business technologies, such as accounting systems, point-of-sale systems, inventory management systems, text and trade ordering systems, website and e-commerce, to gather information and inform decision-making.
• Keep abreast of changes in the college store industry, evaluating products, services and new technologies for potential adoption and use (e.g. digital delivery, custom publishing, e-books, print-on-demand, inclusive access).
• Evaluate the store’s product mix and dedicated resources. Develop merchandising and inventory management methods, ensuring fresh product selection and responsiveness to customer demand.
• Build relationships with faculty partners to further integrate the Bookstore as a resource for course material selections and format options.
• Work closely with colleagues in the division and across campus to provide coordinated services that support student success.
• Engage external stakeholders such as employers, alums and parents to promote school identity and create opportunities for support and connections.

FISCAL/ASSET MANAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT 15%

• Continually implement fiscally responsible business practices to ensure effective use of resources.
• Monitor industry trends, analyze fiscal and service results, and perform assessments, benchmarking and ratio analysis, ensuring all stakeholders are involved in the process.
• Forecast sales and expenses, develop annual and long-range budgets, develop departmental sales and expense expectations. Monitor results and make timely adjustments.
• Set and monitor inventory levels, maintain appropriate levels of reserves, and plan for ongoing maintenance of the facility and operating systems.
• Ensure relevant policies, laws and regulations are followed.
• Be actively involved in physical inventory, systems controls and internal/external audit processes. Continually train staff and develop the store’s capacity to deter theft and manage shrinkage.
• Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing and continuous assessment activities that integrates strategic planning.

MARKETING, PROMOTIONS AND CAMPUS OUTREACH/COLLABORATION 10%

• Continually develop strategic service, marketing and promotional objectives that position the store competitively, reinforce brand identity and secure a market niche.
• Incorporate a strategic direction into all aspects of store operations and communication, creating coherent, multi-layered messaging, in order to enhance the service experience and encourage loyalty and satisfaction.
• Serve as a proactive administrative liaison with departments across campus to develop ways in which the Bookstore can enhance the academic success, retention and personal development of students. Partner with departments such as Associated Students, Athletics, New Student Services, University Residences, Alumni and Foundation to increase sales and promote school tradition, community and pride.
• Offer special programs and events that foster goodwill within the campus community and with all customers (e.g. book signings, commencements, listservs, and sales at athletic games).
• Maintain positive, collaborative working relationships with the Associated Students Board, Faculty Senate, and various other constituent representatives.
• Plan effective use of store floor space, allocating square footage and placement of product lines in keeping with store mission and business goals, merchandising to take advantage of seasonal opportunities.
• Lead staff efforts to cross-merchandise, rotate and coordinate visual displays and promotions.

Qualifications:

Required:

• Bachelor’s degree.
• Minimum of 5 years of experience in management of a retail operation including supervision of full-time staff at the scope of Assistant Manager level or higher.
• Demonstrated ability to lead, organize, motivate, develop, recognize, and set goals for staff in a collaborative team environment and to lead personnel through change.
• Demonstrated well-rounded experiences working effectively in highly diverse and inclusive environments.
• Experience with POS, inventory management and social media integration with a demonstrated ability to evaluate and adopt new methods and technologies that drive results.
• Proven ability to forge positive, collaborative relationships with various constituencies, create a positive customer service environment, and to be responsive to a diverse set of needs within a campus community.
• Knowledge of current college store industry trends and market initiatives.
• Demonstrated ability to collect & utilize relevant data and to analyze financial information for assessment & decision-making in order to achieve tangible results and measure progress toward goals.
• Strong oral and written communication skills with effective application in a leadership role.

Preferred:

• Business related bachelor’s degree, master’s degree or other relevant advanced certification.
• Three years of management experience within the college store or closely related industry. Management of a unit within a larger store is acceptable, but must include sufficient personnel supervision and similarly broad store leadership experience.
• Retail and/or college store industry training, development or industry certification. Involvement in college store industry related professional organizations.
• Knowledge and experience in college or university course material acquisition and management including multiple formats, sourcing, price points and related issues.
• Experience with college store ERP software and associated online sales solutions.
• Skills and experience that demonstrates a proactive, creative, and market-responsive approach.