



The newly revised
Choice Reviews Online
is here!

- Comprehensive content
- Improved interface
- Enhanced search capabilities
- More personalization
- More than 115,000 searchable reviews
- Web exclusives

For more
information visit
the *Choice*
booth (#2646)
at BookExpo
America in
New York City
June 1 - 3, 2007

CHOICE
CURRENT REVIEWS FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

www.cro2info.org

U.S. College Book Price Information, 2006

BY FREDERICK C. LYNDEN

This 2006 U.S. College Book Price Index updates last year's compilation, which covered 2002 to 2005 (CH, Jun'06). For 2006, the overall average price for books in the Humanities, Sciences, and Social & Behavioral Sciences (including reference books) was \$62.15, a 3% increase over the average 2005 price of \$60.33. Reference books continued to have the highest average price at \$136.85 and the highest percentage increase over the previous year, nearly 11%. Without reference books included, the average 2006 book price was \$56.24 or a 3.3% increase over the average 2005 price of \$54.43.

Data for the index was compiled from 6,315 reviews of books published in *Choice* during 2006; expensive titles (\$500 or more) were omitted from the analysis, thus the total number of titles reported is smaller. As with the "North American Academic Books: Average Prices and Price Indexes" data, which appear annually in *The Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information*, this index includes some paperback prices; as a result, the average price of books is less than if only hardcover books were included.

Table A reports the number of titles, dollar amounts, percentages, and average price for books in each *Choice* subject category for 2006. The percentage of titles and total cost for each broad subject category remain fairly consistent each year.

Table B, "U.S. College Books: Average Prices and Price Indexes," contains average price and indexing information for the years 2004 through

2006 (index base year of 1989), and also the percentage change between 2005 and 2006. The average 2006 price for Humanities titles increased by 5.2% over the previous year. The average price for Science & Technology titles increased less than one percent (.93), whereas the price for Social & Behavioral Sciences titles increased by 4%. Since 1989 there has been an overall book price increase of 53.3% when reference books are included.

Calculated separately, reference books showed a 10.6% increase over the previous year (2005). There has been a steady increase in the prices of reference books, and since 1989, a 224% increase in the average price. The decline in the number of print reference books published in recent years may be a factor in the higher percentage increase.

This year there are no appendixes listing data for nonbook and higher priced titles, which are excluded from the index. The author will supply this information upon request.

These indexes and the accompanying information have been prepared under the sponsorship of the Library Materials Price Index Editorial Board of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, American Library Association. This price index will also appear in the 2007 edition of *The Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information*.

Questions should be addressed to the author.
Frederick Lynden, Brown University, Senior Scholarly Resources Librarian, Box A, Rockefeller Library, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912 USA
Frederick_Lynden@Brown.edu

TABLE A

CHOICE STUDY
US College Book Prices

Volume 43, #5 — Volume 44, #4 — January 2006 - December 2006

Subject	# of Titles	% of Total Titles	Dollar Amount	% of Total \$ Amount	Av. Price Per Title
HUMANITIES	63	1.09%	\$3,493.40	1.07%	\$55.45
Art & Architecture	155	2.67%	8,255.24	2.53%	53.26
<i>Fine Arts</i>	182	3.14%	10,643.17	3.26%	58.48
<i>Architecture</i>	81	1.40%	4,380.00	1.34%	54.07
<i>Photography</i>	50	0.86%	2,516.95	0.77%	50.34
Communication	77	1.33%	3,928.15	1.20%	51.01
Language & Literature	71	1.22%	4,459.70	1.37%	62.81
<i>African & Middle Eastern</i>	15	0.26%	842.75	0.26%	56.18
<i>Asian & Oceanian</i>	26	0.45%	1,461.35	0.45%	56.21
<i>Classical</i>	29	0.50%	1,999.15	0.61%	68.94
<i>English & American</i>	424	7.32%	24,319.24	7.46%	57.36
<i>Germanic</i>	23	0.40%	1,494.80	0.46%	64.99
<i>Romance</i>	70	1.21%	3,982.50	1.22%	56.89
<i>Slavic</i>	15	0.26%	644.70	0.20%	42.98
Performing Arts	18	0.31%	1,283.60	0.39%	71.31
<i>Film</i>	118	2.04%	6,136.40	1.88%	52.00
<i>Music</i>	156	2.69%	7,647.67	2.35%	49.02
<i>Theater & Dance</i>	38	0.66%	2,189.60	0.67%	57.62
Philosophy	164	2.83%	9,862.80	3.03%	60.14
Religion	200	3.45%	9,294.06	2.85%	46.47
TOTAL HUMANITIES	1,975	34.08%	\$108,835.23	33.39%	\$55.11
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	57	0.98%	\$2,516.39	0.77%	\$44.15
History of Science & Technology	112	1.93%	4,598.70	1.41%	41.06
Astronautics & Astronomy	50	0.86%	2,728.10	0.84%	54.56
Biology	116	2.00%	8,079.53	2.48%	69.65
<i>Botany</i>	54	0.93%	3,945.30	1.21%	73.06
<i>Zoology</i>	71	1.22%	4,697.10	1.44%	66.16
Chemistry	60	1.04%	6,633.05	2.03%	110.55
Earth Science	46	0.79%	2,812.89	0.86%	61.15
Engineering	96	1.66%	10,434.80	3.20%	108.70
Health Sciences	122	2.10%	6,977.65	2.14%	57.19
Information & Computer Science	43	0.74%	3,057.18	0.94%	71.10
Mathematics	93	1.60%	6,593.26	2.02%	70.90
Physics	72	1.24%	4,891.30	1.50%	67.93
Sports & Physical Education	54	0.93%	2,180.80	0.67%	40.39
TOTAL SCIENCES	1,046	18.05%	\$70,146.05	21.52%	\$67.06
SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES	103	1.78%	\$5,148.19	1.58%	\$49.98
Anthropology	130	2.24%	7,480.90	2.29%	57.55
Business, Management & Labor	139	2.40%	6,740.35	2.07%	48.49
Economics	239	4.12%	13,900.19	4.26%	58.16
Education	169	2.92%	9,045.14	2.77%	53.52
History, Geography & Area Studies	137	2.36%	7,533.24	2.31%	54.99
<i>Africa</i>	36	0.62%	2,062.60	0.63%	57.29
<i>Ancient History</i>	47	0.81%	3,321.10	1.02%	70.66
<i>Asia & Oceania</i>	81	1.40%	4,347.14	1.33%	53.67
<i>Central & Eastern Europe</i>	53	0.91%	2,738.62	0.84%	51.67
<i>Latin America & the Caribbean</i>	61	1.05%	3,426.40	1.05%	56.17
<i>Middle East & North Africa</i>	37	0.64%	1,917.75	0.59%	51.83
<i>North America</i>	396	6.83%	16,040.33	4.92%	40.51
<i>United Kingdom</i>	73	1.26%	4,302.35	1.32%	58.94
<i>Western Europe</i>	141	2.43%	8,109.15	2.49%	57.51
Political Science	22	0.38%	1,058.50	0.32%	48.11
<i>Comparative Politics</i>	219	3.78%	12,877.31	3.95%	58.80
<i>International Relations</i>	157	2.71%	8,869.15	2.72%	56.49
<i>Political Theory</i>	57	0.98%	3,173.70	0.97%	55.68
<i>U.S. Politics</i>	158	2.73%	7,416.85	2.28%	46.94
Psychology	122	2.10%	7,198.20	2.21%	59.00
Sociology	198	3.42%	10,305.25	3.16%	52.05
TOTAL SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES	2,775	47.88%	\$147,012.41	45.10%	\$52.98
TOTAL HUMANITIES, SCIENCES, & SOCIAL SCIENCES (without Reference)	5,796	100.00%	\$325,993.69	100.00%	\$56.24
REFERENCE					
General	35		\$3,228.70		\$92.25
Humanities	152		20,034.26		131.80
Science & Technology	73		10,767.49		147.50
Social & Behavioral Sciences	198		28,648.95		144.69
TOTAL REFERENCE	458		\$62,679.40		\$136.85
GRAND TOTAL (includes Reference)	6,254		\$388,673.09		\$62.15

Table B
U.S. College Books: Average Prices and Price Indexes 1989, 2004-2006
(Index Base for all years; 1989=100)

Subject	1989				2004				2005				2006			
	#Titles	Price	Titles	Av. Price	Indexed to 1989	Indexed to 2003	#Titles	Av. Price	Indexed to 1989	Indexed to 2004	#Titles	Av. Price	Indexed to 1989	Indexed to 2005	Indexed to 2006	% Change 2005-2006
GENERAL	19	\$40.19														
HUMANITIES	21	\$32.33	50	\$51.18	158.30	101.87	64	\$49.04	151.69	95.82	63	\$55.45	171.51	113.07	113.07	13.1
Art & Architecture	276	55.56	160	53.22	95.79	101.47	145	52.26	94.06	98.20	155	53.26	95.86	101.91	101.91	1.9
<i>Fine Arts (2)</i>			152	59.81		105.11	167	58.85		98.39	182	58.48	99.37	99.37	99.37	-0.6
<i>Architecture (2)</i>			86	57.14		93.43	83	54.62		95.59	81	54.07	98.99	98.99	98.99	-1.0
<i>Photography</i>	24	44.11	38	45.00	102.02	86.54	31	57.24	129.77	127.20	50	50.34	114.12	87.95	87.95	-12.1
Communication	42	32.70	78	53.40	163.30	103.35	99	50.74	155.17	95.02	77	51.01	155.99	100.53	100.53	0.5
Language & Literature	110	35.17	98	60.14	171.00	107.47	86	56.85	161.64	94.53	71	62.81	178.59	110.48	110.48	10.5
<i>African & Middle Eastern (3)</i>			16	53.52		91.30	19	57.69		107.79	15	56.18	97.38	97.38	97.38	-2.6
<i>Asian & Oceanian (3)</i>			30	50.54		106.42	17	44.17		87.40	26	56.21	127.26	127.26	127.26	27.3
<i>Classical</i>	75	43.07	24	61.97	143.88	106.06	31	57.26	132.95	92.40	29	68.94	160.07	120.40	120.40	20.4
<i>English & American</i>	547	30.27	419	52.14	172.25	97.60	418	53.92	178.13	103.41	424	57.36	189.49	106.38	106.38	6.4
<i>Germanic</i>	38	32.18	28	57.01	177.16	106.46	38	63.44	197.14	111.28	23	64.99	201.96	102.44	102.44	2.4
<i>Romance</i>	97	30.30	73	52.18	172.21	101.05	76	60.10	198.35	115.18	70	56.89	187.76	94.66	94.66	-5.3
<i>Slavic</i>	41	27.92	14	48.15	172.46	98.65	15	44.85	160.64	93.15	15	42.98	153.94	95.83	95.83	-4.2
<i>Other</i>	63	25.09														
Performing Arts	20	29.41	22	38.81	131.96	98.60	22	35.10	119.35	90.44	18	71.31	242.47	203.16	203.16	103.2
<i>Film</i>	82	33.00	98	52.63	159.48	101.29	109	43.95	133.18	83.51	118	52.00	157.58	118.32	118.32	18.3
<i>Music</i>	156	35.34	166	55.79	157.87	104.36	140	52.15	147.57	93.48	156	49.02	138.71	94.00	94.00	-6.0
<i>Theater & Dance (4)</i>	58	34.18	60	56.61	165.62	117.59	51	56.42	165.07	99.66	38	57.62	168.58	102.13	102.13	2.1
Philosophy	185	37.25	182	49.91	133.99	99.70	178	49.01	131.57	98.20	164	60.13	161.42	122.69	122.69	22.7
Religion	174	33.49	267	45.33	135.35	110.67	251	46.95	140.19	103.57	200	46.47	138.76	98.98	98.98	-1.0
TOTAL HUMANITIES (5)	2,009	\$36.09	2,061	\$52.64	145.86	102.23	2,040	\$52.37	145.11	99.49	1,975	\$55.11	152.70	105.23	105.23	5.2
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	99	\$46.90	57	\$39.38	83.97	90.72	51	\$46.65	99.47	118.46	57	\$44.15	94.14	94.64	94.64	-5.4
History of Science & Technology	74	40.56	128	43.11	106.29	100.40	118	45.53	112.25	105.61	112	41.06	101.23	90.18	90.18	-9.8
Astronautics & Astronomy	22	50.56	60	56.10	110.96	162.42	43	50.93	100.73	90.78	50	54.56	107.91	107.13	107.13	7.1
Biology	97	51.01	152	61.17	119.92	99.35	142	65.61	128.62	107.26	116	69.65	136.54	106.16	106.16	6.2
<i>Botany</i>	29	63.91	54	58.88	92.13	110.57	63	57.47	89.92	97.61	54	73.06	114.32	127.13	127.13	27.1
<i>Zoology</i>	53	49.21	79	66.35	134.83	115.31	97	65.55	133.20	98.79	71	66.16	134.44	100.93	100.93	0.9
Chemistry	21	70.76	65	114.08	161.22	112.63	73	121.84	172.19	106.80	60	110.55	156.23	90.73	90.73	-9.3
Earth Science	34	79.44	57	66.75	84.03	115.25	52	82.73	104.14	123.94	46	61.15	76.98	73.92	73.92	-26.1
Engineering	87	66.74	76	92.90	139.20	133.42	92	108.88	163.14	117.20	96	108.70	162.87	99.83	99.83	-0.2
Health Sciences	94	34.91	142	46.12	132.11	99.76	136	45.91	131.51	99.54	122	57.19	163.82	124.57	124.57	24.6
Information & Computer Science	70	40.35	57	62.36	154.55	113.05	65	63.16	156.53	101.28	43	71.10	176.21	112.57	112.57	12.6
Mathematics	60	48.53	95	65.70	135.38	119.67	90	73.39	151.23	111.70	93	70.90	146.10	96.61	96.61	-3.4
Physics	22	43.94	49	77.26	175.83	147.25	63	73.85	168.07	95.59	72	67.93	154.60	91.98	91.98	-8.0
Sports & Physical Education	18	27.46	61	43.63	158.89	109.08	65	36.04	131.25	82.60	54	40.39	147.09	112.07	112.07	12.1
TOTAL SCIENCE	780	\$49.54	1,132	\$61.77	124.69	113.88	1,150	\$66.44	134.11	107.56	1,046	\$67.06	135.37	100.93	100.93	0.9

SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES	92	\$37.09	123	\$48.01	129.44	97.72	119	\$50.19	135.32	104.54	103	\$49.98	134.75	99.58	-0.4
Anthropology	96	39.94	109	54.45	136.33	97.53	132	56.13	140.54	103.09	130	57.11	142.99	101.75	1.7
Business, Management & Labor	145	35.72	129	44.69	125.11	100.79	144	51.75	144.88	115.80	139	48.49	135.75	93.70	-6.3
Economics	332	40.75	249	52.38	128.54	96.68	228	56.85	139.51	108.53	239	58.16	142.72	102.30	2.3
Education	71	34.50	153	45.27	131.22	95.23	175	49.02	142.09	108.28	169	53.52	155.13	109.18	9.2
History, Geography & Area Studies	59	42.10	118	53.04	125.99	108.02	108	46.11	109.52	86.93	137	54.99	130.62	119.26	19.3
Africa	44	34.85	31	61.57	176.67	105.05	33	50.74	145.60	82.41	36	57.29	164.39	112.91	12.9
Ancient History			48	65.49		103.23	45	60.48		92.35	47	70.66		116.83	16.8
Asia & Oceania	76	34.75	97	53.90	155.11	109.51	74	56.91	163.77	105.58	81	53.67	154.45	94.31	-5.7
Central & Eastern Europe (6)			62	53.84		105.82	57	51.89		96.38	53	51.67		99.58	-0.4
Latin America & the Caribbean	42	37.23	45	51.34	137.90	95.37	69	52.20	140.21	101.68	61	56.17	150.87	107.61	7.6
Middle East & North Africa	30	36.32	40	52.00	143.17	101.50	45	50.22	138.27	96.58	37	51.83	142.70	103.21	3.2
North America	349	30.56	413	42.32	138.48	98.58	380	40.79	133.48	96.38	396	40.51	132.56	99.31	-0.7
United Kingdom (6)			99	57.01		107.99	82	52.11		91.41	73	58.14		111.57	11.6
Western Europe (6)	287	42.08	127	52.74	125.33	101.93	142	58.09	138.05	110.14	141	57.51	136.67	99.00	-1.0
Political Science	28	33.56	22	63.77	190.02	110.18	25	52.31	155.87	82.03	22	48.11	143.36	91.97	-8.0
Comparative Politics (7)	236	37.82	193	55.86	147.70	100.99	189	57.10	150.98	102.22	219	58.80	155.47	102.98	3.0
International Relations (7)	207	35.74	182	50.43	141.10	95.35	155	50.08	140.12	99.31	157	56.49	158.06	112.80	12.8
Political Theory (7)	59	37.76	60	55.48	146.93	111.74	70	48.71	129.00	87.80	57	55.68	147.46	114.31	14.3
U.S. Politics (7)	212	29.37	170	46.54	158.46	100.63	178	44.80	152.54	96.26	158	48.94	166.63	109.24	9.2
Psychology	179	36.36	152	55.37	152.28	101.71	116	54.47	149.81	98.37	122	59.00	162.27	108.32	8.3
Sociology	178	36.36	167	51.56	141.80	105.83	182	52.76	145.10	102.33	198	52.05	143.15	98.65	-1.3
TOTAL SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES	2,722	\$36.43	2,789	\$50.66	139.06	100.64	2,748	\$50.94	139.83	100.55	2,775	\$52.98	145.43	104.00	4.0
TOTAL GENERAL, HUMANITIES, SCIENCE, SOCIAL SCIENCES	5,530	\$38.16	5,982	\$53.45	140.07	103.95	5,938	\$54.43	142.64	101.83	5,796	\$56.24	147.38	103.33	3.3
REFERENCE	636	\$61.02													
General (8)			57	\$86.37		115.22	52	\$86.72		100.41	35	\$92.25		106.38	6.4
Humanities (8)			183	94.42		90.83	137	125.31		132.72	152	131.80		105.18	5.2
Science & Technology (8)			128	112.45		92.44	97	127.71		113.57	73	147.50		115.50	15.5
Social & Behavioral Sciences (8)			270	134.70		112.99	267	128.65		95.51	198	144.69		112.47	12.5
TOTAL REFERENCE	636	\$61.02	638	\$114.36	187.41	104.50	553	\$123.72	202.75	108.18	458	\$136.85	224.27	110.61	10.6
GRAND TOTAL (incl. Reference)	6,166	\$40.52	6,620	\$59.32	146.40	104.38	6,491	\$60.33	148.89	101.70	6,254	\$62.15	153.38	103.02	3.0

(1) General category no longer appearing after 1999.

(2) Began appearing after 1999.

(3) Began appearing as separate sections in September 1995.

(4) Separate sections for Theater and Dance combined in September 1995.

(5) 1983 totals include Linguistics (incorporated into Language & Literature in 1985), Non-European/Other (replaced by African & Middle Eastern and Asian & Oceanian in September 1995), and Europe (replaced by Central & Eastern Europe, United Kingdom and Western Europe in July 1997).

(6) Began appearing as separate sections, replacing Europe, in July 1997.

(7) Began appearing as a separate sections in March 1988.

(8) Began appearing as separate sections in July 1997.