

University Library Committee Annual Report 2001-2002

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The University Library Committee (ULC) reviews, consults on, advises, plans for, and receives reports and recommendations on the performance of library services, automation, budget, administrative structure, and allocation of resources. Responsibility for keeping the faculty informed of major issues and for creating opportunities for the faculty to discuss priorities also falls to the committee. (see *Faculty Policies and Procedures* 6.46.B)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

This year the ULC devoted its attention to positioning the libraries to deal effectively with several major changes of importance to the future of the library system for the campus. Primary concerns are the lack of investment in acquisitions and maintenance of the collections. The ULC continues to plan and implement strategies for managing library spaces and collections. The ULC encourages increased participation by faculty in these issues and welcomes input from faculty members.

The ULC addressed the following issues during this academic year:

- 1) **Flat budget for acquisitions:** The University Library Committee recognizes the difficult budget situation confronting the university and gratefully acknowledges the decision of the UW-Madison administration to shelter campus libraries from budget cuts during the next fiscal year. However, the ULC continues to worry about the erosion of UW-Madison Libraries' ability to acquire the library materials needed to support research and advanced study. The ULC urges the university administration to explore alternatives to state funding of library acquisitions and consider other funding models to provide a sustainable annual investment in library budget for collections.
- 2) **Wisconsin Historical Society:** Proposed budget and staff cuts in the WHS library will drastically weaken one of the nation's greatest North American history research libraries and its collections. If implemented, the effect of the budget reduction will be to transfer substantial costs to the UW-Madison library system and decimate the acquisition of scholarly materials that are heavily used by UW faculty and students.
- 3) **Journal cancellation project:** The UW-System Libraries completed a coordinated project to reduce duplicate journal subscriptions while maintaining the overall strength of the system wide journal holdings. The elimination of over \$500,000 in subscriptions was necessary because the UW Libraries could not continue all current journal subscriptions without an increase in the library acquisitions budget. Another journal cancellation project will be undertaken in FY 2002-2003.
- 4) **Recommended faculty response to journal pricing trends:** Faculty members are urged to use their influence in professional societies to moderate the increasing cost of scholarly publications and to redirect their research publishing to journals and publishers that offer access to information at affordable costs.
- 5) **Identification and protection of "medium-rare" library materials:** The ULC reviewed the need to provide security and conservation of valuable library materials published in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Books published during this era are often irreplaceable. The paper is sometimes brittle with age and must be carefully handled to avoid damage. Also, the high market value of maps and illustrations in older books leaves these scholarly resources increasingly vulnerable to theft and mutilation. The ULC recommends that the campus libraries consider management policies to improve the security and conservation of these resources.
- 6) **Collaborative digital publishing projects:** Supported by additional funding from the UW System administration, UW-Madison Libraries are developing a digital repository for research and instructional materials. The ULC discussed the growing number of opportunities for faculty and academic units to collaborate in the creation of digital resources of value to faculty and students.

- 7) **Expanded space for collections:** Growing physical collections of books and journals remain essential for research in many disciplines, especially in the humanities. The ULC continues to view the unresolved issue of planned expansion space for library collections as a high priority for the university.
- 8) **Enhancing User Space and Access:** The libraries continue to search out current spaces that can be remodeled to support the evolving needs of users. The committee recognizes this need as central to future planning for the libraries.

NEED TO INVEST IN THE LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS BUDGET

A flat budget for UW-Madison library acquisitions does more than create inconvenience for scholars and limit student access to current information. It is beginning to put UW-Madison academic programs at a competitive disadvantage and jeopardize our high institutional reputation. Representing diverse fields and disciplines, the members of University Library Committee are in complete agreement that campus libraries are essential to the excellence of university teaching and research programs. There is a direct relationship between the excellence of the university programs and the collections and services of the libraries that support them.

There are two stark illustrations of this relationship. First, the American Bar Associate (ABA) Accreditation Committee report, November 2001, expressed concern that “the UW-Madison Law School does not have sufficient resources or a collection to support the Law School’s teaching and research needs.” The ULC is also concerned that the acquisitions budget of the UW Law Library is substantially less than that of peer institutions and that deficiencies in the law collections significantly limit the ability to serve the needs of the university. The UW-Madison Law Library is in last place among Big Ten/CIC law libraries for acquisitions spending, and ranks 87th of 184 accredited law schools in the United States law schools in expenditures on collections.

The following web sites provide law library budget detail:

http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/News/ULC/CIC_ARL_Materials_Expenditures.htm

http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/News/ULC/ARL_Materials_Expenditures.htm

Second, the Wisconsin Historical Society Library is the primary library for North American history resources for the entire UW System. The proposed staff and budget cuts at WHS (detailed below) will cause the acquisitions program for these materials to collapse. Within the next few years the WHS library may cease to function adequately to support university-level research and teaching.

Though less drastic than the situations in law and history, all UW-Madison academic programs have witnessed the declining ability of campus libraries to maintain research quality collections. The UW-Madison library expenditures for collections increased at an average annual rate of 3.5% during the 1990s. This rate of budget growth was well below the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) average of 6% (6.3 for the CIC libraries). At the beginning of the decade the UW-Madison collection budget was \$1.1 million higher than the CIC average, and by the end of the 1990s it was \$1.6 million below the average. UW-Madison Libraries rank 31st among ARL member libraries in total collection expenditures, 33rd in serials expenditures, and 41st in monograph expenditures. Based on the current budget outlook Wisconsin will drop ten more places in ARL ranking during the next two years. In comparison to other Big Ten/CIC libraries Wisconsin has dropped from the top quartile to the bottom quartile in collection expenditures over the last ten years (only Michigan State and Purdue are now lower).

If the collection budget remains flat during fiscal year 2002-2003, the UW-Madison Libraries will once again participate in a journal cancellation exercise that will eliminate approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000 in subscriptions. The libraries will cooperate with other UW System libraries to reduce the number of databases that have been licensed system-wide for access to all faculty and students. The cuts are necessary because of the 8% increase in the price of journals and databases in the next fiscal year.

All the UW-Madison Libraries are increasingly dependent on gifts, endowments, and private fund-raising to support library acquisitions. They continue to collaborate with other universities and institutions in cooperative purchasing and licensing of resources.

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

Beginning next fiscal year the Wisconsin Historical Society plans to implement deep cuts in the library and archives. As currently proposed in planning documents distributed by the WHS administration, the WHS library and archives will lose ten staff positions (9.5 FTE, approximately 20% of total staff) and a substantial portion of its state-funded operating budget (eliminating an estimated 30% to 50% of the library acquisitions budget). The total loss in base funding (as much as \$600,000) will imperil the library's ability to continue functioning as a research library for American History and related disciplines.

While the ULC recognizes that all state agencies have been required to make substantial budget reductions to contribute to balancing the state's budget, the share of the cuts allocated to WHS library is proportionately large in comparison to other WHS programs. The library/archives represent one-quarter of the GPR budget of the Society, but half the cuts will be taken from library and archives programs. Of particular concern to university users of the WHS library is the prospect of drastically reduced acquisition of journals and newspapers and the all but certain demise of the regional depository program for U.S. government documents.

The effect of the WHS budget cuts will inevitably transfer some costs for American history research materials to the UW-Madison Libraries. However, the scale of the cuts is so large that no amount of good will or cooperation on the part of the UW-Madison Libraries will mitigate for the loss of resources and services to the scholars and student users of the WHS library. Other university programs with unmet needs for library support cannot be expected to impoverish their users to rescue the WHS library.

The condition of the WHS library collections has been a matter of concern to historians and scholars for quite some time. The WHS library is filled so far beyond capacity that materials are at risk of misplacement and damage. It is unlikely that it will ever be possible for the library to address the accumulated backlog of processing and microfilming. The WHS can no longer accept even the most distinguished and valuable additions to the collection because it does not have a place to store them. Given the very real prospect of additional state budget cuts in the future, the university and the Wisconsin Historical Society must face the reality that the library will collapse unless a strategy can be found to establish a new relationship between the University and the Society.

The University Library Committee supports the exploration of an understanding with the Wisconsin Historical Society that would transfer greater authority and responsibility for managing the WHS library to the UW-Madison library system.

JOURNAL CANCELLATION PROJECT

During the last fiscal year library staff coordinated and implemented cooperative efforts between UW-Madison and UW-System libraries - most notably UW-Milwaukee - to cancel journal subscriptions. With a zero percent budget increase, annual subscription increases, and new journals to purchase, the libraries were required to increase collaborative efforts to eliminate duplicate titles and to maximize the overall strength and efficiency of the combined collections. At the completion of this project, proposed journal cuts across UW System libraries totaled more than \$500,000.

From 1986-1999 the unit cost of journals rose more than 207% and expenditures on journals rose more than 170%. Shifting from print to electronic access can be an effective cost management strategy; however, it must be noted that in some cases electronic journals are more expensive than print. Prices for electronic products have been increasing by as much as 9% annually. In spite of budgetary issues the libraries have continued to pursue convenient online access for high-demand/high-use journals. For example, the UW Libraries recently acquired a license for the online scientific journal *Nature*. This license provides a gateway to *Nature* and seven other *Nature* publications through MadCat.

The cancellation project coincided with the implementation of a document delivery system called Library Express. This service was established for all UW-Madison faculty, staff, and graduate students for the primary purpose of providing rapid access to articles from journals that have been canceled. The service includes articles in journals owned and also those not owned by campus libraries. Campus libraries also provide researchers with an electronic table of contents service for all types of journals.

Serial cancellations have become a fact of life for UW-Madison Libraries. It has resulted in a closer partnership among the UW libraries and with the wider community of academic libraries. In some cases, access to information for students and faculty has actually improved as result of system-wide licensing and faster delivery. The trend to greater cooperation among libraries has been successful, but the improvements in service and access cannot continue without additional investment in library collections and resources.

RECOMMENDED FACULTY RESPONSE TO PRICING TRENDS

The cost increases of scholarly and research journals, both print and electronic, are unrelenting. As long as commercial publishers continue to increase prices of journals and databases at three or four times the general rate of inflation, there is little hope that public universities will be able to provide the budget increases to match. Therefore the ULC strongly encourages faculty members who serve on editorial boards or referee journal articles to use their influence to moderate the cost of scholarly publishing by demanding a say in the marketing, licensing, and pricing practices of commercial publishers. Prior to submitting an article and signing over copyright to a commercial publisher faculty authors must consider the effect of high journal prices and restrictive licensing on the long-term visibility and accessibility of their work.

Faculty members should investigate and support new alternatives for disseminating knowledge. Many fields now have at least one peer-reviewed journal online that is fairly priced and focused on distribution rather than profit. Moreover, journals published by scholarly societies are often lower in cost. In turn the libraries will continue to pursue collaborative new approaches to managing the research literature created by the university community. The UW-Madison Libraries have cooperative relationships with other universities and information technology systems that can facilitate the creation of low-cost electronic publishing systems. More information on establishing alternative publishing models can be found at the following web site:

<http://www.arl.org/sparc/home/index.asp?page=0>

IDENTIFICATION AND PROTECTION OF “MEDIUM-RARE” MATERIALS

The category of “medium-rare” library materials is not precisely the same as the universe of nineteenth century publications, but many nineteenth century works qualify as “medium rare.” Increasingly, those in research libraries speak of the challenges posed by these “medium-rare” materials which exist in research library collections in large quantities. Such materials are not exactly rare, nor are they necessarily very old. They do not all seem to require full special-collections handling, although some are increasingly fragile, but they would all benefit from storage in spaces with appropriate (and consistent) temperature and relative humidity. Some are seen as especially vulnerable to theft or mutilation, often for their decorated trade bindings or illustrations. Collection policies of many special collections departments have long included a blanket provision for stack books dated before 1801 to be transferred automatically to special collections. The questions of where best to house, and how best to handle, nineteenth century imprints must now be addressed.

These works hold considerable interest for today’s scholars. The Modern Language Association *International Bibliography* classification of “English literature 1800-1899” listed 1,371 articles, books, and dissertations in its 1990 edition; in 2000 this number had increased to 1,821. By contrast the number of titles on 1700-1799 English literature increased from just 420 to 566 during this same period.

Collectors are also interested in many nineteenth century works, as demonstrated in the online catalog of books offered for sale by members of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America. In addition to the first editions of highly collectible authors and the ever-popular Civil War items, several hundred nineteenth century books are currently available at prices of \$5000 or more per title. Dealers in prints and engravings sometimes disbind whole nineteenth century volumes for the illustrations they contain, discard the text pages, and realize considerable profit for their trouble.

The preservation challenges, scholarly and market value, and sheer numbers of medium-rare materials present serious issues for library collection management and service policies. The ULC recommends that an auxiliary shelving facility with appropriate security and environmental controls and an applicable service model be established for some of the “medium-rare” nineteenth century materials in UW-Madison Libraries.

DIGITAL PUBLISHING PROJECTS

Over the past year UW-Madison Libraries have created numerous digital publishing projects utilizing a range of technical capabilities. The libraries are collaborating with faculty, other universities, and library supporters to create digital resources for research and instructional purposes. The focus has been primarily on building and strengthening the technical infrastructure to support access to the digital material. Some projects are supported by grants, others by external funding. The following is a selected list from approximately 35 such projects.

- 1) The Digital Library for Material Arts and Decorative Culture.
The Digital Library for the Decorative Arts and Material Culture collects electronic resources for study and research of the decorative arts, with a particular focus on Early America. Included are electronic texts and journals, image databases, and information on organizations, museums and research facilities. This project was made possible by the Chipstone Foundation and was created and is maintained at the University of Wisconsin Madison.
<http://decorativearts.library.wisc.edu/>

- 2) The James Joyce Scholars Collection.
This project was developed in collaboration with UW-Madison Professor David Hayman, one of the pioneers of Joyce scholarship. The selected works compiled in the James Joyce Scholars' Collection (JJSC) all share two characteristics: 1) all the books are currently out-of-print and 2) they are valuable, perhaps indispensable, to those who seek a more complete understanding and appreciation of the richness of James Joyce's literary works.
<http://libtext.library.wisc.edu/JoyceColl/index.html>

- 3) The Nordic Translation Series.
The Nordic Translation Series was published by the University of Wisconsin Press between 1965 and 1970. The series here contains eleven texts by nineteenth-and twentieth-century authors. The works were translated into English from their original languages, which include Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Finnish.
<http://libtext.library.wisc.edu/NordicTrans/>

- 4) The Meiklejohn Collection.
The Meiklejohn Collection currently provides access to two important works by noted philosopher and educator Alexander Meiklejohn. Meiklejohn was, among other things, the founder and director of the Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he pursued his vision of exploring innovative (and sometimes radical) approaches to teaching and learning.
<http://libtext.library.wisc.edu/Meiklejohn/>

- 5) Wisconsin Electronic Reader.
The Wisconsin Electronic Reader is a cooperative project of the University of Wisconsin General Library System and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in celebration of the sesquicentennial of Wisconsin statehood. The site contains stories, poems, letters, biographies, journals, and tidbits of Wisconsin history. It is profusely illustrated, and enjoys much use both within and outside the university
<http://www.library.wisc.edu/etext/WIReader/>

UW-Madison Libraries have begun exploring new publishing models that combine electronic and print-on-demand. Collaboration with the UW Press recently produced a print copy of *The Experimental College* (1932) by Alexander Meiklejohn. The libraries' imprint, Parallel Press, produced a print-on-demand copy of the out-of-print *First Draft Version of Finnegans Wake* by David Hayman, Evjue-Bascom Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at the UW-Madison.

EXPANDED SPACE FOR PHYSICAL COLLECTIONS

The ULC has advocated for the need to plan additional space for housing library collections in previous reports. The issue remains one of the most important challenges facing the university. Space for expanding library collections is a common concern of research university libraries and one that has been successfully addressed by other CIC libraries and our national peers. Unlike the intractable difficulties presented by the escalating cost of commercial journals, housing research library collections is relatively affordable and straightforward.

As indicated in previous committee reports, including that of 2000-2001, several campus libraries have reached full capacity and Memorial Library will reach that state in 2005 given the current rate of growth. Given the fact that physical library collections will continue to grow, even as electronic publishing expands, the need for significant additional space is urgent. The campus responded to this issue with an interim solution.

In early 2001 UW Archives shifted many of its collections at Steenbock Library into a new compact shelving facility in the basement. Campus Administration allocated the funding of \$391,000 for this project. Archives shelving capacity in Steenbock was more than doubled by this project. The old stack area vacated by Archives was then converted into a closed shelving facility for materials from science libraries on campus. The science librarians agreed to transfer selected low-use (typically older) books and journals from the most crowded libraries. After procedures for transferring, processing, and retrieving materials were developed, transfers to the facility began in June 2001. As of March 2002, the facility is about 70% full.

In previous reports ULC has recommended that Middleton Library be allocated for interim auxiliary storage. Planning has begun for the transfer of materials to auxiliary shelving facility.

ENHANCING USER SPACE AND ACCESS

Successful remodeling of recently opened space on the main floor of Memorial Library reinforces a current and long-term need for more interactive space for students within the library. Productive library use requires spaces that are efficient, environmentally comfortable, and conducive to the kinds of activities that current library technologies and services require. The libraries continue to search out existing spaces that can be remodeled to support such activities. The ULC recognizes this need as central to future planning for the libraries.

In an effort to continue the expansion of services for users, the libraries have been collaborating with DoIt to provide wireless computer services. Currently the Memorial Library InfoLab has 10 wireless computers. In addition, there are three access points in Memorial Library where patrons can use a wireless connection. The libraries will soon have laptop computers available for checkout. Other campus locations also offer a wireless connection such as Steenbock Library, Wendt Library, Grainger Hall, Union South, and Memorial Union.

FUTURE ISSUES

The most urgent issue that is rapidly moving from an issue of the future to one of the present is the issue of space. As indicated above, many campus libraries are at capacity and Memorial Library will reach capacity by 2005. The nature of an excellent library is that it is always growing and changing; in its physical collections and in its demand for services. The immediate implication will be that significant funding will need to be diverted because libraries have to constantly move and remove massive amounts of materials into different positions as new materials are accumulated and existing spaces reconfigured. The ULC suggests this situation can be avoided by developing plans for physical needs and acquiring campus support for the implementation of such plans. Despite the growth of electronic technologies, the strength and core of libraries will continue to be their print- and non-print collections (e.g. microfilm). Libraries will continue to require the physical facilities and equipment to accommodate the expansion of these collections.

The ULC has begun planning in two ways. First, campus libraries are participating in the planning and development of an East Campus Mall envisioned as an arts and humanities district where departments are concentrated, and buildings and services are ideally suited to meet modern space needs. The ULC sees this programmatic unity as an important long-term benefit to the campus. Second, the ULC has formed a subcommittee to work with campus officials and the UW Foundation to develop an appropriate planning process for library facilities for the future.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Elected Faculty (voting members)

Arnold Alanen (Landscape Architecture)
James Baughman (School of Journalism & Mass Communication)
Brenda Dingus (Physics)
Virginia Boyd (Environment, Textiles and Design), Chair
Christopher Kleinhenz (French and Italian)
Thomas C. Osborn (Agronomy)
Kenneth Potter (Civil & Environmental Engineering)
Eric Triplett (Agronomy)

Appointed Academic Staff (voting members)

Susan H. Hellstrom (Engineering)

Students (voting members)

Paul Friedman
Chetan Rao
George Tiser

Ex Officio (nonvoting members)

Phillip Braithwaite (Budget Planning and Analysis)
Casey Nagy (Office of the Provost/Office of the Chancellor)

Librarians (nonvoting members)

Steve Barkan (LCC Liaison) (Law Library)
Susan Barribeau (Electronic Resources Coordinator)
Ken Frazier (Director, General Library System)
Ken Rouse (Chemistry Library)