

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2009-10

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E. Lee,
Chair, Senate Library Committee

B. Benn
R. Chaudhry
A. Conacher
J. Dixon
L. Flynn
H. Hutchins
J. MacIsaac
J. Medd
P. Wiens

Secretary
M. C. Vandenburg

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Senate Library Committee has met regularly with the University Librarian and other members of the Library staff to receive reports and to provide advice on various aspects of the Library's policies and operations. Specific areas of focus for the committee in 2009-10 included (i) Library change process, (ii) a review of the preliminary analysis of the LibQual™ Lite survey of Queen's Library users in 2010, and (iii) discussion of the Library's annual budget, as required by the committee's terms of reference.

(I) LIBRARY CHANGE PROCESS

In response to projected multi-year budget reductions, the Library formed a Library Change Steering Group in April 2009 with a one year mandate to guide a comprehensive analysis of operations and services. This analysis was intended to inform the development of strategies to preserve the Library's core strengths while creating new efficiencies, keeping in mind the specific and varying needs of the University's diverse academic programs. The group developed the *Library 2012 Change Framework* in the summer of 2009 and shared this document with the Senate Library Committee and Library advisory committees in 2009-10. This document provided foundational principles and ideas to guide the change process.

A number of Task Groups were formed within the Library staff to explore various aspects of Library operations and services (Technical Services; Interlibrary/Loan Document Delivery; Collections Space; Information Services; Operations Review).

The groups were asked to provide recommendations for changes to the Library Change Steering Group by May 2010. In addition, an outside consultant was commissioned by the Library to provide advice on the processes and organizational structure needed to support efficient and effective access to information resources.

The Senate Library Committee received some submissions from a number of groups affiliated with specific libraries (Law, Education, Bracken Health Sciences). These expressed concerns about the possibility of continued consolidation of services resulting from the change process and the impact that this would have on the quality of library services in these locations.

It is anticipated that any recommendations for consolidation of libraries or other major restructuring would require broader review and input before final decisions are made. The Library Change Steering Group will develop a plan of action that will be brought forward to the Senate Library Committee and the Senate as the culmination of the change process, including areas for further exploration and consultation.

(II) USER SURVEY

A preliminary report of the 2010 data was presented with a comparison to the data from the 2007 user survey. Although this was only preliminary data one potentially troubling finding in light of the projected budget reduction and consequent further restructuring of Queen's Library was a decline in student satisfaction. While Queen's Library ratings are still relatively high in relation to other libraries, in comparison to the 2007 report both undergraduate and graduate students were more critical of service quality in 2010 with lower ratings in all three categories: library as a space, affect of service, and information control. There was a substantial increase in the number of graduate students who completed the survey in 2010 compared to 2007, representing 23% of the total graduate student population. Unlike the student ratings, overall faculty ratings of library services were generally higher in 2010 than in 2007. A full analysis of the data in comparison with other Canadian libraries will be available this summer and the Library will report the findings and resulting actions to the university community in the fall.

(III) BUDGET

Over the past few years the Library has undergone considerable reorganization to reduce costs. Through its participation in the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN), the national consortium that negotiates for electronic resources, the Library has been able to acquire resources at considerable savings (4 to 1 ratio).

The Library was asked to submit a budget plan for 2010-11 through 2012-13 that addresses a \$1 million operating budget reduction, on top of a \$400,000 reduction in 2009-10. Salaries are 93 percent the Library's operating budget and the non-salary savings that can be achieved are minimal, so budget reductions must come from salaries. There was a reduction of 14 positions in 2009-10. This is in addition to 16 positions closed since 2004-05. Between 1995-96 and May 2010, the Library's

staff has been reduced from 180 to 123 positions. According to current budget targets this will need to be further reduced by 13 positions in the next two years. By 2012-2013 the Library staff will have been decreased to 110 positions, a 40% drop in size from 180 positions in 1995-96. During the same time enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate level has increased; between 1995 and 2005 undergraduate enrollment increased 26% and graduate enrollment by 23%. Enrollment increases result in greater demands on Library services, yet there are now too few staff available to deliver those services.

Under the new budget model the Library is required to absorb annual salary and benefit increases. Unlike the Faculties the Library does not have income from tuition. Consequently, this funding model will mean that the Library has to cut its budget by 4% annually. This will mean further staff reductions and in essence the dismantling of the Library system over time.

Until now, Queen's University Library has been one of the best university libraries in Canada. It was the only one to receive an A+ in the 2010 Globe & Mail Canadian University Report and also received top marks for online resources, hours of operation, library holdings, service and study space. Given the current budget model, the university can expect this ranking to decline in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senate Library Committee notes that:

Budget

The Library has been in the forefront of units that have restructured and reduced costs. The Library serves all of the academic units yet lacks an equivalent mechanism for funding. A sustainable funding formula that recognizes the fundamental role of the Library in the academic mission of Queen's University needs to be developed.

Library Restructuring

We recommend that the University administration support the Library in developing a mechanism whereby faculty and students are consulted early in the process of any major restructuring so that they may provide meaningful feedback about proposed changes.