

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2011-2012

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Senate Library Committee Members 2011-12

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INTRODUCTION

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Senate Library Committee 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 2011-12 were (1) The University Academic Plan and the Library; (2) Library support for teaching and learning; (3) Library support for research and scholarship; (4) Copyright Advisory Office; (5) Library Restructuring Action Plan; and (6) Library budget. To address these matters, the Committee held meetings October 28, January 13, February 13, and April 20.

The Library has an important role in community building within the university and appreciates the support it receives from the community at large.

In July 2011, Provost B. Silverman announced the appointment, by the Principal, of Martha Whitehead as University Librarian for a five-year term, following the recommendation of the Principal's Advisory Committee, University Librarian. The Senate Library Committee extended its congratulations to the Librarian on her appointment.

(1) UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PLAN AND THE LIBRARY

The committee reviewed the Library's submission to the Senate Academic Planning Task Force. The committee considered this to be a very useful reference document. The committee participated in a project with Marketing & Communications to develop Library positioning in relation to the Academic Plan and the University's

brand idea, and reviewed the results of that project. Further discussion is expected on the role of the Queen's Learning Commons in relation to the broader role of the Library. The committee noted that the Library has extensive mechanisms for obtaining feedback from the communities it serves, such as advisory committees, departmental liaisons and user surveys.

(2) LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Committee emphasized the importance of programs for new undergraduates and graduate students and sees the Library as integral to academic and community life on campus. Support for teaching is very important and the Committee sees a major role for the Library in relation to increased emphasis on inquiry-based learning. The Queen's Learning Commons is an important part of this work. All campus libraries are of critical importance; staff are very directly involved in the academic programs of the disciplines they serve.

Queen's Learning Commons, in which peer mentoring plays a key role, brings together 5 areas: Learning Strategies Development, Information Technology Services, the Library, the Writing Centre and the Adaptive Technology Centre. A strategic planning exercise identified three areas for ongoing development: online services, unification of services, and expansion of resources. Librarians made use of Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes to work with their faculty colleagues on information literacy learning outcomes and assessment. The Committee made suggestions with respect to graduate student involvement in these processes and involvement of librarians in online resource development for courses.

(3) LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

Providing access to information resources in all formats is fundamental and ranges from ensuring access to top-tiered journals via the web to unique and rare materials found in Special Collections. Approximately 70% of the Library's acquisitions are now electronic materials, but this number varies across disciplines, with as much as 90% being electronic in the areas of science, technology and medicine. Access to electronic resources has been greatly improved, in part because the content is often created in digital format and disseminated digitally.

The Library participated in the development of the University's Strategic Research Plan and sought input on campus about how the Library can best support e-research at Queen's.

The Library, through the Canadian Association of Research Libraries and a wide range of initiatives, is active in addressing the challenges of data management in the absence of national strategy and infrastructure. With data doubling every nine months, the challenge of data curation is great. The Library sees its role as helping to create an infrastructure with services that support data access and preservation, building on connections between existing infrastructures at the local, regional and national level. The e-research strategy in development will identify potential opportunities and raise awareness.

(4) COPYRIGHT ADVISORY OFFICE

The Senate Library Committee received updates on the work of the new Copyright Advisory Office established in the summer of 2011. Situated in the Library and working closely with Queen's University Legal Counsel, the Copyright Advisory Office (CAO) is dedicated to educating, supporting and engaging Queen's faculty, students and staff in matters pertaining to the relationship between copyright, access to knowledge and learning, teaching, research and scholarly communications.

(5) LIBRARY RESTRUCTURING ACTION PLAN

An organizational review, led by the Library's Organizational Assessment Project Group and in consultation with Elspeth Murray, Queen's School of Business, was conducted in relation to the positions of the interim Division Heads and the Associate University Librarian. Minor changes to the organizational structure were recommended. Implementation of changes recommended in the 2010 Restructuring Action Plan continued, including preparations for development of a Library and Archives Master Plan. The Committee applauded the Library's high degree of effectiveness in providing access to information and integrated support for students.

(6) LIBRARY BUDGET

Budget allocations for 2012-2013 were the same as for 2011-2012, with all University units covering increases in salaries and benefits. (In response to its 2011-2012 budget proposal, the Library did receive additional base funding to hire a copyright specialist in that year.) Salaries and budgets make up 94% of the Library's budget. In the past, cuts have been managed through attrition and this strategy will continue as long as possible. There are limited carry-forward funds to fund early retirement incentives already committed over the next 5 years. The budget document includes goals and priorities based on the Restructuring Action Plan. The acquisitions budget continues to remain separate and has not received a base increase since 2007-08. Price increases for individual resources can be very high, and the average for the primary commercial publishers of academic journals was about 3% per annum, requiring judicious cuts in other acquisition areas.

In reviewing the Library's budget plan for 2012-13, the committee raised questions concerning the impact of staff reductions, the new budget model and procedures, budget in relation to digital and non-digital acquisitions, the relationship with the RMC Library, and the risks associated with external contracts. In response, the University Librarian made it clear that ongoing staff reductions were not sustainable in the long term. Although work related to print materials has lessened, physical locations still have to be staffed and the work in the digital realm has increased. The Restructuring Action Plan addresses this shift. The new budget model is designed to align with academic priorities and to increase transparency. The Library has a reciprocal borrowing arrangement with the RMC Library. External contracts are reviewed and renewed annually.

Queen's University Library continues to be one of the best university libraries in Canada. For example, student polling again led to an A ranking in the 2012 Globe & Mail Canadian University Report, the only such ranking of any university in the country. This is a remarkable achievement, all the more so given budget constraints.

SENATE OPERATIONS REVIEW AND THE SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

In 2011-12, the Senate Operations Review Committee reviewed the composition of Senate and the operation of most of its committees. A review of the Senate Library Committee is expected in the Fall Term of 2012. It is recommended that the Senate Library Committee examine its terms of reference and its role in relation to this review.