

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2010-2011

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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 2010-11 included (i) Library Restructuring Action Plan (ii) Student community and (iii) discussion of the Library's annual budget, as required by the committee's terms of reference.

(I) RESTRUCTURING ACTION PLAN

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 *Library 2012 Change Framework* was developed and shared with the Senate Library Committee and Library advisory committees in 2009-10. This document provided foundational principles and ideas to guide the change process. From this process the *Restructuring Action Plan* was developed and released in July 2010.

The *Restructuring Action Plan* "makes provisions for an efficient and flexible organizational structure that keeps academic communities and information resources at the core of its activities as it realigns staff resources for the current and

future digital age. This restructuring positions the Library to develop new strategic directions to support the learning and research priorities emerging from the University's forthcoming Academic Plan."

(<http://library.queensu.ca/files/QULRAP.pdf>, p.1)

During 2010-2011, implementation of the new organizational structure and other recommendations of the *Restructuring Action Plan* were begun, including development of a staffing plan. Technical services relating to acquisitions and management of information resources were reorganized with a focus on electronic services. Librarians will maintain liaison responsibilities for particular academic departments while several new cross-campus specialists roles have been established. Staffing of new roles has occurred through reassignment.

(II) STUDENT COMMUNITY

The committee observed that the Library as a location and provider of service to all students offers opportunities to build a sense of community amongst students. The following initiatives are but a few examples.

Queen's Learning Commons (QLC): The QLC celebrated its 5th anniversary in the Fall of 2010. The QLC was developed to provide a collaborative learning space to support students by bringing together academic services from several university units in Stauffer Library. This year the QLC partners engaged in a strategic planning exercise to identify new directions for this ongoing collaboration.

<http://www.queensu.ca/qlc/index.html>

Inquiry@Queen's Undergraduate Research Conference: Students and faculty from departments across Queen's came together March 10-11 at this 5th annual showcase of independent or course-based undergraduate research. As one of the co-leaders in this initiative, the Library will be examining ways of ensuring its long-term sustainability. <http://www.iatq.ca/conference.html>

Live-in for Literacy: This student initiative began at Queen's six years ago in Stauffer Library and is now an annual event at university campuses across the country. This year students at ten universities participated, raising approximately \$40,000 to build libraries in Nepal. <http://www.liveinforliteracy.com>

(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, and other consortia, the Library has been able to acquire resources at considerable savings.

The Library has also seen a substantial reduction in staff. Salaries are 93 percent of the Library's operating budget and the non-salary savings that can be achieved are minimal, so budget reductions must come from salaries. There has been a reduction

of 17 positions over the past two years. This is in addition to 16 positions closed since 2004-05. Between 1995-96 and May 2011, the Library's staff has been reduced from 180 to 120 positions.

According to current budget targets this will need to be further reduced by 12 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 has increased; for example, between 1998 and 2008, there was a 47.5% increase in doctoral students and a 41.1% increase in master's students. Enrollment increases result in greater demands on Library services, yet there are now too few staff available to deliver those services.

Under the current budget model the Library, like other units, is required to absorb annual salary and benefit increases as well as any across the board cuts. Unlike the Faculties, the Library does not have income from increased tuition. Consequently, this funding model will mean further staff reductions and in essence the dismantling of the Library system over time.

The acquisitions budget is static. Notwithstanding the cost benefits to Queen's University Library by purchasing through membership in consortia, the purchasing value of the acquisitions budget decreases by approximately 5% each year because of increased licensing costs. Over time this trend will lead to a narrowing of the collection as more specialized books and electronic journals are dropped.

Until now, Queen's University Library has been one of the best university libraries in Canada. For example, it received an A in the 2011 Globe & Mail Canadian University Report, placing it ahead of all other libraries in the medium-sized university category. Given the current budget model, the university can expect such rankings 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 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.