

**Wright State University**  
**Library Faculty Advisory Committee**  
**Report to Faculty Senate, Fall Semester 2018**

The Library Faculty Advisory Committee held its first meeting on Friday, November 9, 2018, attended by Dr. Karla Huebner (COLA, Chair), Dr. Timothy Crawford (BSOM), Dr. Maher Amer (CECS), Dr. Zdravka Todorova (RSCOB), Dr. Gale Kleven (COSM), Dr. Beth Hurt (SOPP), Dr. Weisong Wang (Lake), Ms. Sue Polanka (Interim Librarian), and Ms. Karen Wilhoit (Associate Librarian). Dr. Lynne Kelley (CONH) and Dr. Doris Johnson (CEHS) were unable to attend.

The committee was established by the Faculty Senate this year with rotating, representative faculty from each college/school in order to improve communication and to steer decisions about collections, policies, facilities, technology, staff, and development.

Therefore, the primary purpose of this initial meeting was to provide the faculty members of the committee an overview of the library's current situation. Dr. Huebner reported that in 2016, the committee's predecessor, the Library of the Future Task Force (LOFT), prepared a report on the university library, with suggestions for future development. However, due to the university's financial crisis, the library's situation is now in many respects very different than it had been in 2016.

Ms. Polanka and Ms. Wilhoit presented an informative Powerpoint which reviewed the library's purpose:

- To serve as the scholarly information center for the University
- To collect, organize, preserve, and facilitate access to scholarly resources in all formats
- To support teaching, learning, and research
- To provide instruction in the use of traditional and new information resources and technologies

They listed its major services:

- Collections (local and OhioLINK, print and electronic)
- CORE Scholar, Institutional Repository
- Special Collections and Archives
- Interlibrary Loan, Course Reserves, Bookings
- Research and instructional support
- Research guides and Ask a Librarian/Archivist (a chat service much used by students)
- Patent/Trademark Resource Center (PTRC)
- Student Technology Assistance Center (STAC) staffed Sunday – Thursday 4:00-8:00 and by appointment

Provided demographics on staff:

- **Currently 42** (just under 40 FTE, 23 with Master's degrees), **down from 63 due to recent retirements and other losses**

The librarians noted that, following recommendations from the earlier Taskforce, the library was able to get FY18 Capital Funding from the State amounting to 1.1 million, which is paying for deferred maintenance/physical improvements such as paint, new carpeting, some new furniture, and creation of

much-requested private study spaces for students (**loss of staff made this space available, which raises the question of where replacement staff would work if/when the library is able to hire again**; however, alternative spaces exist). Capital Funding of this kind is specific and project-oriented; it is not available for standard operating expenses.

The previous Taskforce had recommended **that the administration recognize the critical importance of establishing a stable and predictable budget as well as generating additional revenue streams for the library so that the library's funds for purchasing materials necessary for faculty research and teaching do not continue to diminish**. Historically, the library had had budget increases that kept up with inflation, but at the time of the LOFT report, the library had begun to experience some cuts alternating with a flat budget (effectively a cut due to inflation). **In FY18 the library budget was cut 5% and in FY19 19.8%**. With the FY19 budget, **the library is back to FY1999/FY2000 levels while costs have risen**. Journal price inflation tends to be about 5-6% per year, while book prices inflate at 1-3% per year.

**The library currently spends** 68% of its materials budget on journals (this includes JSTOR), 19% on databases, and 12% on books and AV. This budget can also be divided between OhioLINK and "local" resources; as a result of budget cuts, **OhioLINK now represents 60% of materials spending**, the first time it has been over 50% (i.e. the library was obliged to cut local purchases heavily). While there are a few opt-in databases in OhioLINK, on the whole either we have OhioLINK or we don't, and we cannot do without it. **OhioLINK saves us money** because the cost of acquisitions is shared among all the libraries. **If the budget remains flat, in 16 years we will only be able to afford OhioLINK, not any locally purchased items**. The benefit of OhioLINK is the significant amount of content we have access to at a lower cost. OhioLINK is also able to negotiate lower inflation rates with the publishers. On the other hand, if we cannot fund locally purchased materials, we will not add any new physical materials (books, videos), will lose streaming video services, and will no longer be able to add new journals or support the BSOM, CONH, and other graduate level research. **Note:** As regards electronic resources, it is not obvious to the end user which ones are local vs OhioLINK, as the system was set up to be seamless and easy-access.

The librarians noted that Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is not actually free. While we have reciprocal borrowing agreements with many schools, not everything can be obtained without costs. Articles can cost \$12-30 apiece. Furthermore, **as we have had to cancel so many journals—many of which saw frequent use—this will cause a rise in ILL costs**, as we will start having to pay copyright fees on many of the requests.

**The library has lost 37% of its staff**. In part these losses are due to retirements and resignations. However, with recent huge budget cuts, the library has also had to make some cuts to staff along with cutting acquisitions and other areas. Loss of staff results in **service cuts**—for example, the library has cut building hours, electronic course reserves, STAC services, and has reduced instructional and outreach initiatives for local high schools and other campus and community groups.

The LOFT report had recommended that the library's **areas of excellence continue to be supported and expanded, including excellent staff, OhioLINK and ILL, and STAC**. As we can see, **the reverse has happened**.

Going forward, the committee needs to advocate for the library as central to the mission of the university. Every college—every faculty member and every student—needs the library. At present, it appears that what the library needs most is a stable budget. At present, its budget comes almost

entirely from the General Fund. Regular increases from the University's general funds are the library's best source of funding as close to 90% of the library budget funds ongoing subscriptions/databases.

During the meeting, some suggestions were made about augmenting the library's revenue. Suggestions included tapping the university's recruitment budget and moving some revenue from the bookstore and Starbucks to the library. Such funds are difficult to project, so would have to be used for one-time resources. The library's development could also be connected to the university's strategic plan as part of a student retention tool.

The committee plans to meet on a monthly basis in Spring 2019 to learn more about the library and determine a concrete strategy for its development. Meetings will include a tour of the archives and discussion of the Lake Campus and other library services.