

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2012-2013

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Senate Library Committee 2012-13

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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 2012-13 were: (1) Review of the Senate Library Committee terms of reference, as requested by the Senate Operations Review Committee; (2) Educational and scholarly initiatives of the Library; (3) the Library and Archives Master Plan; and (4) the Library budget. To address these matters, the Committee held meetings October 3, October 31, February 6, and April 10.

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

(1) REVIEW OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

In 2011-12, the Senate Operations Review Committee (SORC) reviewed the composition of Senate and the operation of most of its committees. The Chair and Secretary of SORC met with the Chair of the Senate Library Committee and the University Librarian. In 2012-13, the Senate Library Committee then developed a proposed revision of its terms of reference that are in keeping with the work of the committee in the past several years and as anticipated in the coming years, should Senate chose to have it remain as a standing committee.

The University Librarian reviewed the nature and role of various academic library committees at comparable universities across Canada. On the basis of that research,

and in light of the work done in recent years by Queen's Senate Library Committee, the Committee drafted a recommendation for revised terms. Below are the existing and proposed terms of reference, with a summary of the Committee's deliberations. The Chair submitted the proposed terms to SORC.

Existing terms

- To recommend to the Senate policies for the operation and development of the University Library System;
- to advise the Chief Librarian in all matters of policy relating to the University Library System which are of academic significance;
- to advise the Chief Librarian on the preparation of the Library's annual budget and on any proposed change in the approved annual budget of the Library which involves a change in Library policy on matters of academic significance;
- to make regulations on matters of academic significance with respect to the operation of the University Library system.

In at least three respects, these terms did not match the actual work of the committee: the Committee has not brought any policy recommendations to Senate; the Committee does not have the expertise to advise the University Librarian on budgetary preparation, nor does the timing of its meetings match the budget preparation cycle; and the committee has not produced any regulations on Library operation, nor did it seem appropriate to the Committee that it should do so.

Proposed terms

The University Librarian presented the Committee with information on the status of Senate Library Committees of seven universities across Canada whose libraries are members of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries. The existence, role, and accountability of such committees varied widely.

The Committee recognized that the Library is deeply embedded in each academic unit at Queen's and has well established mechanisms for obtaining feedback from the academic community it serves, through advisory committees, departmental liaisons, and user surveys. Furthermore, the University Librarian is a member of Senate. Nevertheless, the Committee felt that it was still important to have an elected committee of Senate to provide direct faculty and student linkage between the Library and Senate. This allows Senate, through its Committee, to pay close attention to matters of library planning, to be well informed of library initiatives, and to deal with any serious matters of concern that might arise.

After considerable deliberation, the Committee concluded that it had a useful role to play, as reflected in these proposed terms of reference:

1. To provide advice to Senate regarding:
 - a. continuing matters and broad policies relating to the Library's support for the academic needs of the University;

- b. strategic planning for the Library, including but not limited to the budgetary process;
 - c. Senate policies that affect the Library.
2. To support Senate in serving as a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas among the members of the University community in all matters of an academic character relating to Library services and resources.
3. To provide a written report annually to Senate, and to report at such other times as may be necessary or appropriate.

(2) EDUCATIONAL AND SCHOLARLY INITIATIVES OF THE LIBRARY

The Committee reviewed and discussed the document prepared by the University Librarian and staff, *Comprehensive Planning and Budget: Queen's University Library 2013-14*. A document of this sort is required by the University of all service areas for the annual budget planning process. It provides a very detailed and comprehensive picture of the Library. Of particular interest to the Committee is the account of goals, priority initiatives, and performance measures. For each of five major goals related to people, academic community, information resources, discovery, and library as place, the document includes a chart listing priority initiatives and corresponding expected outcomes, performance measures, and funding plan. Closely related to this is a set of "Standard Service Level Definitions" giving for each of 16 core service activities the available resources (FTE staffing, budget), detailed description, performance measure, and risks or implications related to sustaining, reducing, or eliminating the activity. This, combined with detailed organizational charts, means that every library position and function is documented systematically to provide a coherent and comprehensive picture of the whole Library system. The Committee found the document a helpful presentation of the scope of the Library's educational and scholarly initiatives.

In conjunction with its scheduled meetings, the Committee decided to visit various locations within the Library system. This provided the Committee with fresh insight into Library programs, usage, services, and challenges. The Committee would benefit from continuing this practice.

Following the Committee meeting held in Douglas Library February 6, the Librarian explained some of the possible changes being proposed through the Library and Archives Master Plan process and the benefits that would accrue. Underused stack space would be repurposed, special collections would be highlighted, and stronger synergy would be developed between special collections and archives.

In a discussion relating to its terms of reference, the Committee proposed that it periodically arrange presentations and discussions on a particular Library priority. At its meeting in February the Committee agreed that it would co-host an event with the Information and Communications Working Group of the Queen's Accessibility Framework. The event was an Accessibility Café, held April 10, at which Queen's students with disabilities told their stories and entered into discussion with those in

attendance. The Committee then received a short tour of the Adaptive Technology Centre and received an overview of its services and adaptive technology. Those who were able to attend were very impressed with the range and quality of services provided to increase accessibility to Library resources and to facilitate the studies of students benefiting from adaptive technology and a quiet work environment conducive to effective study and research.

(3) THE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES MASTER PLAN

Senate has been kept well-informed of the Campus Master Plan process for the University and more recently for the distinct, but closely linked Library and Archives Master Plan (see <http://www.queensu.ca/connect/lamp/>). The Senate Library Committee was apprised of this planning throughout the academic year. This major initiative to improve access to collections and learning spaces began formally in the spring of 2012, with the formation of a steering group including student, faculty, and Library and Archives representatives. An RFP for a planning partner was issued in June, 2012, and planning began in November. The process has included extensive stakeholder consultation and background research. Preliminary concepts were shared with the community in April and a report is expected in June 2013. A review and revisioning of this scope has not been done for over 20 years and will enable the Library to continue to adapt to the shift towards increasing use of electronic resources and the growing involvement of librarians with e-research, inquiry-based learning, and the library as a hub of inquiry activity.

(4) THE LIBRARY BUDGET

Budget details are contained in the *Comprehensive Planning and Budget: Queen's University Library 2013-14*. The Library is an academic element of each Faculty and School, and requested base reinvestment in its operating budget in order to meet academic needs. 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: the current industry norm for the primary commercial publishers of academic journals is between 3% and 5% per annum and is often higher, requiring judicious cuts in other acquisition areas.

To support major reworking of library space and to strengthen key areas of service, the Library looks to the Initiative Campaign (see <http://www.queensu.ca/initiative/priorities/library-archives>), with fundraising priorities for learning and research space (\$3.5M), digital initiatives (\$1M), and library acquisitions (\$1M).

Given that other university libraries are facing similar fiscal challenges, libraries continue to seek to expand collaboration, for example in acquisition of e-resources and various aspects of service delivery.

In presenting the Library's budget plan for 2013-14 the University Librarian reviewed the Library's vision, core activities, priorities, and past staff reductions required to address increasing costs, and summarized the major challenges:

- keeping the doors open due to reduced staffing levels (restructuring has already occurred and further staff reductions will require the exploration of service changes);
- embracing the digital deluge (continued rise in digital collections has been addressed through collaboration and innovation but new positions are needed in areas such as digital curation);
- maintaining a high level of access to information, given acquisition pressure points such as inflation, pricing schemes, increased usage, exchange rate fluctuation, new formats, unmet demand for new resources, and new programs and initiatives (no increases to match inflation);
- space and space allocation (need for increased efficiency through reorganization and need to address learning space demands, at-capacity collections space, and inadequate archives facility).

The Library has received base reinvestment in its operating budget for the 2013-14 fiscal year. The adjustment will be consumed by existing costs. To address priorities driven by the University's strategic directions and the changing information landscape, the Library will need to continue to make structural changes and reallocate resources within a tight envelope.

Even with these challenges, Queen's University Library continues to be one of the best university libraries in Canada. For example, student polling reported in the 2013 Globe & Mail Canadian University Report led to Queen's being the only mid-sized institution to earn an "A" ranking for its library.

CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

This report brings to a close my terms on the Senate Library Committee and on the Senate. I wish to express my gratitude to faculty and students who have served with me. I also wish to thank our University Librarian and her staff for hosting and organizing our meetings; for their detailed and insightful reports on Library work, challenges, and developments; and for listening carefully and critically to our questions, concerns, and advice. Finally, I wish to thank our Secretary for keeping excellent records of our deliberations. W. Egnatoff