

University Library Committee
February 25, 2003
Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Val Burris, Deb Carver, Andre Djiffack, James Harper, Gina Psaki, Peter O'Day, Dan Pope, Mark Vanscheeuwijck

GUESTS: Faye Chadwell, Head, Collection Development & Acquisitions; Mark Watson, Associate University Librarian for Access & Collections

Dan Pope, chair, convened the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

SUBSCRIPTION VENDOR DISCUSSION

Mark provided an update to the Feb. 7 memo discussing the financial troubles of one of our subscription vendors (pasted below).

February 7, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Departmental Library Representatives, UO Department Heads, Library Subject Specialists

From: Deb Carver, University Librarian

Subject: Subscription Vendor in Financial Trouble

In late December 2002, the UO Libraries learned that one of its journal subscription vendors, divine/Rowecom, was in serious financial difficulty. This situation has resulted in the delay of some of our journal issues and/or loss of access to electronic journals. The UO Libraries have taken appropriate measures to identify the titles affected, and we have already begun working diligently with appropriate university offices, state agencies, and the U.S. Department of Justice to reach a solution.

Even when this situation is resolved, there remains the likelihood that the Libraries will still have gaps among its 2003 holdings for subscriptions this vendor handled. Several scholarly publishers have pledged to continue fulfilling our orders, but many publishers are only providing libraries with a one- to three-month grace period.

To minimize the impact, we are:

- encouraging library users to seek assistance at the closest reference desk if they are not able to locate a 2003 print or electronic issue, and
- expediting interlibrary loan options.

We regret the frustration this difficulty may cause you and appreciate your patience while it is being resolved.

For more information, contact Mark Watson, AUL for Collections & Access, <<mailto:mrwatson@oregon>>mrwatson@oregon, and Faye Chadwell, head of Collection Development & Acquisitions, <<mailto:chadwelf@oregon>>chadwelf@oregon.

There are currently three actions taking place re. Rowecom: the potential sale of US division to Ebsco, lawsuits filed against Rowecom, and bankruptcy proceedings in federal court. We have begun working with legal counsel on the campus, state, and US levels. Our number of subscriptions purchased through Rowecom is about 2,000 titles, roughly 10% of the collection. We are among the top 40 creditors. It would be to our best interest if Ebsco is able to purchase the US division of Rowecom. There is also the possibility that the parent company of Rowecom may file bankruptcy, which would make it difficult for creditors to receive any money.

If the library is not able to receive subscription issues through the vendor, we can contact public libraries for issues that they may no longer need or want, look to other Orbis institutions, or accept donations from patrons to help fill any gaps. There is also the possibility of getting a particular journal through another vendor. When a patron cannot locate a particular journal issue, he/she should check with a librarian. We may be able to access the electronic version. The 2,000 titles cover a number of disciplines. The list is available at <http://fluffy.uoregon.edu/delayed/>. It was suggested that this list be sorted alphabetically, rather than by discipline, to make them easier to review.

A question was asked on why libraries use one vendor for so many titles. Mark responded that it is primarily for cost-savings and to take advantage of greater discounts. Publishers prefer to go through one vendor rather than selling directly to the individual libraries.

Deb stated that this memo can be shared with colleagues and she will keep the ULC posted on the bankruptcy proceedings and the potential sale to Ebsco.

SERIALS REVIEW

Deb reviewed the Feb. 11 memo on Serials Review that was sent to library representatives, subject specialists and department heads from Mark and Faye. The text of that memo follows:

The UO campus has made significant progress providing cost-effective access to scholarly information. These steps include improved resource sharing, cooperative purchases of databases, and electronic subscription packages. Despite these cost containment methods, the library anticipates that funding in the next fiscal year will be inadequate to cover ongoing costs of serial subscriptions.

Several familiar factors dictate the need to reduce the number of serial subscriptions. Journal prices will likely inflate between 8 and 10 percent in 2003-2004, the average rate of inflation since the last serials cancellation project in 1999-2000. It is unlikely that any augment to the library's budget will cover these increases. We do not plan to decrease the book budget at this time but increases in book prices mean the library will buy fewer titles. Though we regret the need for another cancellation project, we must initiate a plan immediately to avoid any serious deficits in the library's budget.

Currently we are planning for a reduction of up to \$600,000 in serials expenditures. This reduction represents approximately 16-18 percent of the total 2002-2003 serials budget. If the budget situation changes, we will adjust the total target accordingly. It is important to stress that the reductions will not be across the board, as the targets for individual departments will reflect the costs of serials and inflationary factors.

The timing of our journal renewal process requires identifying titles to cut before the end of the summer 2003. The review of titles will commence February 2003 and extend through the end of May.

Our principal objective will be to eliminate duplication among formats (electronic, print, or microform) and retain the broadest possible access to unique intellectual content. To begin the review, library staff will create a website with title lists for faculty to scrutinize. Working in collaboration with faculty, the library subject specialists will identify and prioritize titles to meet individual departmental targets. More details about the review process and the targets for individual funds are forthcoming.

Deb informed the group that the library will reduce serials expenditures by \$400,000 this year and the remaining \$200,000 will likely be cut the next year. The focus is to minimize content loss. We have some duplicate titles that we can start with. Oregon State University Library is also undergoing a cancellation process. We will review their list so that both libraries do not eliminate an important title. There may also be some of the more specialized databases that we could possibly let go, which will be included in the list. Deb said that the list will also reflect prices, adding that the more expensive titles will be reviewed first. She hopes to avoid a major cancellation process every 3-4 years and switch to a process of continuous review.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

Deb reported that the library submitted 31 proposals to the University's campaign. Of those, twelve were marked as high priority – those that might be more appealing to our donors. We should know by spring if any of the library's submittals are selected by University Advancement to move forward in the process. The top 12 are listed below:

- 1) Support for Scholarly Research and Publishing
- 2) Center for the Study of the Book and Book Arts
- 3) Oregon Studies Online: a Web-Based Site for Oregon Scholarship and Service
- 4) Northwest Photography and Images – Preserving and Promoting Oregon's History
- 5) Understanding World Religions – Strengthening the Library's Collections
- 6) Native American Resources – Strengthening Library Collections
- 7) University Historian & Archivist
- 8) InstantInfo: Dynamic Delivery of Library Information
- 9) The Brain, Biology, Machine Initiative: Strengthening the Library's Collections
- 10) Reaching Out: Creating a Multilingual Library Website
- 11) Bellotti Family Fund
- 12) Creating a Science Library for the 21st Century

MLA –THE FUTURE OF SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

A copy of this report was distributed to the committee members in December. Discussions on publishing monographs in the Humanities have been taking place over the last several years. The report makes it clear that there are serious implications for all disciplines. Gina drafted a memo on scholarly publishing and promotion criteria to be distributed to the deans and other advisory committees, urging the campus community to begin a serious review of these issues. A few suggestions were given to incorporate into the memo. Val will send her the wording on tenure and promotion. When the final version is ready, Sheila will contact the Provost's Office in regard to the best way to distribute it. The ULC should follow-up with the Deans, possibly at the Deans retreat in June, or in September at the Deans/Department Heads retreat.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15. S. Gray will send spring term schedule requests. We will try to schedule the next meeting in April.

Submitted by
Sheila Gray
March 10, 2003