



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

March 12, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Linda Brady, Senior Vice President and Provost

FROM: Deborah A. Carver, Dean of Libraries
Dev P. Sinha, Department of Mathematics and
Chair, University Library Committee

SUBJECT: Request for One-time Funding

The University Library Committee has discussed the possibility of one-time funding in support of the Library. We realize there are many demands and not enough discretionary funds to address them all, so we appreciate the opportunity to make a case on behalf of the Library.

As you know, inflation on library resources creates a situation that is very challenging for all research campuses. While most of our peer institutions have regular processes to address inflationary factors, the University of Oregon has not systematically covered these costs. Inflation on journal literature has consistently run between 8 and 10 percent each year. Our budget increases have been between 0 and 3 percent each year. Total materials expenditures for UO Libraries increased by just 1% in real dollars from 1999 to 2005. During this period the median total materials expenditures for ARL Libraries increased by 45 percent. Consequently, the UO ranking in total materials expenditures fell steadily from 74th in 1999 to 107th in 2005. The lack of sufficient funding to address inflation has resulted in a major cancellation project every three to four years. Next year, we will have to cancel at least \$300,000 in journal subscriptions if there is no additional funding. This process would add several hundred titles to the 3500 already cut from our collection since 1992.

We respectfully request you to consider an investment in the library's materials budget to forestall a major cancellation project. Normally, one-time funding would best be used for one-time costs. However, there is some hope that the new budget model can factor in inflationary costs and prevent these cyclical cancellations in the future. This one-time investment would serve as a bridge to that new model.

There are several additional compelling reasons to make this investment:

- In its accreditation report, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities listed the lack of library funding for scholarly resources as one of its eight recommendations. The report stated that *“the continued long-term decline in library support has left the University of Oregon Libraries’ core collection (print and online) insufficient in quality, depth, diversity and currency to support graduate curricula and research in a number of programs.”*

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON LIBRARIES

1299 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403-1229 T (541) 346-3056 F (541) 346-3485 libweb.uoregon.edu

MAIN LIBRARY
Knight Library
(541) 346-3056
F (541) 346-3485

BRANCH LIBRARIES
Architecture and
Allied Arts Library,
Lawrence Hall
(541) 346-3637
F (541) 346-2205

John E. Jaqua Law Library,
Knight Law Center
(541) 346-3088
F (541) 346-1669

Mathematics Library,
Fenton Hall
F (541) 346-3023

Science Library,
Onyx Bridge
(541) 346-3075
F (541) 346-3012

Loyd and Dorothy
Rippey Library,
Oregon Institute of
Marine Biology,
Charleston
(541) 888-2581
F (541) 888-3250

Architecture Library,
Portland
(503) 725-8742
F (503) 725-8406

- The University is focusing on graduate education as one of its top strategic priorities. Graduate students are the heaviest users of scholarly resources, and the strength of the library's collection can be an indication of the University's commitment to graduate education.
- The Library has been highly successful in this last fundraising campaign, exceeding its original goal by nearly 90 percent. Donors are clearly interested in investing in a central service that is so core to the educational mission. Your investment would send a signal to donors that the library is also important to the administration, whereas a major cancellation project could send a very discouraging message to those who have been so generous.
- Cancellation projects are enormously time-consuming. Faculty and librarians work for weeks to determine what can be cancelled. The campus engages in a huge effort to take several steps backwards. The process is the antithesis of "faculty productivity." Over 90 percent of our journals are now in electronic format only, and most are bundled into publisher packages. Protracted negotiations with publishers can make the process even more time consuming and difficult. We would much prefer to devote resources instead to a number of strategic priorities involving librarians and faculty working together, such as expanding the role of our on-campus repository *Scholars' Bank* or improving subject-specific search capabilities through our website.
- Although the University has made great strides in supporting academics, the fantastic investments in athletics still loom large for many faculty and suggest that our priorities are out of balance. The 3500 journal titles already lost in repeated rounds of cancellations have eroded faculty morale. Engaging the entire faculty in a cancellation project will further damage morale, and will certainly be juxtaposed to the plans for new athletic facilities that will be among the best in the world. While this juxtaposition may not be entirely justified, we fear the timing of a cancellation project next fiscal year could be especially detrimental.

Thank you for your understanding, your concern, and your unquestionable support for the academic mission of the University of Oregon. We urge you to consider an investment of \$300,000 in one-time funds for the library's collections for all the reasons mentioned above.

DAC/DPS:skg

cc: University Library Committee

Priscilla Elder, Development

Alexander Mathas, Germanic Languages

Eric Mentzel, School of Music

Tze-Lan Sang, East Asian Languages

Howard Davis, Architecture

Alisa Freedman, East Asian Languages

Julie Haack, Chemistry

David Levin, Mathematics

Gina Psaki, Romance Languages

Andy Karduna, Human Physiology

Melissa Baird, Graduate, Anthropology

Mary Tucker, Undergraduate, Political Science