

University of Oregon Libraries
University Library Committee (ULC)
Winter Meeting, 2015–2016 Academic Year
Monday, February 29, 2016
Time 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Rowe Conference Room, 115H Knight Library

AGENDA

Attendance: Andrew Bonamici, Sara Brownmiller, John Fenn, Mark Horney, David Ketchum, Ann Miller, Jimmy Murray, Alison Parman, Doris Payne, Jennifer Presto, Nicholas Proudfoot, Mark Watson

Absent: Zena Ariola, Chloe Bosnar, Jack Boss, Richard Chartoff, Adriene Lim

Collections Budget Allocation

- At the last meeting, the ULC heard about how the libraries could use formulas of various sorts to help predict funding needs for collections.
- The current meeting will be used to discuss how the libraries might move forward, and how they might introduce such ideas to the faculty as a whole. Specifically, what are the characteristics of a formula-based system that you would like to see?

Discussion

- Larger versus smaller formulas
 - Following the ideas of statistician Nate Silver (one poll is flawed, so need to look at many polls), it was suggested that the libraries create a system of smaller formulas instead of using one large, complicated formula.
 - For example, one factor was FTE and the other was cost of materials by discipline. Using these two factors alone to determine the formula for allocations would result in most new allocations remaining similar to current allocations, except for two exceptions in which one unit has been severely underfunded and one unit overfunded.
 - But, the way FTE is calculated for the two units may not accurately reflect scholarly activity. Instead of head count per unit, it may be more accurate to count scholarly units (groups of people who need the same library resources). This would require another small formula to figure out different units of scholarly research areas, although this could be difficult to do.
 - FTE does not take into account the graduate students and faculty that do research in a particular program area, but do not have an FTE in that area. Correcting for this may require the libraries to contact unit heads to get an estimate of the number of faculty and students doing research associated with unit.

- Good judgement versus formal-based allocations
 - The problem is that current allocations appear to be arbitrary and the reasons behind them have been lost.
 - Some members are wary of creating any kind of formula for allocations because they cannot account for all factors and do not necessarily create transparency (formulas can be based on arbitrary factors). An exercising-good-judgement model would be better.
 - Others expressed concern about an only good-judgement model because it would lack accountability and transparency.
 - Most members agreed that a hybrid model would work best.
 - What is the least formula needed without hindering the ability to exercise good judgement?
 - One percentage to good judgement (discretion, for historical corrections, emerging needs, etc.) and one percentage to formula for baseline would be reasonable.
- Regardless of the model adopted, how should it be put forward to the whole consensus?
 - Reach out to units for feedback on what their needs are and what a major cut in allocations would mean for their research and for staying current.
 - Subject specialist work with units and have a say in the allocation process.
 - Have a system for special requests based on units' changing needs.
 - The libraries currently has the [Stanley B. Greenfield Award](#) for faculty to request special research materials.
 - Collections policies
 - Subject specialist have been working this year on internal collections policies, but could consider making them available to faculty, as part of the conversation with subject specialists and their departments.
- Core collection
 - What is the core collection per unit?
 - Units for which we are not meeting the core needs would require a wider discussion: provide increased funding for collections, cut program, etc.
 - Could also then imagine going beyond the core collection, for example, to entice new faculty.
 - What resources are absolutely essential to be an R1 institution?
- How do we decide who to take money away from? Key question when discussing reallocation.
 - The last version of the large formula model indicates that the allocations for several departments would need to be greatly reduced, that they have been overfunded in comparison to all other departments. However, given cluster hires, this would probably not be a popular decision.
 - The cut of one expensive database could free up a lot of funds to support other programs. Possibly offer choices: A or B?

- Cross-the-board cuts is the easy out, but rarely makes sense; instead use differing percentages based on size, sufficiency of core holdings, and impact of cuts. The reasoning: each department has the same right to go on and be sufficiently supported as any other.
- Funding of new majors/programs: Do proposals for new majors or programs include implications for the libraries, such as the cost of additional collections?
 - Proposals include resources needed, but this data does not always come from the libraries and the cost is not always broken down.
 - The libraries has representation on the review committee, but the libraries does not have to sign off on the proposals. If collections funds are not included in the final budget, the libraries has little recourse.
 - Committee to consider the chair taking this issue to the Academic Council
 - A cost analysis of needed resources should be included in all proposals.
 - The libraries should be included in the approval process to review the libraries' part of the cost analysis to ensure that initial and recurring funds will be available for the program.
 - From where should the funding come? If only from existing library funds, this means collection cuts for existing programs that still need to be maintained.

Next steps

- Inflation topic to continue

Remaining AY2015-2016 meeting schedule:

April 18, May 16

All meetings 10:00-11:30 in Rowe Conference Room
