

University Library Committee 1995-1996

Minutes for November 29, 1995

Summary

The Library Committee voted to reconsider its decision at the 8 November 1995 meeting concerning the \$500,000 serials budget cut. Instead of apportioning cuts proportional to inflation figures for each discipline and based on the 1994/5 budget figures, the cuts will be proportional to more broadly based inflation figures and based on the average 1993/4 and 1994/5 budgets. The precise recommendation is given below: PRESENT: Bart Alexander, Frances Cogan, Peter Gilkey, Lucy Lynch, Theodore Palmer, Leland Roth, Joe St. Sauver, Ray Weldon.

ABSENT: John Gage, Bill Orr, George Shipman.

GUESTS: Deborah Carver, Assistant University Librarian for Public Services and Collections; Faye Chadwell, Head, Collection Development; Richard Heinzkill, Reference Librarian.

The meeting was brought to order by Peter Gilkey, chair, at 4:00 pm. Gilkey informed the committee that the President's Office has informed him that Bill Washburn will not be appointed to serve on this committee. Bart Alexander will be the sole student representative.

The November 8 minutes were approved with no changes or amendments.

The agenda item for this meeting was to reconsider the committee's decision on how to proceed with the \$500,000 cut in the serials budget. Deborah Carver and Faye Chadwell feel that an area based cut would be more equitable than a discipline based cut, which is the model that the committee voted in favor of at the November 8 meeting. The new model proposes using a 16.5% rate for the humanities, 21.3% for the social sciences, and 22.3% for the sciences. Gilkey distributed a handout Recommended Library Serials Budget containing a spreadsheet of this new model.

Palmer made a motion that the committee reconsider the motion to cut the serials budget according to the Library Journal (LJ) percentages. Gilkey seconded that motion. There are two inflation figures that could be used - Library Journal averages or American Libraries averages. The inflation rates being used for Model 2 are from Library Journal.

Carver stated that there are several reasons which support changing to Model II. First, Model II evens out the range of inflation rates. There is quite a variance when using disciplinary rates of inflation. Some funds would be severely penalized if we worked with Model I's individual inflation rates. By grouping them, it would be less painful to some disciplines who have experienced very high inflation rates according to the LJ figures. Second, it is important to base the cut on inflation rates as much as possible, as opposed to expenditures. This will help restore the distribution of funds. We do not want to look at expenditures because they not only reflect inflation, but also reflect deliberate decisions which

have been made over the years to increase a fund because of need. We do not want to erase any of those deliberate decisions. Third, many of the journals are interdisciplinary in nature. It makes sense to group those together. Fourth, we have looked at two sets of national figures - Library Journal (LJ) and American Libraries (AL). There were some differences between using those two sets, but when averaged by group disciplines (humanities, social sciences, sciences), they came out to be very similar. If we would go with individual figures, groups could argue for or against LJ or AL figures. Carver stressed whatever formula is used, there may be some disciplines that need to be examined closely to avoid unfair treatment.

Palmer stated that he is in favor of reconsidering the decision to use Model I for the serials cuts, but is not certain he would favor the Model II option. Gilkey suggested that the committee vote on the motion to reconsider and then examine the models more closely. Palmer pointed out that if you examine PoliSci, they have had very unstable expenditures over the past years, for whatever reason-random fluctuation or systematic reasons. As it turns out, the year from which we are cutting was a low year for PoliSci which would make their budget after the cut less than their 90/91 budget figure. He stated that a standard way to eliminate random fluctuations would be to take an average of over more than one year, and inflate or deflate from that average. Gilkey agreed that basing the cuts only on the 94/95 year would not be fair to departments whose budgets were down that year.

St. Sauver asked rather than assigning a particular amount to be cut per department, would it be possible to review the periodicals that are good candidates for elimination, and then go back and make a second cut if that first round didnt amount to \$500,000. Gilkey stated that he believes it would be very difficult to know which titles would be candidates to be cut as the library recently went through a serials cut. St. Sauver distributed a spread sheet on expenditures per department/annual % change, and also a handout Do-It-Yourself Retrospective Serials Cost Analysis. He feels that if the library could identify some titles that cost \$8,000-\$10,000 a year to be cut, there wouldnt be the need to examine past history and eliminate fluctuations.

Gilkey asked if the committee would like to vote on the motion to reconsider or discuss the model as well as the motion to reconsider. The committee voted in favor of Palmers motion to reconsider.

With the motion to reconsider passing, Palmer proceeded to make a motion that the committee approve a \$500,000 budget cut to the serials budget, apportioned by the group statistics as shown in the Recommended Library Serials Budget handout (16.5% for humanities; 21.3% for social sciences; 22.3% sciences), but applied to the total of the 93/94 and 94/95 budget.

Weldon expressed concern in that some areas appear to be growing at higher rates than the average 3%, through deliberate decisions other than of inflation factors. There are particular areas that are being increased at the expense of regular lines. He is concerned that if we have an inflation rate of 3%, or whatever, and we are arbitrarily averaging a particular line, it is impossible for the other lines to stay within the inflation rate. It might be appropriate to have each discipline cut relative to the increase it has received. Palmer said he too thought of that but doesn't believe it would be a good model. Carver also does not support cutting relative to expenditures. She still favors working with inflation; otherwise we would eradicate some deliberate changes that have occurred based on the changing needs of a curriculum.

Alexander believes it is not fair to decrease some areas in order to deliberately increase other areas. Palmer stated that he feels it is inappropriate for this committee to discuss which budgets should go up or down.

Weldon feels that it is no longer simply a decision to vote for an inflation model when there are other programmatic reasons funds increase. Gilkey made an amendment to the existing motion by Palmer to permit that he, as chair, meet with Carver and Chadwell to see the real figures that the motion would generate, and make sure that there are no negative numbers in column D; and if there are, that they be adjusted. Palmer accepted the amended motion and Cogan seconded it. Gilkey asked the group to vote on the main motion as amended. St. Sauver and Lynch asked that they also examine the high ends as well as the low ends. Gilkey asked if the committee would like to instruct the chair to also look at the high ends. Palmer and Cogan stated they do not believe it is necessary to look at the high ends. Gilkey then called for a vote on the amended motion as he stated; the amended motion passed.

Gilkey stated that the original agenda for this meeting was to discuss the letters that will be sent to faculty addressing the serials cancellation. The letters need to go out before this term ends. A motion was made to instruct Gilkey, as chair on behalf of the committee, to meet with library representatives on the wording of the letters. The motion was seconded and passed.

Lynch asked that the final figures and letters that will be put together by Gilkey, Carver, and Chadwell be circulated to the committee. Gilkey stated he will post all material on the Web and send copies to Roth and Cogan.

Two items to discuss at the January meeting will be reserve book and faculty study issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Related Documents:

- Memo from George Shipman (University Librarian) December 8 1995
- Final budget cuts recommended

Submitted by Sheila Gray December 1, 1995