



COUNCIL ON THE LIBRARIES

Tuesday, 16 November 2021

12noon – 1:00pm

Library

Minutes

Present: Cantor, Chor, Clarke, Davis, Donovan, Gleiser, Mehrer, Parker, Quint, Skinner, Singh, Snyder, Sunde, Tell (chair)

Apologies: Castelot, Goodman, Marinho Ramos, McCabe

Library Leadership Team: Chamberlain, Reynolds, Taxman

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Council and reminded everyone that the next meeting would be on January 25.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on October 12, 2021

The Minutes of the October 12, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

3. Matters arising from previous Meeting

The Chair recapped that the Council previously decided to focus on 3 areas for the coming year:

- Council workflow and participation.
- Better communication with faculty governance structure on campus.
- Library budget reductions (from a 5-10-year perspective).

4. The Status of the Library: Budget and Staffing

FY18-FY22 Library Budget Overview

FY18-FY22 Library Budget Reductions

FY13-FY22 Overview of FTE Changes

The Dean provided an overview of the Library's operating budget, the trends over recent years, and the impact on Library operations. Against a background of significant budget cuts, the Library prioritised funding for collections and information resources and critical services and programs in support of teaching, learning and research in order to minimize the impact on faculty and students. However, the last round of budget cuts necessitated changes that resulted in the

consolidation of collections and services to Baker-Berry Library, reducing the overall library spaces, and a cut to the Library collections budget. Any further budget cuts would more visibly and directly impact the Library's ability to support Dartmouth's teaching, learning and research at the level required and expected of an Ivy League institution.

The Dean reported that the Library's annual budget round discussions had been held the previous day when the Library put forward its case for an increase to its collections budget of \$500k to address the ongoing inflationary increases and additional investment in new information resources. The Council will receive an update on decisions in the new year. On a related note, the Dean reported that the [Board of Trustees at its November meeting](#) had approved capital investment for a new Library Collections and Services Facility to store Dartmouth's valuable print and physical collections in industry standard conditions for long-term preservation.

In response to questions from the Council, the library team explained that electronic resources continue to see inflationary increases between 3%-9% annually and that the Library is negotiating through the NorthEast Research Libraries (NERL) consortium for the best deals, particularly on multi-year contracts of big deals. The Library tracks journal usage to optimise resource allocation; however, the ongoing increase in cost is not sustainable in the long run and libraries and academic institutions are pushing for new publishing and licensing models, particularly in relation to open access. The Council raised the issue of the high cost of textbooks which is a major concern for students. The Library is actively exploring and promoting open educational resources (OERs) to advocate for and support a new approach to teaching resources.

Questions were raised in relation to financial benchmarking data of peer institutions. The Dean explained that the Library was aware of reduced budgets at some other institutions and regularly reviews high-level comparisons compiled by the Association for Research Libraries, but that understanding and interpreting detailed reported financial data for benchmarking purposes would require time and expertise that is not available from within the library's staff. It was suggested that the Council could request support from the finance division and the Office for Institutional Research to analyse and report benchmarking data on library budgets of peer institutions.

It was recognised that the more overarching questions related to the long-term effects of the current budget reductions; what the Library is unable to do compared to peer institutions as a result of a permanently smaller operating budget; and the impact on the Library's aspirations would be more difficult to assess.

The Council proposed to invite the Provost to its meeting in January and asked the Dean to extend the invitation.