

Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee
Minutes
19 February 2021

Attending: Christopher Brown, Jamie Bronstein, Lori Saiki, David Irvin, Eric Scholljegerdes, John Mullen, Mariaelena de la Rosa, Michael Hyman, Richard Pratt, Samantha Villa, Stephanie Frisch, Susan Beck, Ellen Bosman, Alisa Gonzalez, Susan Bussman, Caiti Steele

- I. **Update on External Review and Dean's Search** (Susan Beck reporting): the external team is coming in as a prelude to searching for the new dean. The members of the review team are: Lori A. Goetsch, dean of libraries, Kansas State University, and Ivan Gaetz, dean of libraries, University of Wyoming.
 - a. as mentioned in a few Hotline posts, the external reviewers have developed a short survey to seek feedback of faculty perspectives of NMSU Library services and resources. To complete the survey, click here (<https://provost.nmsu.edu/provost-office-projects/library-feedback.html>). The survey results will be shared with the provost and the external reviewers. Your input is greatly appreciated. For more information, contact Kate Terpis at 576-646-1508 or kterpis@nmsu.edu.

- II. **Recent Serials Reduction and discussion of related Senate Memorial**
Chris Brown and Jamie Bronstein are working on a senate memorial as emergency legislation in response to the recent 433 journal subscription cancellations. The Collections Team issued an official statement (**attached below**):

Discussion of the draft:

- Jamie: willing to consider reframing the emergency memorial but requests whether the library could provide more robust communication
- Michael: understand good faith efforts to balance the cuts across disciplines; but cuts have been far stronger in arts humanities and business;
- Meg: please comment on the predatory pricing of Elsevier
 - Ellen: attempt to negotiate with them for more than a decade; and national libraries in Sweden, Germany and in the US have broken ties. Nearly 1/3 of entire budget was begin spent on this database, but the savings will only be realized over a two year period.
 - Alisa: incredibly difficult to do any kind of negotiation with Elsevier; it was an imbalanced set of cuts
- Chris: asked Melody Munson-McGee to open a town hall over this; we are in the line for one
- Jamie: list of cuts in Hotline hard to search and link buried
 - Ellen: unable to answer that. In accordance with Hotline—please consult Dean Terpis
 - Jamie: will draft this question for Dean Terpis

- Susan: in terms of imbalance of cuts, this round particularly hit STEM, especially some of the leading journals (which are usually part of expensive packages); not sure how Physics and Chemistry will be able to continue giving PH.D. degrees without these
- Ellen: Use AND Cost per use has been the criteria for ALL cut decisions over the past decade, regardless of print or digital
- Michael: Elsevier's site—2740 journals—and only six related to business;
- Alisa: would be nice if top administration took on the task of communicating these issues; they are too important.
- Ellen: these cuts are done; the deadline for paying the bills was in September and we begged for an extension to Dec. 2020, but then all subscriptions began to lapse and we were threatened to be cut off by EBSCO Host. Electronic content (Portico) is a digital archive service that will allow for access of all past paid-for content of these digital subscriptions, but new subscription content will only be available through database or free source content providers (but access will take a while to set up).

ACTION:

- If anyone on the FSLAC wants to edit, contribute and/or join the proposed new memorial, please let Christopher and Jamie know ASAP

III. response to Senate Memorial from October 2020 on funding (Susan Beck):

- Susan Beck met with and sought response from President Floros; request for open meetings on this, but no movement had happened by the time the cuts went into effect. As part of this conversation she sent the following document with the itemized list of cancellations to the president and gave him a head's up about the emergency legislation.
- Memo sent to President Floros:
https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fdocument%2Fd%2F1FixCw4efiWJZQJ0dDhkpN4_gcSOSBRsgmR1Jv0rzk6A%2Fedit&data=04%7C01%7Csusabeck%40nmsu.edu%7C57767a323fea4029a2c808d8d50e9c81%7Ca3ec87a89fb84158ba8ff11bace1ebaa%7C1%7C0%7C637493606011672805%7CUnknoun%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoic4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=kWIXele9BgF8MfVSqXbkP131Sd3qCXYARnMOGbS852g%3D&reserved=0 ;
- and gave him a head's up about the emergency legislation
- https://facultysenate.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/02/09-2021-Transmittal-Administrative-Action-Routing-packet_Signed.pdf
- Carol Parker and Dean Terpis will issue a joint memorandum to clarify and update on this situation in a few days

IV. UPAC and library holdings:

- UPAC was developed to streamline the manner by which program proposals and substantive revisions were handled and went through the approval process; approved by Faculty Senate in the late Fall

- <https://provost.nmsu.edu/committees/upac/index.html>
- Susan Beck has been working with Dean Terpis to come up with a one-page document that allows for analyzing library costs associated with any new program, and figuring out mechanisms by which these resources can be funded.
- ACTION: FSLAC committee should look at this proposal to review and offer any ideas or suggestions relating to the UPAC proposal

Statement read by Ellen Bosman, department head of Library Technical Services, and head of The Collections Team.

Let me begin by saying the library Collections Team shares your concerns regarding the recent round of journal cancellations and we empathize with the senate's inclination to take action in response. We regret the inconvenience library users will experience as a result of the cancellations but we will continue to meet your information needs by any financially feasible means.

That being said, the purpose of this committee is to support and advocate for the library and the tone of this memorial is counter to that purpose. In response to the specific allegations in the memorial, the Collections Team wishes to provide an in-depth explanation of cancellations and address some of the claims made in the memorial.

To better understand this round of cancellations it is important to keep in mind that this represents a response to inflationary increases for FY21. The estimated inflationary impact is 6%.

In addition to responding to inflationary increases, this round of cancellations also accounts for an additional 2.5% reduction in the library's overall budget as a result of the university's budget realignment process. The library was further told to expect a possible mid-year budget reduction, so additional money was set aside from the collections budget to accommodate that possibility. This cancellation also reflects the loss of carry forward funds that would otherwise have been used to cover operational expenses, such as the annual costs associated with paying for the library's operating systems and memberships in consortia. Finally, materials ordered in FY20 were, due to the university pandemic closure, not received and invoiced until FY21, thus creating an unanticipated additional expense for FY21.

I hope this sheds light on the additional financial factors impacting the situation and illustrates the need for the library to take the regrettable and drastic actions necessary to balance the budget.

Turning to the allegations in the memorial, the memorial alleges the library failed to adequately communicate with the faculty regarding the cancellations. The library has been informing the faculty and university administration of the dire financial situation for more than a decade. The library has used various methods to convey this information, including communications via departmental liaisons, open forums, calls for feedback published in the Hotline and maintaining a decade's worth of cancellation information on the library website.

With regard to the recent round of cancellations, three calls for feedback were issued via the Hotline between Fall 2019 and February 2020. All information, including a complete list of journal titles, database subscriptions, usage and cost data was maintained on the library's website until the beginning of this year.

Simultaneously to the call for feedback, Dean Terpis approached university administration and the academic deans and informed them that the library would need to cancel subscriptions with the largest vendor, Elsevier. She received support for this decision. Given the impact of this decision, the library suggested that a town hall focusing on the library's budgetary situation be conducted.

In May, the Associate's Dean's Council was informed by the library representative that cuts to the materials budget would be larger than expected due to the university's budget situation. In response to the university budget realignment process, Dean Terpis submitted plans for a potential cuts. These included the possibility of canceling nearly all journal subscriptions and were presented to this committee in October 2020. At that time this committee acknowledged the dire situation and took action to bring forward a memorial to the senate regarding the library's funding. This was not the first time the Senate had taken such an action, as evidenced by memorials in 2010, 2012, and 2013. The library appreciates the support and also cites this as evidence of continued efforts to communicate with the campus.

At the time Dean Terpis presented the plans for potential budget cuts to this committee in October, it was explained that once the library received final budget numbers from central administration there would be no additional opportunity for faculty input on the cancellations due to the fact that the library had already stopped paying invoices and was past the vendor imposed deadline for submitting journal cancellations. At that time, it was noted that decisions regarding cancellations would be guided by the same rubric and metrics that had always been applied and that were posted on the library's website. This is reflected in the minutes of this committee.

Once the library received the budget from central administration in December 2020, the Collections Team took two steps: identifying a list of titles the library could afford to retain and drafting a memorandum to accompany the release of the list of cancellations. When identifying the titles to retain, the library used the list that had been referred to in the earlier Hotline announcements and posted on the library website for more than a year. The Team applied the same data-driven metrics it has used for the last decade, namely cost, cost per use, and availability via database aggregators. The Team also tried to maintain at least a few titles in the sciences, arts and humanities, and social sciences.

Taking all this information together, the Collections Team hopes you can see the necessity of the cancellations and the efforts the library made to communicate under less than ideal circumstances. While we understand the inclination of the faculty to take action in response to the cancellations, we respectfully suggest that calling out the library leadership in this memorial is, quite frankly, adversarial, not in keeping with the purpose of this committee and essentially "shooting the messenger." The Collections Team suggests re-wording the memorial to call upon central administration to account for the lack of library funding and request that administration come up with a sustainable funding model for the library prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Submitted by:
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Chair, Library Collections Team
February 19, 2021