

IUPUI LIBRARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Minutes

October 30th, 2007

Attending

Faculty: David Bivin (chair), Peter Thuesen, Nancy Parks

Librarians: David Lewis (Dean), Jim Baldwin, Fran Huehls, Mohnash Moshbegh

Guest: Karen Janke, Associate Librarian and Access Services Team Leader.

The meeting began slightly after 3:00pm. The main order of business was the current state of the budget and prospects for the future.

The “University Library Materials Budget” is the portion of the budget devoted to the acquisition of monographs and subscriptions to journals. This budget rose by 9.74% from the 2003 academic year to the 2004 academic year and 4.44% in 2004-2005. But in 2006, it fell by 1.42% and remained constant in the current academic year. It has been suggested to Dean Lewis that the budget will not grow next year either. Overall, the budget has grown by 12.99% from 2003 to the present.

In contrast, the cost of journal subscriptions has risen by 38% over the same period (the cost of monographs has risen much more moderately).

The budget process is such that each school is assessed a “tax” by the administration and a portion of this tax is passed onto the library to support acquisitions and subscriptions that are relevant for that school. This approach assures that each school receives its “fair share” of the budget. Among the schools, Science is facing the most immediate budget crunch because of their heavy reliance on journals and the fact that science journals have experienced especially rapid price increases. Specifically, Science is expected to receive an 18% reduction in its serials budget this academic year, measured in real terms. Although Dean Lewis expects serials inflation to moderate in the near future, he anticipates that other schools will soon encounter similar difficulties as well.

Dean Lewis is concerned about the difficulties of managing the budget when there are one or two years of substantial increases in the budget followed by several years of no increase or even declines. He asked the committee to propose to the administration that a budget process be adopted that would insure more regular growth of the budget to the library. This should be completed by late January 2008 at the latest in order to be incorporated into the annual budget hearings. David Bivin will write a rough draft of the letter and circulate it for comments and suggested revisions.

Several related pieces of information:

- Although the library’s budget is set by the administration, the distribution of the budget between monographs and journal subscriptions is determined by the individual departments.

- Dean Lewis indicated little room for additional cost saving. He mentioned that the library has started tracking usage more closely and that we have joined a consortium that provides more efficient inter-library loans. The latter may allow us to cancel subscriptions of rarely used journals.
- Dean Lewis did not propose a target growth rate for the library's budget and so, presumably, neither will we.
- Library users are relying more heavily on electronic versions of materials, but there is limited scope for cost-saving by canceling paper copy subscriptions because of the very small discounts for doing so.

The meeting concluded with a 15 minute presentation by Karen Janke on library security. A survey was recently done of library users and employees on the issue of property and personal security. There were 152 respondents. Although I doubt that we can attest to the scientific validity of the survey, the results are still interesting. 70% of the respondents are either the victims of theft or are aware that thefts have taken place in the library. 46% indicated that they had "frequently" or "sometimes" experienced concern for their personal safety while in the library. 70% responded in the same manner when asked about safety outside the library or on the campus in general.

The concern focuses on a wide variety of issues including theft and unruly, threatening patrons. But one issue that has received special focus arises from the fact that the library is freely available to all citizens of Indiana. It seems that we recently attracted a number of homeless men and women from downtown. This is due to the closure of the downtown branch of the Indianapolis/Marion County Library and also the free bus line that runs from downtown out to the campus. The concerns are two-fold. The first is that the homeless are monopolizing the computers to cruise the web and play games when other may wish to use them for academic-related work. The second is that several of the homeless appear to be mentally ill and frighten the other patrons.

The issue is how to best address this sort of behavior while still providing access to citizens of the state.

A "safety audit" of the library is being conducted by a member of the IUPUI Police Department and he will provide a report on his conclusions in the near future. This issue does not directly fall under the committee's purview but we may need to address the issue if it becomes a substantial budget item.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30pm.