Senate Committee on Libraries
Report to the University Senate, December 2018

The Senate Committee on Libraries met on November 5, 2018. The following faculty members were present: Brian DeMare (committee chair), Martin Dimitrov, Paul Colombo, Rich Campanella, Robert Dobson, and Kerstin Honer Zu Bentrup. Students in attendance: Joseph Hoffman, Peter Kintner, Erin Kelly, and Joie Olayiwola. Professional librarian: Eric Wedig. Ex-officio members present were: David Banush, Neville Pendergast, James Duggan, and Betsy Clementson.

To start the meeting, Dean of Libraries Academic Information Resources David Banush, provided a thorough overview of the university’s libraries. Dean Banush’s presentation focused on the following issues.

- **Budgeting and Staffing:** The library budget for the 2019 fiscal year is $18.900.000. Of this amount, 60% ($11.3m) is allocated for collections; 35% ($6.6m) is allocated for staffing; and 5% ($900k) for other expenses. The library is considered a shared services unit in the university’s RCM budget model and funded by taxes on the revenues of the university’s various schools. The libraries currently employ 105 full time employees plus student workers. Our personnel costs are low compared to other universities, mostly due to lower salaries and fewer staff.

- **Usage:** The library has about 1 million visitors this past year; use as measured by gate counts is increasing. Circulations are down 10%, but the use of electronic resources is rising, with 1.65 million downloads this past year. We are also seeing a 10% rise in instruction sessions and workshops (425).

- **Events and Notable Acquisitions:** The libraries continue to celebrate the H-TML 50th Anniversary and held a number of outstanding events over the past year, including several exhibits that also tied in with the 300th anniversary of New Orleans’ founding. Among the libraries notable acquisitions was a subscription to the *Wall Street Journal* for Tulane affiliates (see below for a list of major events and acquisitions).

- **Projects and Initiatives:** The library continues to work to maximize its limited space. A space planning study in conjunction with a consulting firm, Brightspot Strategy, has been underway since earlier this year. Results, which will be shared with the broader community, should be available in early 2019. A library user survey was conducted in spring 2018; further analysis of results is underway.

- **Pressing Issues:** the main concerns for our librarians continue to be space, staffing, and funding. Our libraries are essentially out of space. We are currently 2/3 of the way through a project to free up on-campus space by moving more than 300,000 volumes (mostly duplicate copies of monographs and journals that have reliable digital versions) off campus, but our off-site storage facility in midcity New Orleans is nearly filled. On campus, a proposed renovation of the first floor of Howard-Tilton to create a large space for technology-enhanced scholarship, leaning, and teaching is a capital campaign priority. The library continues to have difficulty attracting or retaining qualified employees due to
salary concerns; hiring technology specialists has proven particularly difficult given the salaries available in the private sector.

Following Dean Banush’s overview of the state of our libraries, committee members discussed how we might improve how we work with the libraries, starting with more workshops, both online and in person. In terms of funding, the committee believes the library to be underfunded, especially in comparison with our peer universities (although there is some confusion over which universities qualify as our peers). The undergraduate student committee members introduced an innovative project to collect used textbooks and make them available to students. The initiative is a partnership with the library to support students who may have trouble affording expensive textbooks. In order to help create a robust collection of textbooks, a collection drive is planned for the end of the semester. This project, the Textbook Resource Center, is located on the first floor of Howard-Tilton library. Materials are available for use in the library during all of its 128.5 weekly operating hours. The committee discussed open educational resources, created by faculty, which could be made available online; this could be a textbook, or any kind of learning object. The committee discussed acquisitions of journals, open access materials, and non-English sources. Other topics of conversation included the creation of a regular library newsletter, the need for new staff to deal with social media and community engagement, more library workshops on evaluating sources, and how to more effectively reach out to Tulane faculty.

Major Events, Acquisitions, and Activities: Fall 2018


*Cook Dat!:* [https://library.tulane.edu/events/cook-dat-celebration-new-orleans-cuisine](https://library.tulane.edu/events/cook-dat-celebration-new-orleans-cuisine)

Latin American Library Open House: [http://lal.tulane.edu/happenings/exhibits/latin-american-library-14th-annual-open-house-exhibit](http://lal.tulane.edu/happenings/exhibits/latin-american-library-14th-annual-open-house-exhibit)

Library fellows program: [https://library.tulane.edu/library_fellowship](https://library.tulane.edu/library_fellowship)


Tulane Open Access Week: [https://libguides.tulane.edu/oa/events](https://libguides.tulane.edu/oa/events)
