

Queen's University Library
Library Advisory Committee for the Humanities and Social Sciences
Report to the Faculty of Arts and Science Faculty Board

April 2010

The purpose of the Library Advisory Committee for the Humanities and Social Sciences (LACHSS) is to provide a forum for effective communication between the Library and the humanities and social sciences communities at Queen's University. The membership consists of the Departmental Library Representatives, graduate and undergraduate representatives and representatives from the Library, including the subject liaison librarians. Two meetings were held in the 2009/10 academic year – October 21, 2009 and March 30, 2010. Further information about the LACHSS and minutes of meetings are available at the [LACHSS website](#).

Highlights 2009/10

1. Budget discussions

At both LACHSS meetings this year, the Library provided information and updates on the effects of ongoing operating budget reductions. We also asked departments to keep us informed about their own changes to programs, curriculum, teaching methodology and student assessment, as these changes will impact Library services and collections.

The Library began a planning process in 2009 to determine how to preserve the Library's core strengths while addressing significant fiscal constraints. A *Library Change Framework* was drafted in the summer and presented to the LACHSS for information and feedback in the fall. The framework has guided Library task groups in reviewing several different aspects of Library services and operations. The overarching goal of this process is to streamline activities such as purchasing and cataloguing in order to maintain services tailored to the widely varying needs of users across all disciplines. As part of streamlining activities, a new approach to monitoring funds for monograph purchases for the humanities and social sciences may be piloted for the 2010/11 fiscal year. The LACHSS provided feedback on the proposed pilot at its March meeting.

The Library is in a relatively early stage of exploring options for organizational restructuring. If any major facilities or service changes are proposed they will be brought forward to the Queen's community through appropriate governing bodies.

2. Reports and discussion on Library projects

(a) Print journal cancellations

Budget reductions and resulting staff reductions, along with increased availability of electronic journals, prompted a project in 2009/10 to analyze whether journals currently received in paper could be replaced by an electronic version. Approximately 1200 titles in the humanities and social sciences are being evaluated according to a set of criteria including the quality and completeness of the electronic version and its images and charts. More analysis is required to establish how many titles can be cancelled. The LACHSS discussed several aspects of the analysis, including the embargo periods of journals in some databases, the ability to access

journals when off-campus, the apparent duplication of journals in several databases and longer term plans for continuous assessment of journal collections.

(b) Videostreaming

A videostreaming working group has been looking at the state of videostreaming in general and what role the Library should play in making streamed video available for teaching and research. Videostreaming is becoming more common as an option for purchasing media but pricing, licensing and distribution models are still very much in their infancy and in flux. The working group conducted a pilot project to provide seven streamed titles for the online Global Development Studies 100 course. The project was successful, with students reporting only a few minor access problems. The Library is purchasing streamed media instead of DVDs whenever possible and continues to monitor the latest developments.

(c) Course reading lists and reserves

A course readings working group explored ways that the Library could improve access to course readings. The group included Professor Maggie Berg as well as individuals in the Library and IT Services. As a result of the working group's investigations, the Library began suggesting online access to course readings when an item is requested for reserve. Faculty may also want to consider online access as an alternative to course packs, many of which have a substantial overlap with content freely available to students through the Library's electronic journal licenses. Many students appreciate the convenience of course packs but are often unaware that online access is an option. The working group developed a new website to advise faculty on a variety of aspects of course readings, including accessibility requirements and how to create effective permanent web links: <http://library.queensu.ca/help/course readings>.

3. Other activities

One of the purposes of the LACHSS is to provide a forum for communication. We are pleased that concerns come to the table which we might otherwise not be aware of and to which we can respond with explanations and/or policy changes. Examples this year included matters relating to interlibrary loan policies and charges, eligibility for library privileges, borrowing limits and web proxy usability. As well, we are pleased to provide information on activities such as a very successful workshop organized for the School of Graduate Studies' *Expanding Horizons* series. Held in Stauffer Library's Speaker's Corner, *The Literature Review: Ask Those Who Know* was a panel discussion by three faculty members on conducting effective literature reviews for graduate studies. It was very well attended and many positive comments were received from the participants.

We greatly appreciate the engagement of members of the LACHSS and the close working relationship the Library has with the Faculty of Arts and Science, and welcome comments and questions from the Faculty Board.

Respectfully submitted by

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