

Library Advisory Committee for the Faculty of Arts and Science (Humanities and Social Sciences)
Minutes
November 2, 2016
10:30-12:00pm
Stauffer Library, Room 121

1. Welcome and Introductions

J. Druery (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves. There are 26 departmental library representatives, two undergraduate student representatives, three graduate student representatives and twelve library representatives.

2. Presentation: Information Resources Strategy, Martha Whitehead, Vice-Provost and University Librarian and Heather McMullen, Associate University Librarian

Key points from presentation:

The library spends 44% (2015/16) of its total acquisitions budget purchasing journals in packages from five vendors – Elsevier, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Springer and Sage – known as the “big deals”. The percentage is increasing every year and is not sustainable. The more we spend on these packages the less money we have to purchase monographs, journals from other vendors, resources in other formats and materials to support new and expanded academic programs and new areas of research. Queen’s University recognizes the value and importance of library collections and has provided some additional funds to offset the challenges of the drop in the value of the CDN dollar and inflationary pressures.

New models of scholarly communication are emerging and the library is working with national and international consortia and organizations (eg. Canadian Association of Research Libraries, Confederation of Open Access Repositories) to investigate, raise awareness of and provide access to these models. The library will develop a comprehensive information resources strategy that addresses the challenges and opportunities of the evolving scholarly record in all its forms and raises awareness of these resources as well as the materials that library already provides access to.

Library must modify its acquisitions practices to address the issues of current publishing models, foreign currency exchange fluctuations, and new and continuing teaching, learning and research needs. We need to return to a more targeted, flexible model of purchasing journals. The Library is raising awareness of these issues across the university by making presentations at Principal/VP Meetings, Faculty Boards, library staff events, departmental meetings and at an invitational meeting of academic stakeholders held in May 2016 (a summary of that meeting was distributed to this group by email in November).

In the coming year, the “big deals” will be closely examined and evidence-based decisions will be made about subscriptions to be maintained. Evidence to be gathered and analyzed includes the results of a journal usage survey being conducted at several institutions across Canada that will ask faculty, Phd students and post-doctoral fellows to identify the journals that they use most often, QU usage data including number of downloads (helps to determine undergraduate needs) and citation data. The data will allow us to measure the usage of the electronic journal collection, identify variations across

disciplines and publishers, identify journals that are most important to the QU community, keep usage high while lowering costs and regain control of spending and collection development decisions.

What you can do to help – respond to the survey, continue to tell us what resources you want (and understand when we need to assess costs, priorities and alternative forms of access), retain your copyright and deposit your publications in a repository as QSpace, raise awareness of the issues within our discipline and consider high-quality alternatives to make your research available.

A question was asked about the timeline for the data collection and decisions to be made about the “big deals”. H. McMullen explained that the data collection and analysis for all participating universities is being done at the University of Montreal and that it will be available to us in time to make decisions in fall 2017 when the renewals will be due.

3. Revised Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Advisory Committee were revised in summer 2016. Library Advisory Committees across the system are now more closely aligned with the Faculties. A new committee was formed within the Smith School of Business and that committee will meet in the winter term 2017. At the next meeting of this group there will be a discussion of the new terms of reference.

4. Acquisitions Budget

J. Druery gave an update on the state of the acquisitions budget for the humanities, social sciences and business including the following:

Approval plans for monographs were discontinued in February 2015 and have not been resumed. A budget is available for purchasing monographs but each book has to be selected and ordered on an individual basis by the liaison librarians. Monographs are being purchased either in print or electronic format. Except for a very few exceptions we cannot purchase the same material in two different formats. Please continue to send your requests as most direct requests are being purchased. It is very helpful to have suggestions from faculty.

All electronic resource purchases including databases and journals are being evaluated as they come up for renewal to ensure they are still relevant to the teaching and research needs of the departments. These are difficult decisions and consultations will be undertaken when necessary with departmental library representatives.

A question was asked about whether we might return to the practice of having individual departmental budgets for monographs. J. Druery explained that individual budgets were discontinued on the recommendation of a consultants’ report when the library had to make staff reductions and could no longer deal with managing individual departmental monograph budgets. There is also more interdisciplinarity and that would make it difficult to equitably distribute funds. A number of monographs are also made accessible through electronic book packages including Duke ebooks, Oxford Scholarship Online, Association of Canadian University Press, Emerald ebooks and Canadian Electronic Library. It would not be possible to parse out individual titles and their costs to determine how much is spent by department in these packages.

A question was asked about the problem of records not being loaded in QCAT in a timely manner and consequently users may think we do not have a book when in fact we do have access to it. J. Druery

explained that there is sometimes considerable lag between the time items appear in the electronic book packages and when they have a record in QCAT or are searchable through Summon. H. McMullen said that the library is working on a plan to improve this situation.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.