

## Annual Report of Senate Library Committee 2016-17

The Senate Library Committee and the University Library have devoted substantial attention this year to library acquisitions in the face of financial challenges (increasing subscription costs and the poor exchange rate between Canadian and US dollars) and changing needs (expanding graduate programs, the new Indigenous Course Requirement, etc).

One point of emphasis over the last two years has been the increased costs of periodical subscriptions, both due to rising fees and to the fact that most subscriptions are priced in US dollars. Beginning in 2015-16, the Library reviewed subscription usage and discussed journal needs with faculty, identifying a number of databases and single-title subscriptions that could be canceled. This has already led to significant savings in the subscriptions budget, and the SLC encourages all departments to work with the Library to review subscription needs in the future.

The continued development of electronic resources and new programs at the University have also placed a focus on the process by which departments request new acquisitions and the amount of funding available to each department to do so. The SLC has especially noted that inter-departmental programs (often graduate programs) must currently be supported within department allocations and that the ICR will likely lead to additional acquisitions needs as new courses are developed to satisfy the requirement. In addition, some departments regularly underspend their acquisitions allocation, suggesting that there may be inefficiencies in the current acquisitions process. To discuss these issues, the SLC met with all the librarians in January and then held an open meeting with departmental library representatives in February; at these meetings, Michael Hohner (Library Head of Collections) presented a two-part proposal for changes to the acquisition process. The first proposal is to move from a single annual deadline for acquisitions requests to three deadlines per year (fall, winter, and spring/summer terms) to spread spending throughout the fiscal year and allow the Library to take greater advantage of discounts from publishers. Second, after each deadline, unspent funds would move to an open pot from which departments, programs, or potentially individual instructors or students could apply for resources for specific needs. This would allow a more flexible approach to meeting the needs of inter-departmental programs, for example. At this time, there is no proposal to change the formula used to determine departmental allocations; the proposal is only to make funds that each department does not spend available for other needs. Based on positive feedback from departmental library representatives, the SLC has formally recommended that the Library move to adopt this proposal. Determining whether the allocation formula needs revision is an issue for the future.

The SLC is also supportive of other Library initiatives during the past year. In particular, the Library held a blessing by Elder Rob Apetagon, including a smudging ceremony, to help make the Library a safe space for Indigenous students and knowledge. The Library is also proceeding with several areas of improvement in conjunction with the University's Integrated Academic and Research Plan, including research support, community engagement, and physical space improvement. The SLC appreciates the University's support of the Library and acknowledgment of these critical issues in the IARP.

Heading into the next academic year, the SLC plans to continue holding meetings open to the departmental library representatives, likely once in each of the Fall and Winter terms. We found feedback from the departmental representatives very helpful this year and would like to take advantage of that resource further.

Andrew Frey, SLC chair  
for the Senate Library Committee