

## Senate Committee Report

**Date:** 11/20/2020  
**Senate Meeting Date:** 12/02/2020  
**Report #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Intended Action:** Informational

**Committee:** Library

**Committee Status:** Appointed Chartered

### **Names of Committee Members:**

Johnathan Farris, CCCA (**Co-Chair**)  
Jacob Labendz, BCLASSE (**Co-Chair, Fall only**)  
Eleanor Congdon, BCLASSE  
Laura Calcagni, BCHHS  
Kristin Bruns, BCLASSE  
Alice Wang, CCCA  
Rick Deschenes, CSTEM  
Kimberly Pleva, WCBA  
Jeremy Schwartz, WCBA  
Maddy Johns, Student  
Michael Sacco, Student  
Martha Pallante, BCLASSE. (ex officio, fmr. Admin.)  
Ana Torres, Dir. Maag Library (ex officio)  
Phyllis Paul, Admin. (ex officio)  
Gary Walker, CSTEM (ex officio)  
Christine Adams (ex officio)

### **Brief Summary**

The Senate Library Committee met for the second time this semester to assess the current system by which the library allocates funds on an annual basis to departments and programs.

The following includes a proposal for how to more fairly and systematically allocate the library's acquisition funds. It includes a two-step process whereby academic-unit allocations are revised and a new system for allocating annual surpluses will be developed in consultation with the university community.

**If substantive changes in your committee recommendation are made from the floor, the committee would prefer that the matter be returned to it for further considerations?**

## **Introduction and Rationale**

The current system by which library acquisition funds are distributed between departments has been in place for over fifty years. We lack any information which would clarify how those in charge determined how much to allocate to each department or program. We have only the tradition that specific departments receive specific allotments. New programs often go without an allocations budget. In sum, we have a tradition, not a system.

Our work over the past two years, nonetheless, has been to bring allocations into order by ensuring that departments do not exceed their budgets and that departments that under-allocate are aware of missed opportunities. This work took on renewed importance this year, as we helped the library to accommodate the restructuring of our academic units.

This process was made easier in FY18 when the administration increased its allocation to the library's acquisition fund by \$126,000. Of that amount we earmarked \$60,000 to cover an ongoing shortfall in funding for OhioLink, which was due to rising costs.

This left \$66,000 in new funds to be allocated, for which we solicited proposals. We decided to allocate some of this money to pay for the video-streaming service, Films on Demand, which provides access to thousands of films for online courses and research. In FY20, we allocated a total of \$30,507.40 through this system.

We then used the remaining funds to cover the additional costs of departments that had exceeded their budgets, on the condition that they brought their expenses in line with their allocations moving forward. This process has worked well. (\$10,592.06 was encumbered to offset the costs of OhioLink in FY21.)

It is now appropriate that we develop a more responsive, fair, and flexible allocations system for the library. This will help us weather any future structural changes at YSU.

## **Revises Policies**

The only reason why our various departments and programs enjoy their current allocations is tradition. Some programs lack budgets altogether. We seek a more sensible and fair system, one that can be revised and modified.

With this in mind, we propose a two-step allocations system. Both will require immediate attention to provide faculty and administrators with opportunities to shape this process.

### *Phase One*

All academic units—programs and departments—will submit a detailed proposal for their baseline allocations budget. This list should be ranked and include a justification for each expense line. Academic units may divide their requests into the following categories:

- Necessary for accreditation
- Necessary for instruction and degree completion
- Necessary for student research or instruction

Working closely with the library leadership, the Senate Library Committee will draft a proposed baseline budget for each academic unit. This process will be conducted on a biennial basis, in order to accommodate the addition of new or expanded academic units, as well as novel or increased expenses that fall into one of the categories above.

Once this budget has been established, we will move on to secondary allocations. We hope to create a budget of sufficient size to provide more flexibility in the allocations system and to facilitate new teaching and research initiatives.

### *Phase Two*

We would like to initiate a university-wide discussion early next semester. Our task will be to create a system for allocating all funds not encumbered in phase one. Unlike phase one, this will eventually be an annual allocations process.

We will hold a few online forums where faculty and administrators can propose different uses for the funds not encumbered in phase one. This will be followed by the use of a questionnaire to assess the general will of the university community.

Some possibilities for phase-two allocations include:

- A set allocation for new faculty members to be used during their first year.
- A set (or negotiated) allocation for new or expanded academic units. (This would be incorporated into phase-one budgeting upon its biennial revision.)
- A process for vetting and assessing acquisition proposals:
  - from part-time and non-TT faculty members.
  - from full-time faculty awarded FILs, sabbaticals, or research professorships.
  - for designing new courses.
  - for general proposals.

Guidelines must also be developed for how to prioritize and review applications.

### **Recommendation**

Senators should provide feedback to the Senate Library Committee, advise their departments and academic units of the proposed changes to the allocations policies, and encourage their colleagues to participate in information- and feedback-gathering processes.