

Library committee final report & recommendations: AY 2012-2013

June 15, 2013

### Overall summary

The faculty library committee evaluated the needs of the McDermott Library over the past academic year. We found that the library, while happily possessed of an energetic staff and an enthusiastic student population, significantly lacks the resources to fully meet the needs of the University of Texas at Dallas. In particular, students require more study space, resources require more storage space, librarians require adequate wages, and programs require library budgets. Without these four improvements, the library will not be able to keep pace with the rapid growth of both the university and the accumulation of knowledge in its various academic programs.

Attention to the library is particularly urgent should the University move forward with its Tier 1 status campaign. A Tier 1 university requires a Tier 1 library, which means inclusion in the Association of Research Libraries, an organization for the largest and most major research libraries in North America; UT Austin, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, University of Houston, and Rice are currently ranked. Yet the library's finances are currently far from the level that would permit a successful application. Our expenditures are \$13 million short of entry level, and our professional staff's average salary is \$10,000 short of entry level.

We strongly recommend that the library be acknowledged as a central and pivotal part of the academic and capital landscape at UT Dallas. We maintain that a fully functioning, twenty-first century library is crucial to our work as researchers educating a hard-working, quickly developing group of students.

### Specific recommendations

Our particular recommendations are numbered and explained below. Most of the committee agreed that they bear equal priority—that all ought to be planned for, and implemented, as soon as possible. At least one member indicated that the list should be prioritized in the presented order, while recommending a costs/benefits analysis for particular options for item (2).

1. Increased student study space. Students need at least twenty additional study rooms including whiteboards, computers (in some cases projectors), tables and chairs.

2. Increased resource storage space. The library cannot continue to grow the amount of study space students desperately need without room to relocate its current and future collection of materials.

The library currently holds 118,515.67 square feet of space; it seems to need at least 50% more. In the final analysis, a new building wired, and otherwise prepared for computer terminals, student study spaces (both group and individual), and material collections—"a space of this century," as one of our committee members called it—is probably in order. In the short run, a

substantial expansion of library space is essential, either through new building or space allocated from another campus facility.

We considered digital storage as a way to decrease the amount of space necessary for materials. While digital storage works well for journal subscriptions, books are not currently available in a format that makes possible the detailed reading necessary for research. The limitations on digital books under copyright does not constitute a problem unique to UTD but results from the software available to all libraries. Other options include a remote storage space and a satellite building on campus.

3. Adequate pay for library workers. The library has recently made new hires in two important positions. Still, compensation remains low for the region and attracting talent has been challenging. An increase in librarian wages is recommended immediately.

4. Resource budget to match program growth. When UTD schools are developing new programs and considering new hires, either the Provost's Office or the appropriate Dean needs to make available funds for new journal and database subscriptions and/or books and film collections.

#### Use of this document

As the library will be participating in a university-wide self-study in the 2013-2014 academic year, it is our hope that this document can direct attention to the most pressing issues for assessment and improvement. The faculty should be understood to stand behind library development and, in all senses of the word, expansion.

Respectfully submitted by Shari Goldberg, Chair, and Susan Chizeck, Vice Chair, on behalf of the entire faculty library committee:

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