

University Libraries Principal Priorities for FY98

Increase student wage budget to cover the increase in the minimum wage.

The Libraries depend heavily upon student workers to perform routine functions such as shelving, working at the circulation desk, and processing materials. This past year, we employed the equivalent of 52 full time workers as students at a cost of \$464,000. Almost all of these students are paid the minimum wage. On October 1, 1996, the minimum wage increased from \$4.25 to \$4.75 per hour and on September 1, 1997, it will increase again to \$5.15, a combined total of 21%. *In order to continue to employ the same number of students, the Libraries needs an increase in its student wage budget of \$98,275.* Without this increase, basic library functions will suffer.

Increase the Library Materials Budget to cover inflation.

The cost of books and journals continues to escalate. It is anticipated that costs for FY98 will increase by about 10%. An increase of about \$2,000,000 is needed to restore FY90 purchasing power. If this is not achievable, *then an increase of 10% of the FY97 budget or \$650,000 is needed to maintain FY97 purchasing power.*

Increase Salaries.

The median salary for librarians has improved compared with our peer institutions in the Association of Research Libraries. For FY97, we moved up to 8th out of 109 ARL members, just squeaking into the third quartile. In recent years, our position was 10th in FY94, 95th in FY95, and 90th in FY96. If a 6% raise is forthcoming, this improvement should continue. However, it should be pointed out that the overall ranking for the Libraries is 30th out of these same 109 institutions in the ARL membership index. It is doubtful that any other unit on campus that ranks this high among its peers would also rank so low in median salaries compared to the same peer group. Additional attention to salaries would be welcome.

Add New Positions.

The FY97 budget provided funds to create some additional positions. These positions were sorely needed and greatly appreciated. We still are experiencing difficulties in providing adequate staff to assist students in the use of new resources. Any additional funding in this area would significantly improve the level of service we can offer.

Pursue Library Building Projects.

The need for new space for the Libraries continues to be an issue. Our collections continue to grow, with notable additions to our special collections. Also, we provide only 2,700 seats when the accepted standard calls for 4,500 for our current enrollment. We actually provide fewer seats now than we did in 1973 when the Annex to the Main Library was constructed. Further, the Repository will be full in a few years.

This past year, the major new library building that was on the campus list of capital priorities was broken into three separate projects – an Electronic Teaching Library that would be part of the proposed new library/classroom building, a special collections building with a storage facility, and an addition to the Science Library. These proposed projects require additional study and attention over the coming year.

Investigate New Integrated Library System.

GALIN, the Libraries' online catalog and processing system, operates on the University's mainframe computer. Newer commercial systems are available that operate on Unix platforms and provide greater functionality and better support for advanced networking. We are starting to investigate these new systems in order to identify a possible replacement for GALIN. This investigation is being undertaken in conjunction with all the libraries in the University System as the next phase of GALILEO. Through the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology, the University System libraries intend to request FY99 funds to purchase the same system for all libraries. This will promote greater cooperation and allow students and faculty to more easily borrow materials from other libraries. If this request for funds at the System level does not succeed, the University Libraries may still attempt to pursue replacing GALIN as a campus project. The cost to do this is estimated at between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000. These costs could be spread over several years.

Coordinate Retrofit of Main Library HVAC.

The University and the Regents have requested approximately \$4,200,000 to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in the older portion of the Main Library. This project is certainly needed and appreciated. However, it will disrupt services and require that a large number of staff be housed outside the Libraries for some period of time. Coordinating this project will require considerable attention on the part of the Libraries.

Establish a Budget for Staff Equipment through Redirection.

Library operations increasingly require the use of sophisticated equipment, especially computer workstations and networks. A budget for this equipment has never been established and every year we struggle to squeeze the necessary dollars for staff equipment. There is an opportunity to establish such a line due to the departure of two of the Libraries' Assistant Directors. Only one of them will be replaced and the remaining salary, about \$67,000, will be devoted to the purchase of equipment for use by the staff.

Establish a Budget for Student/Faculty Workstations.

An increasing portion of the Library Materials Budget is allocated to the purchase of electronic publications. However, we also need to purchase the necessary equipment to use these publications. If the increase to the Library Materials Budget is sufficient, up to \$100,000 will be allocated for the purchase of workstations and related equipment for use by faculty and students.

Use Graduate Tuition Funds to Purchase Appropriate Electronic Resources.

The allocation of funds from the increase in graduate tuition to the Libraries presents an opportunity to provide enhanced electronic resources to support graduate student research. During the coming year, activity will focus upon acquiring electronic texts in the humanities, establishing a larger back-file of *Biological Abstracts* and possibly mounting electronic versions of *Science Citation Index* and *Social Science Citation Index*.

Establish Electronic Publications Center.

The possibility of establishing an area in the Main Library focused on the use of electronic resources and publications is being investigated. These resources would support graduate student and faculty research. Discussions are underway with the English Department and others in the humanities regarding a possible proposal to the UGA Research Foundation for funds for equipment and staffing.

Continue Internal Study and Reorganization of the Libraries.

A program review of the Libraries completed this past year was very positive. One notable finding was that over 95% of the students and faculty were either satisfied or very satisfied with the Libraries' services and collections. In the context of this review, an internal committee has been analyzing the Libraries organization looking for ways to further improve operations and communication. Two of the three Assistant Directors have announced that they intend to retire and this affords an opportunity to thoroughly examine and reshape the Libraries' organization.