

Interim report of Library Committee
December 4th 2018

The Library Committee has been assigned with four charges this year (pasted below). Of these four, we have focused this semester on the second one: monitoring funding for subscriptions and replacement of lost fee revenue.

We've held one meeting; in addition, the committee chair (Holly Dugan) has met with Dean Henry (Gelman), Director Linton (Himmelfarb), and Director Pagel (Burns) in October to learn more about the strengths of the library and the role of student fees in past budgets. The committee chair also attended a Librarian's Council Meeting in November to learn more about how this potential change in fee revenue might impact student experience, especially given the sharp cuts in staff made in the past five years.

We have identified this charge as our highest-priority issue because of the potential for a serious shortfall in already over-committed budgets. This has the potential to negatively influence student and faculty experience of the library as a place, as knowledgeable staff, and as a collection. The analysis of our library-spending (as detailed in the 2013 administrative review and in subsequent reports from this committee in the past five years) document that our budgets are well below those of our peer institutions; this is balanced with the increasing costs of journal subscriptions and for maintenance and repair (Gelman Library, for instance, is dealing with extensive HVAC issues that may threaten the stability of the collection).

Our libraries, however, remain some of the most vital and most-used spaces on campus. Library usage at GWU is incredibly high; even with all of the new places on campus to study, many students prefer the library. They are vital spaces on campus and they are central to GWU and its academic mission.

The loss of student fee revenue could potentially impact student experience. Vice President Arbide's presentation at the November Faculty Senate meeting emphasized that volunteer giving remains a targeted area of improvement; we anticipate that this will be true for our current students, many of whom advocated for a removal of the fee from their tuition. We anticipate a significant shortfall.

Student fees have been used to maintain the space and to maintain student-oriented books and research journals.

Jacob Burns Law library: student fees have paid for purchasing books for the library; this is likely to continue, given the huge cuts their budget has experienced this past year.

Eckles: no data collected as of yet.

Gelman: voluntary student fees have paid for new chairs, shelves, and computers, as well as repairs to existing furniture and shelving units; it has also funded renovations to study rooms, including adding additional electric service drops and book security systems.

Himmelfarb Health Sciences library: student fees pay for subscriptions to Access Medicine and Dynamed Plus, two resources that are used by students across the health sciences (though the library only receives student fees from students enrolled in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences).

Virginia Science and Technology Campus Library: no data reported as of yet.

We'll know more in January when we have some figures; in the meantime, we're continuing our research on how other universities handle student fees. The committee plans to meet in January and then again in April to prepare our report for the senate.

AY 2018-2019 Charges for Library Committee:

- Explore strategies for building a research university-level collection;
- Monitor funding for subscriptions and replacement of lost fee revenue;
- Explore collaboration with the University Library Faculty Advisory Committee to ensure faculty input on questions of open access and intellectual property for online course development;
- Continue follow-up on the 2013 administrative review of the library.