



## COUNCIL ON THE LIBRARIES

Tuesday, 27 February 2024

### Minutes

Present: Castelot, Kull, Fosu, He, Mehrer, Olivetti, Parker, Peters

Apologies: Davis, Chee, Cirigliaro, Feiler, Gleiser, Goodman, Jawad, Sunde, Wales, Webster

Library Leadership Team: Chamberlain, Johnson

Guests: Dave Kotz (Provost)

1. Welcome

The Chair and Dean welcomed the Council members and guests.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 16 January 2024

The Minutes of the January 16, 2024 meeting were approved as written.

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting

None.

4. FY25 Budget Round Outcomes

Dean Mehrer provided an overview of the budget for the Libraries and the status of the FY25 budget requests. For context, Dean Mehrer shared a slide offering an overview of the library budget from 2017-2024, noting breakouts by major funding source and relation to overall Dartmouth operating budget. Mehrer noted that the primary source of funding comes from central. This has remained relatively flat over the period, effectively driving the Libraries percent of the overall Dartmouth operating budget from 2.7% in FY18 to 2.2% in FY24. Dean Mehrer also shared a slide indicating that the FTE count in the Libraries has dropped from 167 in FY18 to 144 in FY24. A final slide noted that budget requests for new staff positions were not approved, and that a modest inflationary increase in collections fund was approved. Provost Kotz explained that the budget approval process is always challenging, as there are always valuable proposals that do not get approved, and that operating units are often expected to reallocate funds internally. Council members asked questions how the Libraries' strategic direction and goals had been considered in the budget decisions, since each of new initiative requests were directly

aligned with the strategic plan. The Provost responded that having the strategic plan was helpful in understanding priorities but other institutional considerations led to the Libraries' requests not being approved. Council members also asked about the status of funding for the Libraries in light of the A&S transition, yielding the answer that the Libraries will continue to report to the Provost and that the mechanisms for aligning funding from A&S still need to be worked out.

5. Textbook affordability: Next Steps

Daniel Chamberlain, Associate Dean of Libraries, Research & Digital Strategies, reminded the council that the results of the Council's working group on textbook affordability and open educational resources were shared with the Academic Dean's at a meeting convened by the Provost last fall. The substance of that meeting included an overview of the textbook marketplace, a review of the student survey conducted in Spring 2023, and a description of the various efforts undertaken by the Libraries in this space. Library staff continues to advise instructors in the creation of open educational resources, and an informal textbook exchange has been established. The Provost reported that he has been in conversation with the Director of Financial Aid, Dino Koff, and that they are exploring creative, legal solutions to address the affordability of textbooks for students. The Provost has also brought together the Director of Financial Aid, the Dean of Faculty, the Dean of the College, and the Vice President & Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid to collectively consider this challenge for undergraduates. The council expressed appreciation for these efforts, and noted that policies and approaches aimed at undergraduates might subsequently address graduate and professional student needs, as appropriate.

6. Library Collections Budget Overview

Qiana Johnson, Associate Dean of Libraries, Collections & Content Strategies, provided an overview of that portion of the budget dedicated to collections. She explained how the library collections budget is approximately \$13 million dollars and comes from a variety of funding sources—funding that is centrally allocated, funding from Tuck, funding from Thayer, and funding from Geisel. Despite the variety of sources, they are all administered centrally by the staff in Baker-Berry. Librarians across the professional schools and liaisons to Arts and Sciences select and evaluate the library resources that will best support their constituencies. Johnson explained that of the total \$13 million dollar budget, a little over half comes from subvention funding, with the rest made up of a mix of restricted and unrestricted endowment funding. 80% of the budget goes toward ongoing resources--journal subscriptions, databases, and electronic resources. These resources, particularly journal titles, can have yearly increases the range from 3% for humanities journals up to 7-8% for the sciences. With the collections budget staying largely flat, increasing costs for journals and databases could take up a larger percentage of the budget. To keep this percentage relatively stable, the library does regular review of the resources it subscribes to in order to make sure that what is being acquired meets current teaching and research needs.

7. Any Other Business

None.

8. Next Meeting: 9 April 2024