



Faculty Senate
Library Advisory Committee

TO: THOMAS GALLIGAN, INTERIM PRESIDENT
TO: MANDI LOPEZ, PRESIDENT, FACULTY SENATE
TO: PRESIDENT OF THE LSU STUDENT GOVERNMENT
TO: STACIA HAYNIE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST
TO: JAMES NGUYEN SPENCER, VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
TO: SAMUEL BENTLEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TO: TROY BLANCHARD, DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TO: ADELAIDE RUSSO, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH STUDIES
TO: RAFAEL OROZCO, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES, LITERATURES & CULTURES
TO: JOSEPH KRONICK, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES
TO: LORI MARTIN, ASSOCIATE DEAN, COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, INTERIM CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
TO: AARON SHEEHAN-DEAN, CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
TO: SHARON WELTMAN, DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
TO: MICHAEL PASQUIER, DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL ARTS
TO: ELENA CASTRO, DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM IN WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES
TO: PATRICIA SUCHY, DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAM IN SCREEN ARTS
TO: JAMES STONER, DIRECTOR OF THE ERIC VOEGELIN INSTITUTE
TO: SUZANNE MARCHAND, BOYD PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
CC: STANLEY WILDER, DEAN OF THE LSU LIBRARIES

May 10, 2021

Report on Library Resource Shortages at LSU

Dear Presidents, Provost, Vice Presidents, Vice Provost, Chairs, Directors, and Distinguished Professors,

Today, we present to you a deeply concerning report on the availability of library resources at LSU that make apparent a dire need for sustainable long-term solutions.

As one of the Standing Committees of the LSU Faculty Senate, the Library Advisory Committee is charged with monitoring resources and services that the LSU Libraries offers to support research and teaching activities and with communicating faculty needs to the Dean of the Libraries. The following report is a result of the committee's effort to illustrate how a decade of low budgets for the LSU Libraries has had and continues to have negative impacts on teaching and research at LSU.

We are alarmed by the fact that LSU's total library expenses are currently at about 60% of the SEC Mean and that the expenses on books are only 26% of the SEC Mean. Over the last ten years, LSU's library expenses on books have been consistently far below the mean spending of the American Research Libraries, comprised of the 116 largest research libraries in the US/Canada, in 2016 even as low as 10% of the ARL Mean. These statistics indicate a prolonged underfunding of library resources which has negative effects on all units of the university, but which disproportionately disadvantages those disciplines that heavily rely on monographs and book publication in the Arts and Humanities.

As the committee is not equipped to survey all schools, departments, and programs at LSU, we identified two departments where the negative effects of gaps in the collections and lack of other library resources are particularly pronounced: research and teaching in the Departments of French as well as World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. We are using these case studies as examples to make tangible the dire consequences of prolonged underfunding of library resources.

We understand the difficulties in making funding decisions at a large state university which runs on a tight budget. We are grateful for your service as leaders at our institution and we sincerely urge each one of you to use your administrative leverage and to engage with the Dean of the Libraries in an effort to develop a sustainable long-term strategy for the funding of library resources, a strategy that is worthy of a Research One university and that will place LSU in a leading position among our SEC peer institutions.

The Library is the one place and resource center that every single department and all parts of the LSU community, faculty, students, and staff alike, must use on a regular basis to conduct their work and to fulfill the mission that brings us together: to bring innovative research and excellent education to Louisiana and to help students launch careers that have an impact on the world. If we want to continue to be able to do this, we cannot afford to underfund the library anymore!

Sincerely,

Dr. Gundela Hachmann, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Chair
Dr. Tracy Quirk, Coast and Environment, Co-Chair
Dr. Morgan Kelly, Science
Dr. Kayanush Aryana, Agriculture
Dr. Senlin Chen, Human Sciences and Education
Dr. Gabriel Arce, Engineering
Takashi Taguchi, Graduate Student Representative
Dr. Lois Kuyper-Rushing, Libraries, Member Ex Officio
Dr. Stanley Wilder, Dean of the LSU Libraries, Member Ex Officio