

May 5, 2022

Dear Chair and Members of the Faculty Senate,

I look forward to presenting on the University Library Committee's work at the Faculty Senate meeting to be held on May 10th. In preparation for that meeting, I have prepared this report of the Committee's work during academic year 2021 – 2022.

From the Handbook of Operating Procedures Section: ADM 06-304:

<https://www.utrgv.edu/hop/policies/adm-06-304.pdf>

University Library Committee Role

- Address library issues
- Reflect the voice of faculty
- Make recommendations regarding faculty issues to appropriate officials
- Serve as a channel of communication among faculty, Faculty Senate, Provost, SGA, and other stakeholders
- Report outcomes of recommendations to Faculty Senate

Purpose of Committee

- Advise librarians on matters of general library policy and development of library resources

Responsibilities of Committee

- Advise Librarians on University Library policies
- Provide input on allocation of resources for the departmental requests for new resources
- Advise on services to support students, faculty, staff, and other Library patrons

Term of Service

- Three years (current members will end their term on August 31, 2022 – except for Chair-Elect)

Committee Membership and Anticipated Changes

1. Dr. Jorge Canchola, College of Sciences (Chair, 2021 – 2022)
2. Dr. Andrew Anabila, College of Business & Entrepreneurship (Chair-elect, 2022 – 2023)
3. Dr. Saara Grizzell, College of Health Professions (Past Chair, 2020 – 2021)
4. Mr. Donald Lyles, School of Art & Design

5. Dr. Javier Cavazos, College of Education
6. Dr. Lin (Helen) Jiang, School of Social Work
7. Dr. Mohamed Abdel Raheem, College of Engineering and Computer Science
8. Dr. Maria Romero-Ramirez, College of Liberal Arts
9. Dr. Liji Mathew, School of Nursing
10. University College Representative – Vacant
11. Undergraduate Student SGA Representative – Vacant
12. Graduate Student SGA Representative – Vacant
13. Jesus Resendez, University Library (Recording Secretary)
14. Dr. Paul Sharpe, Dean of Libraries (Ex-officio member)

The University Library Committee members listed above will have completed three years of service on August 31, 2022. The Chair-elect, Dr. Anabila, will remain on the Committee for another term to welcome and guide new members and continue the Committee's work in 2022 – 2023. New members will need to be selected from the following academic units:

- College of Sciences
- College of Health Professions
- School of Art and Design
- College of Education
- School of Social Work
- College of Engineering and Computer Science
- College of Liberal Arts
- School of Nursing
- University College
- Student Government Association

Committee Report

- The UTRGV Library is composed of the campus libraries on the Brownsville and Edinburg campuses, as well as its constantly growing online presence. The library serves the needs of distributed campuses and provides access to electronic resources thought throughout the RGV.
- As of January 18, 2022, the University Library has returned to the Academic Affairs division; it was previously housed under the Division of Research. Paul Sharpe, Dean of Libraries, now reports to Provost Janna Arney.
- The University Library is an intellectual hub for faculty and students. It provides crucial services to students, faculty, and staff. The Librarians and Dean of Libraries have gone above and beyond in support of the Committee's work and have been instrumental to its success.
- Over the past ~~six~~ years the Library has operated on a flat budget. Feedback from surveys and reports gathered by the Committee reveal a need to increase Library funding in order for it to keep up with the University's growth and emerging research/R1 status aspirations.

- During the 2021 – 2022 term, the Committee analyzed results from a Faculty Needs survey conducted in 2020 – 2021. In October 2021, two reports were compiled listing current available resources and services, and those that are not available but requested by faculty. Both reports reveal a discrepancy between the increasing needs of faculty members conducting research and teaching and those that the library is equipped with given its current budget.
- Examples of requested resources and services currently not available at the Library include collaborative spaces for faculty, recording studio space (e.g., lectures, podcasts), greater access to e-Books for multiple students to use in various courses, more physical books, specific videos, workshops/instructional sessions, databases (e.g., Scopus), specific journals, and a faculty writing center.
- The Library awaits the results of a Student Needs survey to be conducted by the SGA.
- It is no surprise that the Library ~~presents~~ faces staffing shortages as it operates under a flat budget. The present number of full-time staff at the Library is an area of concern. In 2015, when UTRV emerged, the legacy-institution libraries employed 67 full-time staff. As of FY 2021, the number of full-time staff at UTRGV's Library total 51. As you see, this represents a decrease in full-time employees. The effects of a flat budget, hiring freezes and swept-away funds have not allowed the Library keep pace with the rate of attrition.
- The departments that have been most affected by staff shortages are Access Services, Special Collections and Archives, Scholarly Communications and Collection Development and Acquisitions.
- Recent changes to the financial aid available to UTRGV students has reduced eligibility for federal work-study positions. This has limited the number of students that the Library can hire to fill staffing gaps (e.g., service desk and low-level library tasks).
- The Library is leaning into a policy of acquiring new resources available in a predominantly online electronic format. This policy is driven by factors such as availability of space, the University's distributed campus model, cost-effectiveness and flexibility of use with open education resources.
- Computer lab use at the Library is steady. Campus IT may be closing computer labs that are located outside the library due to low use. This will have a potential impact on Library computer lab usage and service levels.
- The Library continues to work with faculty and instructors to identify resources for use in open educational resources (OER). As part of the [Textbook Affordability Project](#), the library has helped students save over \$500,000. This helps make attending UTRGV even more affordable. The Committee has worked with the OER Librarian to promote the adoption of OER.
- The Edinburg Library started two large projects:
 - 1) Compact shelving on the 2nd and 3rd floors are being converted from electric to manual crank-operated systems. This project will extend the life of high-density shelving systems. The project began in 2017 and will be completed in Summer 2022. The project would not be possible if not for contributions from the following sources:

▪ \$300,000	UT System LEER funding: 2017
▪ \$250,000	UTRGV one-time funding (Academic Affairs): 2022
▪ \$100,000	UTRGV one-time funding (Facilities): 2019
▪ \$123,754	University Library funding: 2017-2022
▪ \$773,754	TOTAL

This project has been completed.

- 2) The general collections located on the 4th floor of the Edinburg campus are being moved to the 2nd and 3rd floors. This relocation will allow space for the Special Collections Department to relocate to the 4th floor. The Special Collection houses artifacts that have been accumulated over several decades. This Department is instrumental in preserving the cultural history of our HIS for students and researchers. The 4th floor space will allow for better display, greater accessibility and protection from flooding that may occur at their present location on the 1st floor. Through digitization and enhanced exhibits, the Library anticipates the ability to provide access to more primary resources for use in various curricula.

This project is ongoing.

- The Committee suggested improvements to the library's Welcome page. Library staff made updates which included easier access to library hours and events.
- The Committee promoted developing channels of communication between the Committee, the Library and University faculty. Several models of improved communication were developed, including inviting librarians to present reports at Committee meetings, inviting library liaisons to present to Department/School meetings, and tasking faculty liaisons to communicate Library news and activities with their units' faculty. In the future, Faculty Liaisons will be invited as guests to Committee meetings with the intent of increasing participation and with and awareness of Library business.
- Current Faculty Liaison assignments may need to be updated by the University Departments/Schools: <https://utrgv.libguides.com/collectiondevelopment/libraryliaisons>

The Committee plans to continue work during the Summer.

Respectfully,

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