Report of
the Administrative Board of the Library (ABL)
to the Faculty Council
April 16, 2021

Membership of the Administrative Board of the Library (ABL)

Name	Department (School)	Constituency/ Electoral Division	Term Exp
Crescenzi, Mark	Political Science (Arts and Sciences)	Social Sciences	2021
Gilliland, Kurt (chair)	Cell Biology and Physiol (Medicine)	At-Large (appointed)	2021
Henley, Amanda	University Library (Libraries)	Academic Affairs Libraries	2022
Kim, Heidi	English and Comp Lit (Arts and Sciences)	Humanities and Fine Arts	2021
Melo, Maggie	Information/Library Sci. (Information/Library Sci.)	Academic Affairs Professional Schools (appointed)	2021
Pegard, Nicolas	Applied Phys. Sciences (Arts and Sciences)	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	2023
Persky, Adam	Pharmacotherapy… (Pharmacy)	Health Affairs (appointed)	2023
Quinonez, Rocio	Pediatric Dentistry (Dentistry)	Health Affairs (appointed)	2023
Radding, Cynthia	History (Arts and Sciences)	Social Sciences	2023
Sanders, Kimberly	Practice Advancement (Pharmacy)	At-Large (appointed)	2021
Sathy, Viji	Psychology/Neuroscience (Arts and Sciences)	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	2021
Soldavini, Jessica	Nutrition (Public Health)	Graduate Student (appointed)	2021
Tanner, Jessica	Romance Studies (Arts and Sciences)	Humanities and Fine Arts	2023
Westbrooks, Elaine	Information/Library Sci. (Information/Library Sci.)	University Librarian	*Ex officio*
[VACANT]		Undergraduate Student (appointed)	2021

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This report was prepared by Kurt Gilliland on behalf of the Administrative Board of the Library.

A. Overview

Duties. The Administrative Board of the Library (ABL) advises the University Librarian on the administration of the University Libraries ("the Library"), the general policies governing collections, and budget; advocates for the Library; and makes an annual report to the Faculty Council. The ABL met 7 times during the 2020-21 academic year and assisted the Library in supporting its *core pillars* and the five strategic initiatives of the *strategic framework* for the Library.

Core pillars of the Library
- Preservation of the historic record of the state and the University
- Student success
- Supporting the research enterprise

Strategic framework initiatives for the Library
- (1) Data science
- (2) Sustainable scholarship
- (3) Philanthropic growth
- (4) Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility
- (5) Global engagement.

Acknowledgments. The ABL appreciates the leadership of Vice Provost Elaine Westbrooks (University Librarian) and support of numerous faculty and staff including Blue Dean, Anne Gilliland, Nerea Llamas, Nandita Mani, Judy Pannitch, Deborah Zombar, and many others.

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B. Budget cuts

The Library is receiving significant budget reductions in current and future fiscal years. This is particularly challenging since the Library has not received any increases in extramural grant funding and associated F&A (facilities and administrative indirect costs) over the past 10 years. In addition, the Library faces exponential inflation with respect to acquisitions. Prices have been rising annually, on average, ~6% annually for scholarly journals and ~4.5% for academic books, amounting to approximately $600,000 annually – well above the rate of inflation in the general economy. This means that the Library will need to cut $600,000 of collections every year to keep up with the inflation. As long as funding remains flat, the Library's purchasing power erodes because of the cumulative effects of inflation. The Library has developed various management strategies as a result of the sustainable scholarship initiative to maximize the value of the value of the collections budget: (1) canceling print journals that Library also subscribes to online, (2) offsetting the cost of new journal subscriptions by canceling others that are of equivalent value but less needed, and (3) entering into new agreements with Sage and PLOS. Although the Library continues to use these and other strategies, the benefits will diminish over time as the effects of inflation compound and the budget becomes increasingly unsustainable. Budget cuts are currently having the following impacts:

- **Research and recruitment.** Humanities and sciences book acquisitions have been reduced nearly 80% in this current fiscal year. In the fall, the Library will likely need to cut approximately 7000 journals, with 80% of the cuts occurring in the health and life sciences. Graduate students will especially struggle with these reductions in resources.

- **Rankings.** The Library will drop 13 slots in the overall ranking in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and 44 slots in the collections in expenditures. In addition, the School of Law will likely drop 1-2 slots in *U.S. News and World Report* rankings.

Depending on the extent of the budget reductions, the Library may need to take further action. In addition to continuing to cancel journal subscriptions and purchase fewer books, the Library may be need to reduce hours of operation in all libraries. The Library may also be forced to reduce services (e.g., reserves, interlibrary loan) and outreach programs (e.g., exhibitions, book talks, public history programs). Finally, it is possible that budget cuts may result in the closing of branch libraries, layoff of Library staff, and reduction of student hiring.

The future impact of these budget reductions is long-lasting and yet to be seen. **Students** could lose significant study space and access to collections as well as experience reduced career-building opportunities. **Campus researchers**, who are already experiencing a loss of journal access, may experience increased costs or delayed response times for interlibrary loan and delivery services. **Non-UNC researchers** would be significantly affected as they represent 50% of the users of special collections, and attorneys and alumni across the state will lose access to print legal publications, as electronic versions are restricted by publisher license to law affiliates only. **Community users** will become disconnected from the University, as well. All of these cancelations and changes will damage UNC's ability to recruit to faculty and secure competitive grants and cause morale to suffer.

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C. Value of the Library

The Library is valuable to the entire UNC community as well as the citizens of the state of North Carolina.

- ***Serves as a physical space.*** The Library not only provides a space for curiosity, exploration, and inspiration outside of the assigned curriculum but also promotes a sense of community for the campus. A student petition that was created in August stated, *"We students need a place to convene even though we will be socially distanced."*

- ***Creates access to information.*** The Library is the University's most democratic organization because it ensures students, faculty, and staff have access to information and lifelong learning regardless of major, ethnicity, income, physical limitations, or geographic barriers. Librarians know that equitable access to information is crucial for the Library's sustainable scholarship campaign to make UNC research open to the world must be supported. The Library provides a wealth of resources, from extensive databases to conduct research to 3D printers that can help ideas come to life. During the pandemic, the Library instituted a "digital first" strategy to ensure that UNC users can access digital content from the safety of their homes, offices, and residence halls.

- ***Facilitates research and its dissemination.*** The Library is an indispensable part of the cycle of research. Researchers are not able to conduct research, write articles, submit proposals, or obtain grants without having access to research licensed by the Library. The Library also provides a platform for faculty and students to publish or archive their research and make it openly accessible to the world.

- ***Contributes to health literacy for NC citizens.*** There is extensive health information online, but much of it is unreliable. The Library helps the community find health resources that are scientifically accurate and thoroughly vetted, playing a key role in promoting health literacy across the state of North Carolina.

- ***Teaches its users.*** Three out of 5 UNC Librarians report collaborating directly with faculty and graduate students on helping them identify, access, visualize, and evaluate information to create new knowledge. Libraries help students acquire strong research and critical thinking skills so that they can crystalize information instead of rote reporting. Researchers save time when they consult with Librarians who are trained to evaluate and analyze all types of sources. Finally, the Library's coding classes are in high demand; these courses give students from all backgrounds and majors a chance to succeed in today's tech-driven world.

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D. Library Reckoning Initiative

Although the Library has taken affirmative steps to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion, the persistent racial and social injustices of our time demand more of us. On June 1, 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, Vice Provost for University Libraries Elaine L. Westbrooks issued a call to action that launched the Library Reckoning Initiative. The initiative represents a commitment to go beyond a mere focus on diversity. The Library will instead use racial equity, inclusion, and social justice as a lens for all work and the means by which it achieves its mission.

This **Reckoning Initiative Framework** will guide the Library's efforts to address inequality and promote racial equity, inclusion, and antiracism within the organization and through the work that it does. The Library will dismantle the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levers of systemic inequality. It will implement practices and policies that sustain equity, opportunity, and inclusive excellence. This shared framework empowers strategic action and coheres efforts in support of a common direction.

To "reckon" is to account for what the Library has done — or has failed to do — as an organization. Regardless of who was responsible for creating unjust, racist, or oppressive systems in the past, the Library, as an organization, will take responsibility for identifying and dismantling them. Fundamentally, "reckoning" is an umbrella term that encompasses all activity dedicated to these goals:

(1) Studying the past to understand what role the Library has played and continues to play in upholding systems of oppression, exclusion, and inequity

(2) Eradicating inequity and increasing equity throughout all Library systems and services

(3) Instilling antiracism practices, policies, and procedures into all library work

(4) Engaging and partnering with communities that have been erased, dehumanized, silenced, or marginalized in the Library or by the Library

(5) Making the Library a more inclusive environment where both staff and users can be their true and authentic selves

(6) Prioritizing accessibility

(7) Increasing the diversity of the Library staff

(8) Providing appropriate resources to incentivize and reward antiracist work

(9) Prioritizing programs and events that promote, center, and highlight marginalized groups

(10) Offering education and training to help employees become more aware of injustice, inequity, unconscious bias, and other barriers to diversity and inclusion

(11) Being an engaged and active voice for racial equity, inclusion, and antiracism work on campus, in the community, and in our professional organizations

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E. Impact of the reduction of Elsevier journal subscriptions

Summary of Library decisions
- Broke its $2.6M Elsevier Science Direct Big Deal in April 2020 and cancelled ClinicalKey
- Cut 1600 titles and kept 400, reducing the costs to $1.6M
- Buys only the titles that are wanted (a la carte)
- Added Reprints Desk service which is an expedited interlibrary loan and document delivery service in April 2020 to mitigate the negative effects of the cancelation of Elsevier journals

Data Analysis & Results
- Since the Library canceled 1400 Elsevier titles, it has spent significant funds in acquiring 407 titles via Reprints Desk. A significant number of articles (68%) were acquired through traditional interlibrary loan processes if the researcher indicated that they did not need the article in less than 24 hours.
- Researchers from the Gillings School of Global Public Health were the highest users of the expedited interlibrary loan service. The School of Medicine and its affiliated researchers requested the second highest number of titles, a total of 164 Elsevier titles via traditional and expedited interlibrary loan.
- Faculty, students, and staff are most likely to use traditional interlibrary loan to acquire access to Elsevier articles that they need.
- The titles most requested via expedited interlibrary loan include the following:
  - *Journal of Corporate Finance*
  - *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*
  - *Journal of Environmental Radioactivity*

Next Steps
- More thorough analysis is needed as some of the numbers seem to be skewed. The Library will clean up some of the metadata and supplement these data with information gathered from researcher interviews.
- The Library needs to better understand how researchers are impacted when journals are cut. The Library needs to know how researchers are getting access. It is important to know if the Library made the right decisions regarding the titles that were kept and those that were canceled.

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F. Library activity during the pandemic

During the pandemic, the Library has continued to serve the University and state but in new and different ways. For example, the Library boosted access to electronic resources, auto-renewed books that were checked out with no fines, identified electronic replacements for print resources, made high-powered software available remotely, and created a digital version of the student-curated spring exhibition. Evaluation from the first 6 months of the pandemic demonstrates specifically how productive the Library was.

- *Helping Library users.* During spring 2020 and early fall 2020, the Library performed 8601 remote research consultations; taught 358 remote classes; conducted 107 3D print jobs for researchers; facilitated 66,310 special collections scans; and reached 9820 students. During this time, there was a 67% increase in reference chat questions, and 23,203 views occurred on the HSL COVID-19 guide.

- *Providing access to books and journals.* From April through Sept 2020, 12,289 items were placed on reserve; 439 people used curbside pickup; 21,727 items were picked up curbside and inside; 3449 electronic books were added (plus new subscriptions containing tens of thousands of new titles); and 730 streaming titles were added.

- *Conducting special projects.* In the first half of the pandemic, 68 hours of audio interviews were transcribed; 3838 articles were identified for deposit in the Carolina Digital Repository; and 12,281 pages were transcribed or edited.

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