

**Report of
the Administrative Board of the Library (ABL)
to the Faculty Council
April 8, 2022**

Membership of the Administrative Board of the Library (ABL)

Name	Department (School/College)	Constituency/ Electoral Division	Term Exp
Adel, Shahla*	Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Arts and Sciences)	Social Sciences	2022
Gilliland, Kurt (chair)	Cell Biology and Physiology (Medicine)	At-Large (appointed)	2024
Henley, Amanda	University Libraries (Libraries)	University Libraries	2022
Johnson, Martin**	English and Comp Lit (Arts and Sciences)	Humanities and Fine Arts	2022
Melo, Maggie	Information and Library Science (Information and Library Science)	Information and Library Science (appointed)	2024
Mihalik, Johna	Exercise and Sport Science (Arts and Sciences)	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	2023
Persky, Adam	Pharmacotherapy and Experimental Therapeutics (Pharmacy)	Health Affairs (appointed)	2023
Quinonez, Rocio	Pediatric Dentistry (Dentistry)	Health Affairs (appointed)	2023
Sanders, Kimberly	Practice Advancement (Pharmacy)	At-Large (appointed)	2024
Smythers, Amanda	Chemistry (Arts and Sciences)	Graduate Student (appointed)	2022
Stotts, David	Computer Science (Arts and Sciences)	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	2024
Tanner, Jessica	Romance Studies (Arts and Sciences)	Humanities and Fine Arts	2023
Westbrooks, Elaine	Information and Library Science (Information and Library Science)	University Librarian	<i>Ex officio</i>
Williams, Ronald	African, African American, and Diaspora Studies (Arts and Sciences)	Social Sciences	2024
[VACANT]		Undergraduate Student (appointed)	2022

* Shahla Adel is completing a one-year term as a substitute for Cynthia Radding (Dept. of History) who is on leave and whose term ends in 2023.

**Martin Johnson is completing a one-year term as a substitute for Inger Brodey (Dept. of English and Comparative Literature) who is on leave and whose term ends in 2024.

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

Overview

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 will have met nine times during the 2021-22 academic year and assisted the Library in supporting its core pillars: (1) preservation of the historic record of the state and the University; (2) student success; and (3) supporting the research enterprise. Furthermore, the ABL supported the five strategic initiatives of the Strategic Framework for the Library: (1) data science; (2) sustainable scholarship; (3) philanthropic growth; (4) diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and (5) global engagement.

University Librarian

The departure of Elaine Westbrooks. On behalf of the faculty, the ABL wishes University Librarian and Vice Provost Elaine Westbrooks well as she departs UNC for Cornell University. UNC’s loss is Cornell’s gain. We will miss her leadership, innovative spirit, problem-solving ability, collegial attitude, and warm personality. Her legacy will include her focus on sustainable scholarship and open access, her bold and effective interactions with publisher Elsevier, her development of the first North American read-and-publish agreement with SAGE, her management of the Library during the pandemic, her management of the budget during a difficult time period, and her development of the Library Reckoning Initiative. She has been a forward-thinking, collaborative, and energetic leader!

Discussions in 2021-22

Pandemic management. In fall 2021, all of the libraries on campus reverted to a more open status. Health and safety measures have been in place in all the libraries. To promote safety, self-checkout machines were utilized in Davis Library, the undergraduate library, and the Health Sciences Library. Furniture was de-densified, and using HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds), the Library acquired more furniture that is easier to clean and maintain. Other services include additional reservable study rooms, book pick-up services, digitization of special collections, mailing books to users anywhere in the 48 contiguous states, and online and streaming multi-media collections.

Budget. The Library has been subjected to consistent and regular cuts in the permanent base budget for over 20 years while under the relentless influence of inflation of materials imposed by large multinational publishing houses. In fall 2021, the University announced reductions (\$2 million in 2021-22 and \$3 million in 2022-23) that would put the Library at a tipping point that would permanently alter the Library’s collections for all areas and disciplines. In its role as an advocate, the ABL, along with many other groups on campus, sent a letter (see the addendum at the end of this

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report) to the Chancellor and Provost to explain the need for improvements to the Library's budget. Students, faculty, and staff across campus have worried that reductions in Library funding would have negative effects on teaching, recruiting, accreditation, and research productivity. The ABL was excited and grateful that University leadership responded to these appeals by adding \$2 million to the Library's 2021-22 base budget. In addition, the Library will receive some additional ongoing funding in the future from F&A (facilities and administrative rates for indirect or overhead costs). Even with these reductions in budget cuts, the Library has still been in the unfortunate but necessary position of eliminating hundreds of important subscription resources. The Library needs recurring funding and predictable annual increases for collections because it has experienced and continues to face exponential inflation as publishing companies annually increase costs. As many Library resources are subscription-based, one-time funding is insufficient. The University must have continued attention to the F&A equation and allocation, attention to growth, commitment to change, and robust support for the Library.

Due to strong leadership, the Library continues to be proactive with disruptive innovation, planning, negotiating transformative agreements (e.g., new and different types of contracts with SAGE, Elsevier, and PLOS ONE), and its refusal to sign non-disclosure agreements with publishing companies. The ABL wishes to emphasize the impact of the Library on the faculty's ability to create a world-class center for research, scholarship, and creativity and to nurture our community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to become the next generation of leaders. The Library's collections and staff expertise allow faculty to enhance access to learning and to foster the success and prosperity of each rising generation. The Library also extends its knowledge-based services and other resources to the citizens of North Carolina and their institutions to enhance the quality of life for all people in the State. In short, the Library enables the University and its faculty to chart a bold course of leading change to improve society and to help solve the world's greatest problems. The Library needs a permanent sustainable base budget to achieve these goals. An insufficient materials budget could be an issue in the recruitment of a new University Librarian.

ABL Membership. The ABL continues to be in discussion with the Faculty Council about trying to ensure more representation from professional schools. In addition, terms of current members are such that there is extensive turnover one year followed by minimal turnover the following the year. The ABL would like to see student government appoint students to the ABL in a timely manner and with more consistency. The lack of student representation on the ABL over the past three years is unfortunate. These are potential areas for improvement in the by-laws.

Addendum: The ABL sent the letter on the following two pages to the Chancellor and Provost on November 29, 2021.



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Administrative Board of the Library

November 29, 2021

Dear Chancellor Guskiewicz and Provost Blouin:

We, the elected Administrative Board of the Library (ABL), want to assert the importance and value of the University Libraries to the entire UNC community. No other institution on campus serves the teaching, research, and service missions of the College of Arts and Sciences and all of the professional schools as completely as the Library. The Library values and promotes sustainable scholarship; global engagement; equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and data science for all students, faculty, and staff at Carolina. The Library must provide services such as instruction, media and design, data management, and access to general and special collections for a steadily growing population of students and researchers yet does not have the capacity to generate significant revenue while under the relentless influence of inflation. In fact, the inflation rate for library materials is much greater than that for other goods and services.

Concern about recent budget reductions. The Library has been subjected to consistent and regular cuts in the permanent base budget for over two decades. The most recent reductions (\$2 million in 2021-22 and \$3 million in 2022-23) put the Library at a tipping point that will permanently alter the Library's collections for all areas and disciplines.

What are the downstream effects of the budget cuts? A strong University Libraries is critical to sustaining UNC's status as a world-class public research institution. UNC's University Libraries is the primary research library for the entire state of North Carolina with researchers from across the UNC System and beyond depending on its collection. In particular, the Library's collections support research, scholarship, teaching, learning, and clinical care. The budget cuts will have the following downstream effects:

- **Teaching.** Reduced access to resources will affect the faculty's ability to create superior courses and will pass costs of resources along to the students themselves.
- **Recruiting.** The University's ability to recruit first class students and faculty will be compromised. In addition, the Library's ability to recruit excellent librarians, archivists, and other staff will also be affected.
- **Accreditation.** Accreditation of a variety of programs (e.g., School of Law) requires that specific critical resources are accessible to the UNC community; these resources are in jeopardy.
- **Productivity.** Researchers will spend far more time (and even personal funds) acquiring the research that they need because of these budget cuts, placing an unfair burden on researchers and inhibiting research and innovation. Defunding a common good that supports faculty, staff, and students at all levels and in all disciplines across campus is counterproductive.

What does the Library need to survive and thrive? The Library needs recurring funding and predictable annual increases for collections (as opposed to one-time funding) because it has experienced and continues to face exponential inflation as publishing companies annually increase costs. As many Library resources are subscription-based, one-time funding is insufficient. We believe that the following strategies and administrative commitments will be necessary both now and in the future to ensure adequate funding for necessary annual expenses:

- **Re-evaluation of the F&A equation and allocation.** The Library is critical for faculty as they write NIH, NSF, and other grant proposals and ultimately perform the research that is funded by those grants. The current F&A allocations (facilities and administrative rates for indirect or overhead costs) currently underfund the Library so that investigators no longer have instant access to resources (e.g., journal subscriptions) essential both to writing proposals and to conducting research. The University must re-evaluate the F&A equation and allocate to the Library greater and more consistent funding commensurate to its billion dollar enterprise.
- **Attention to growth.** The University must increase funding via state dollars, tuition, and fees to the Library as enrollment increases and as new programs are added.
- **Commitment to change.** The University must support a drive to make scholarly communications more sustainable with advocacy for open access and efforts to address root causes of high publishing costs.
- **Robust support.** The University must provide robust support for Library services, infrastructure, and staffing.

What is the Library already doing? The ABL fully supports the innovative leadership of University Librarian Elaine Westbrooks and her staff as they manage collections and cuts. The Library continues to be proactive with disruptive innovation, transformative agreements (e.g., new and different types of contracts with SAGE, Elsevier, and PLOS ONE), and its refusal to sign non-disclosure agreements with publishing companies.

On behalf of the constituencies and stakeholders whom we represent, the ABL wants to emphasize the impact of the Library on our ability to create a world-class center for research, scholarship, and creativity and to nurture our community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to become the next generation of leaders. The Library's collections and staff expertise allow faculty to enhance access to learning and to foster the success and prosperity of each rising generation. The Library also extends its knowledge-based services and other resources to the citizens of North Carolina and their institutions to enhance the quality of life for all people in the State. In short, the Library enables the University and its faculty to chart a bold course of leading change to improve society and to help solve the world's greatest problems. The Library needs a permanent sustainable budget to achieve these goals.

Respectfully,

Administrative Board of the Library

Kurt Gilliland, Chair

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