Library Committee Report, 2020-21

The library committee met twice in the school year 2020-2021.

October 28, 2020, via Zoom.

Joan Heath reported the Alkek Library has remained open throughout the pandemic.

The door count is averaging 2,000-3,000 a day, down considerably compared to last

year when the gate count reached 1,000 during peak hours.

Safety measures were taken to address occupancy limits and monitoring face mask wearing.

Overall, the library budget was reduced 8% for FY2020-2021. Joan Heath reported that all parts of the budget were affected with some services cancelled.

The acquisitions budget was cut nearly 12%.  Recently, university administrative approval was received to fill 4.5 vacant positions but 10 positions remain unfilled and some expected to be eliminated.

Association of Research Libraries Membership:

The visit team mentioned a concern that the University’s annual research expenditures of

under $65M is relatively small compared to other ARL members. But our library is prepared to grow and to support research university.

Acquisitions Budget FY21:

We had about a 12% budget cut this year. Acquisitions and subject librarians worked together to review subscriptions during the summer and identified some low-use databases and journals to drop.  We also reduced funding for department allocations.

Subscription costs have increased an average of 6% a year for more than a decade.

So we’ll have to drop some subscriptions every year. We’ll add information on the website as we work out alternatives and library staff will be able to help faculty and students in using the alternative methods.

Research Grants Update.

We received five proposals totaling $6,313.93. The proposals revised and recommended to be funded.