

LIBRARY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL

A Report Assessing the Needs of Reese Library

November 30, 2000

Although time did not permit an exhaustive review of all the needs of Reese Library, the Library Committee did review the special needs of library collections and current periodical subscriptions, and submits this report for your consideration.

Support for the Reese Library is vital to supporting the academic mission of Augusta State University. Research and access to information are essential parts of the academic mission of Augusta State University. Students must be able to find accurate, up-to-date resources as they conduct research for their classes.

The Library Committee and Reese Library have engaged in development of a Student Survey and Faculty Survey of satisfaction with the Library and its services. The Student Survey was piloted with the ASU graduating students in Spring 2000. The Committee is in the process of revising the Student Survey and determining the best method of obtaining a large response from a broad cross-section of students. The Committee is beginning to work on modification of the instrument for use as a Faculty Survey. Results from these surveys, once available, should provide an additional basis for the thorough annual review of the library that you requested.

A survey of faculty in April 1999 found that 29% of responding faculty answered “no” to the question: “Does the library make available sufficient information for the needs of your department?” The May 2000 Library Committee Graduating Student Survey found similar percentages of students dissatisfied with the Library collections. Similar questions are planned for the upcoming Faculty Survey. Much of the collection is old and outdated. For example, in a recent study the Art Department found that only 14% of the volumes in the Art collection were published within the last twenty years.

In order that the Library have the support it needs, the Library Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. Change the current re-directed (one-time) annual funding for periodicals (currently \$11,123) to permanent funding, adding it to the regular annual funding for the Reese Library.

Should this re-directed, one-time annual funding be discontinued, the Reese Library would fall even further short of being able to meet increased costs of books and serials. Moving this amount to the regular funding would provide opportunities for more accurate planning for expenditures by the library.

2. Halt the annual decline in the percentage of ASU’s total expenditures that have been allocated to the Library and begin increasing the total with a view toward regaining the former level of 4%. As can be seen from the chart below, there has been a steady decline in the library percentage of the ASU educational and general budget from 4.41% in FY 90 to 3.36% in FY 99.

The Library is faced with annual increased costs for books of two percent and periodicals of up to ten per cent (see chart, Attachment 1). This translates to the necessity to purchase fewer and fewer new books and the need to discontinue needed periodicals. As noted above, much of the current collection is old and outdated.

To accomplish this, the Committee recommends an incremental increase in the regular annual materials allocation to Reese Library with the view of returning the total library budget to at least the former level of 4% of the institution's education and general budget.

LIBRARY 10-YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

FY	TOTAL Institutional E & G Expenditures	TOTAL Library E & G Expenditures	Library Percent, TOTAL E&G Expenditures
90	20,431,909	901,637	4.41%
91	21,257,742	978,652	4.60%
92	22,419,397	932,169	4.16%
93	26,696,866	1,025,919	3.84%
94	28,582,526	1,143,159	4.00%
95	31,532,270	1,122,715	3.85%
96	34,285,483	1,231,757	3.59%
97	36,547,832	1,318,008	3.61%
98	39,360,495	1,369,621	3.48%
99	40,913,670	1,375,501	3.36%

Source: Augusta State University, Financial Report (FY 90 - FY 99)

3. Allocate one-time funds for a WLN (Western Library Network) Conspectus Analysis as a basis for determination of the needs related to library materials (estimated cost of \$10,000).

There are several possible collection-centered measures:

- a. Checking ASU's serials against lists, catalogs, bibliographies, etc., to determine a match between recommendations and actual holdings.
- b. Application of collection standards of accrediting agencies.
- c. Examination of the collection by persons familiar with literature of each of the subject areas.
- d. Making statistical comparisons to peer libraries.

e. Providing for a WLN Conspectus Analysis.

Choices a, b, and c are very time-intensive, and therefore expensive if extra staff or graduate students are asked to take on this task. Asking faculty to take on the additional work would entail providing time to accurately complete this task. The current number of professional librarians is below the recommended level for libraries the size of Reese, as revealed in the Library assessment document. Contracting the WLN to perform the service would be an appropriate one-time expenditure to enable the Library to better determine its actual needs. We are in the process of collecting data for the purpose of making statistical comparisons to peer libraries.