

# **LIBRARY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL**

## **A Report Assessing the Needs of Reese Library**

November 18, 2002

The following report is being submitted to identify the current needs of the Reese Library. The library committee assesses the needs of students and faculty, to determine how the library can better serve their purposes, both academically and professionally. Accurate and up to date resources must be available and accessible to faculty and students for teaching and research purposes in order to further the academic mission of Augusta State University. For these reasons, support for the Reese Library is critical to advance the objectives of the Library and University. The following report examines budgetary needs of the Library in the context of historical fiscal trends and identifies areas of the faculty's satisfaction and concerns.

The Library Committee and Reese Library have engaged in development of a Student Survey and a Faculty Survey of satisfaction with the Library and its services. The Student Survey was administered in the Spring of 2001 and the results were included in the 2001 Library Committee Proposal assessing the needs of Reese Library. Areas of concern from the student survey which mirror those from the campus wide Faculty Survey are noted. The Faculty Survey was submitted to current Faculty of Augusta State University in the Spring of 2002. Approximately 33% of full time and 10 % of part time faculty responded to the survey. A summary of the major findings as determined by the committee is outlined in Attachment 1. The questionnaire and the data are also provided.

The majority of respondents indicated that Library services have met or exceeded their expectations. Findings of satisfaction were consistent over several measures, including operations of the reserve and reference systems, instructional delivery, interlibrary loans, checking out and reshelving materials, and hours of operation. The library also received exemplary ratings from faculty in organizational areas. Nearly 80% of faculty found books and journals properly placed and functionally ordered, and similar ratings were achieved for online resources. By funding this full time position, the administration has addressed one of the SACS recommendations.

Areas of continued concerns are the faculty's ratings for journal and magazine holdings. While 50% of faculty agreed that the library maintains an adequate number of journals, magazines, and newspapers for performing research and teaching, over 35% of faculty disagreed. Similar results were found of book holdings. These findings, along with the datum gathered from the 2000-2001 student survey suggest a need for improvement in these areas. Furthermore, according to SACS visiting committee report, the number of journal and book holdings is inadequate and an area of concern resulting in the recommendation of increased funding in these areas.

The Committee has begun to work on modification of the instrument to reassess students' opinions for the upcoming 2002-2003 year. Modifications will include an improved method of distribution and the inclusion of Likert scale responses to determine the relative level of satisfaction and importance of several measures. Results from this survey, once available, should provide an additional basis for the thorough annual review of the library.

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

1. There is clear and consistent evidence for a need to increase funding for journals and books. SACS, the student survey, and the faculty survey provide converging evidence toward this need. Every year since 1990 there has been a continued and steady decline in the library's percentage of the ASU educational general budget (E & G). Concurrently, the library is faced with annual increased costs for books of two percent and periodicals of up to ten percent. The disparity between costs and funding has resulted in several negative outcomes.
  - a. Departments have been faced with the dilemma of either cutting back on their periodical subscriptions or utilizing their entire library allocation on journal subscriptions. Although online databases have helped lessen the burden somewhat, online resources may not be an adequate solution. There is no guarantee that the university system will continue to renew contracts with their current online periodical providers, or that the current online periodical services will maintain their contracts with individual journals. If any link in these chains is broken, entire sets of journals may become unavailable.
  - b. Many departments use their entire library allocation on purchasing periodicals leaving no funds for monographs or multi-media purchases. The lack of funding has resulted in an out-of-date book collection that has regressed back to the acquisition level and amount ASU maintained when it was a junior college.

Thus the library 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

<b>FY</b>	<b>TOTAL Institutional E &amp; G Expenditures</b>	<b>TOTAL Library E &amp; G Expenditures</b>	<b>Library Percent, TOTAL E&amp;G Expenditures</b>
<b>91</b>	21,257,742	978,652	4.60%
<b>92</b>	22,419,397	932,169	4.16%
<b>93</b>	26,696,866	1,025,919	3.84%
<b>94</b>	28,582,526	1,143,159	4.00%
<b>95</b>	31,532,270	1,122,715	3.85%
<b>96</b>	34,285,483	1,231,757	3.59%
<b>97</b>	36,547,832	1,318,008	3.61%

<b>98</b>	39,360,495	1,369,621	3.48%
<b>99</b>	40,913,670	1,375,501	3.36%
<b>00</b>	43,528,637	1,432,406	3.29%
<b>01</b>	45,347,611	1,462,251	3.22%

**Source:** Augusta State University, Financial Report (FY 91 - FY 01)

2. In order to increase usage of archival resources, the Library Committee has several recommendations concerning the storage of these documents.
  - a. To combine the Special Collections, ASU archives, and Richmond County Historical Society in a central, high profile location, such as the third floor in the Reese Library. This would increase awareness, use, and allow for easier cross-referencing.
  - b. By moving the ASU archive from its current location in the basement of Fanning Hall, we hope to provide a more appropriate home for these important documents. Their current location is rather inaccessible to many faculty, students, and members of the local community. Furthermore, by moving them to the main Library they will be afforded a climate controlled environment to aid in their preservation.
  - c. Shift personnel and/or create funding for full time staff to oversee this important collection of historical documents.

## **Attachment 1**

The results of the 2001-2002 faculty survey were summarized according to four main areas: Use of Facilities, Holdings and Content, Service Satisfaction, and Organization.

### **Use**

Many of the faculty prefer to go to the library in person to obtain materials while a majority of those who use the online resources do so for research.

Microfilm/microfiche, government documents, special collections, instructional services, and photocopiers are not widely used by a majority of faculty. Between 40%-50% of faculty responded that they did not utilize these collections or services. However, the number of faculty utilizing these resources should not be the sole determinant of their value to the campus. For example the government documents and special collections have rather specialized content which may not be applicable to all disciplines.

Instructional services may be more useful in supporting departments with a research orientation. The Library Committee proposes including a scale to assess the importance of these resources amongst their users.

### **Holdings and Content**

Approximately 50% of the faculty agreed that the library maintains an adequate number of newspapers, journals, and online resources for teaching and performing research, while 60% agreed there were adequate books and non-print material in media services for these purposes. Unfortunately, nearly 35% of faculty disagreed with these statements. Thus, these findings are rather consistent with the 2000-2001 student survey in that there is room for improvement in these areas. Nearly 30% of faculty reported they did not use online resources for research for their classes.

### **Service Satisfaction**

A majority (over 60% or higher) of faculty respondents indicated that the library provides satisfactory service. This finding was consistent over several performance measures including, but not limited to: the specific operations of the reserve and reference systems, interlibrary loans, checking out and re-shelving of materials, and hours of operations. This was data corroborated by the overall satisfaction ratings for individual departments. The ratings for the Circulation/Reserve, Reference, and Media Services Departments were particularly noteworthy with nearly every department receiving favorable ratings from over 85% of the faculty. The remaining three departments Interlibrary Loan, Periodicals, Instructional Services also received very positive ratings with each receiving a satisfactory rating from over 60% of the faculty. The 60% satisfactory rating can also be viewed as being particularly favorable since an additional 25% of faculty reported they have not used these services. Thus, of the faculty who have used these services 80% gave these departments favorable ratings.

### **Organization**

The library also received high rating from faculty respondents regarding its organization. Nearly 80% of faculty found the books and journals properly placed and functionally ordered. Similar ratings were achieved for online resources such as GALILEO and GIL.