

# **LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

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

### **November 25, 2003**

The following report is being submitted to identify the current needs of Reese Library (including Media Services and the Curriculum Center). 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 the University. The following report examines budgetary needs of the Library in the context of historical fiscal trends and identifies areas of need and special concern; recommendations are included.

The purpose of the Library Committee is to examine the library and its responsiveness to the academic and professional needs of faculty and students. The library is charged with providing adequate resources for teaching, learning and research, as well as quality service. Faculty and students must be able to readily access current and accurate print, electronic, and media resources. Media Services and the Curriculum Lab are also part of the library organization and have their own mission and goals.

The three mission statements are as follows:

**Reese Library** *supports the teaching mission of the University by*

- *providing effective access to a broad range of learning resources*
- *promoting the use of quality information in all formats*
- *instructing students in seeking and evaluating information*
- *creating an environment in which instruction and research can flourish*
- *encouraging lifelong learning*

*Reese Library supports the community mission of the university as a cultural and intellectual resource.*

**Media Services** *supports the University curriculum by providing comprehensive, high quality resources to support the faculty in the use of technologies to enhance and extend their teaching and learning. Media Services provides the equipment, expertise, and technical support needed to integrate new technologies into classroom teaching to enhance teaching and learning.*

**Curriculum Center** *supports the University curriculum by providing access to resources to assist students in completing labs and coursework. The center also provides resources to assist the students and potential students in passing the Praxis Tests.*

Support for Reese Library is essential to the promotion and implementation of the objectives of the University and to meet the requirements of SACS and professional and specialized accrediting agencies governing the academic programs. In light of historical and recent budget cuts at the state and institutional level, resources and services provided by the Library continue to be seriously underfunded.

## **THE EFFECTS OF UNDERFUNDING**

### **1. Continued reduction of library materials budget (due to price increases).**

During the past decade, the library percentage of the ASU educational and general expenditures has experienced a continual decline. (See chart at the end of this document.) This means that the library is already receiving an increasingly smaller portion of the institutional budget. Budget cuts would hamper library efforts to serve the increasing number of students.

We urge the State of Georgia to continue to fund GALILEO with lottery and other appropriate funding to support the State's continuing goal of "A More Educated Georgia." At Augusta State University, reliable access to GALILEO resources contributed to the library's ability to cancel some print journal subscriptions to cope with the annual increase of eight to ten percent in academic journal subscriptions. We also take into consideration the availability of online texts when purchasing resources for the circulating book collection.

For FY2003 GALILEO-based accesses for Reese Library totaled 303,319 searches in 49 unique electronic information products for which we did not have to purchase a local subscription. If the ASU community had been paying for these searches locally, the cost would have been \$257,821.85. Of these 303,319 searches, ASU's full-text accesses totaled 162,285 articles. If the ASU community had requested copies of these articles and we paid the current cost, we would have expended \$730,282.50. Thus the total value for ASU for GALILEO searches and copies of the articles during last fiscal year was \$988,104.35.

If ASU were asked to contribute to the maintenance of GALILEO at the USG's current GALILEO database cost of \$2,000,000, our fair share (based on our 2.3 percent of USG student FTE), would be around \$46,000. Compare this \$46,000 with the potential \$998,000 expense if Augusta State (as a stand-alone institution) had been responsible in FY03 for offering the same access and information that was received through GALILEO. Thus, through central funding of GALILEO, the ASU community received \$1 million worth of electronic database usage for a cost to the system of \$46,000. It seems clear that we should make every effort to support continued USG central funding for GALILEO.

Further erosion of the library's ability to maintain current collections also impacts progress in providing easier access to information through electronic resources. Reductions in the library budget for collections would hamper possible cost sharing with other USG institutions in the statewide move to remote access to full-text books and journals.

In the event of another reduction of library materials funding, the already serious erosion of access to information would become a critical problem and would result in the purchase of no books, along with a probable reduction in the purchase of current scholarly journals, both print and online. Such an eventuality could jeopardize the University's SACS accreditation, as well as current professional/departmental accreditations. Additionally this could seriously impact the proposed Fine Arts accreditation, which has been identified as needing additional library books and materials.

Since last year, in cooperation with classroom faculty, some journals were cancelled. However, the average increase in the price of journals is eight to ten percent per year and those journal cancellations will only provide a temporary reprieve from the budget crunch. Thus, level funding for library materials in the current budget has the impact of an eight to ten percent budget cut even in the absence of an actual budget cut in this area. In the event of another budget reduction there would definitely be no money for books and (depending on the increase in journal prices this year and next—conservatively estimated at a minimum cumulative per cent increase of 16 percent) it would most likely be necessary to further reduce the number of academic journals purchased.

Even continued level funding (absent any actual reductions) for the library materials budget continues to exacerbate a problem that was already of such magnitude that it was one of the ten recommendations in the 2002 SACS Visiting Committee Report.

Rather than cuts, additional funding for core journals is needed. This need is primarily due to the ten percent average annual increase in journal prices (over the last few years) and the fact that only a small increase has ever been budgeted for the combined ASU library and book budget in the past ten years. There has been absolutely no increase for this purpose during the last six years.

## **2. A current freeze in the filling of positions.**

### **Special Collections Staff Position (half-time).**

A vacant position in another area has been transferred to Special Collections. This staff position is a critical component in support for the operation of Special Collections as it moves to the third floor of the library. Because of this vacancy, this service area will be closed at any time the Special Collections Librarian is absent from that area. As soon as the move is complete, this will necessitate a reduction in hours for access to the Special Collection of at least 25 percent.

### **Government Documents Staff Position (half-time).**

This position was originally transferred from another area of the library to address, in part, the concerns of SACS regarding staffing for Government Documents. Understaffing in ASU's Government Documents area was one of the ten recommendations in the 2002 SACS Visiting Committee Report. The proper processing and shelving of documents is essential to making them accessible to students and faculty; this is seriously impacted because of this staff vacancy. The documents system, mandated by federal regulations, is virtually incomprehensible to most library users. The half-time documents assistant greatly aided in ensuring that the documents received matched the online catalog records for them. Also, the department's numerous projects are vital for maintaining an accessible collection. Government documents are playing an increasing role in research, especially for statistical and research report information. Due to all of the specifications of the Government Printing office, the processing and maintenance of the collection is quite time consuming. On numerous occasions, students have sought specific documents and, on some occasions, have not been able to locate them. This is something the library is trying to remedy but without the additional staff member, the process is much slower.

### **3. Reduced funding for Media Services**

#### **Non-personnel budget cuts of 76.5 percent for Media Services in eight years.**

The most serious problem facing Media Services is continuing budget cuts, in addition to more responsibilities. The cut for this year was \$1,654 in the non-personnel budget, which was a ten percent cut. The non-personnel budget for Media Services has been steadily cut from \$62,891 in FY 1996 to \$14,805 in FY 2004 (a 76.5 percent reduction in eight years). During this period, Media Services was assigned new responsibilities for media support of the Christenberry Fieldhouse, the installed video distribution system in Allgood Hall, and management of the Audio Lab and Curriculum Lab.

#### **Absence of funding for critical operations of the Curriculum Lab.**

The operation and supervision of the Curriculum Lab was transferred to Media Services in January 2003. Salary for the Curriculum Lab Media Specialist is provided, but there is no other funding for any materials, student assistants, or supplies. The only source of funding is the Media Center, which has suffered drastic budget cuts over the last eight years.

#### **No funding for equipment or repairs.**

There is no funding for equipment in Media Services. When equipment fails or needs replacement due to obsolescence, one-time emergency funding must be requested.

This problem has recently been highlighted with the failure of some instructional stations in Allgood Hall due to technical problems. The temporary solution was to use some of the limited number of projection resource carts to support the classes there. There is not enough equipment to support the entire campus, and there is no funding for purchase of new or replacement equipment.

#### **Absence of funding for operation of the Audio Lab.**

The Audio Lab is operated by Media Services to support music students and faculty. There has never been any funding for this operation, and student assistants must be employed from the Media Services budget. It is probable that this operation will have to operate without staffing, with no open hours. This has implications for accreditation of the music department, as this lab was constructed in order to satisfy the requirements of the last National Association of Schools of Music accreditation visit.

#### **No funding for the New Satellite System annual fee.**

There was no funding included for the \$750 annual programming fee when the new satellite system was installed for use by the foreign language programs. Media Services must annually request special funding for this purpose.

#### **Absence of funding for replacement of projection bulbs.**

There is no funding in the Media Services budget for replacement of projection lamps for the many projection units on campus. This is a particular problem for the numerous units installed in Allgood Hall. Just to purchase two projection lamps for each projection unit on campus costs \$72,000. For Allgood Hall alone, two replacement lamps per unit costs \$29,078.

## PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS

In spite of the budget challenges, the Library has made a significant amount of progress during FY2003.

In order to update and improve the library collections, a list of electronic resources was submitted to the Student Technology Fund Committee, a new collection development policy for government documents was developed, and progress toward the goal of 55percent deselection was made with 64 items deselected. One thousand seventy-six items were removed from the general stacks, placed in documents, and records changed in GIL to complete the consolidation of congressional hearings and maps into the documents collection.

Access and management of Special Collections and historical/archival resources were improved by beginning renovation of the new location for Special Collections and office area and preparing to move Special Collections manuscripts and books to the improved accommodations.

A comprehensive statistics collection plan to strengthen and validate reporting standards and peer comparisons was initiated. A library assessment workshop was presented in two sessions in September and October, and by mid October Library department heads had collected and documented current statistics gathering and reporting methods.

Student, faculty and community awareness of library resources and services were expanded through formalized outreach efforts. These included workshops for library faculty; articles published this year in The Bell Ringer on September 17<sup>th</sup>, October 15<sup>th</sup>, and November 19<sup>th</sup>; and a "Meet the Author" program held on November 19<sup>th</sup> with Bob Grant, author of The Right to Life. In addition, after-hours orientations sessions were held for part-time faculty and the Outreach and Special Collections Librarians created a display for Georgia Archives Week.

To create an environment in which instruction and research can flourish, and which encourages participation by the community in cultural and intellectual resources, contacts were made to discuss a possible plan to improve comprehensive signage and traffic flow. Plans for a refreshment area on the first floor of the Library were discussed with representatives from the Business Office and Physical Plant. The campus architect was approached for initial advice in developing a long-term plan to update the library facility.

The Curriculum Center held an Open House in August of 2003 to promote the Center and to improve access for students and potential students. An article published in The Bell Ringer on October 15, 2003, reported a large turnout at the open house.

The Library Committee and Reese Library have developed Student Surveys and a Faculty Survey of satisfaction with the Library and its services. A Student Survey was administered in the spring of 2001, and a Faculty Survey in the spring of 2002. Results of the most recent survey, that of the students in spring 2003, have been collected, and the data are being compiled by an off-campus agency. Results from this survey, once available, should provide an additional basis for the thorough annual review of the library, Media Services and the Curriculum Center. The Library Committee is in the process of revising the Faculty Survey to be administered in the spring of 2004.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

To be able to accomplish goals set forth in the FY2004 Library Unit Plan, and to maintain the research and instructional mission of the Library at the current level, the Library Committee urges adequate funding, and makes the following recommendations:

1. Move to full-text and away from print to promote access and replace out-dated resources (Strategy 1a-1 of the Reese Library Unit Plan; copy attached).
2. Improve the interlibrary lending and borrowing program by instituting the ILLiad management program. (Strategy 1c-4).
3. Expand access to resources by improving linkages between electronic resources. (Strategy 1c-2).
4. Urge the institution to fully embrace the concept of information literacy (see attached Information Literacy statement). (Goal 3b and 3c of the Reese Library Unit Plan)

### LIBRARY RECENT FUNDING HISTORY

FY	Institutional E & G Expenditures (Unrestricted)	Library E & G Expenditures (Unrestricted)	Library Percent of Unrestricted E&G Expenditures
90	18,071,534	896,362	4.96%
91	18,755,728	961,385	5.13%
92	19,583,312	927,352	4.74%
93	23,631,466	1,025,544	4.34%
94	24,907,333	1,110,713	4.46%
95	26,751,377	1,186,589	4.44%
96	28,835,166	1,225,883	4.25%
97	30,575,370	1,297,708	4.24%
98	33,261,304	1,352,904	4.07%
99	34,154,266	1,369,782	4.01%
00	38,351,312	1,416,926	3.69%
01	37,145,223	1,446,851	3.90%

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

[The figures below are not exactly comparable to the earlier ones because  
of a change in accounting procedures and reporting.]

FY	TOTAL Institutional Operating Expenses (less Depreciation) (less Auxiliary Enterprises)	TOTAL Library Operating Expenses	Library Percent of Operating Expenses
02	38,407,250 *	1,541,172 **	4.01%
03	41,781,787 *	1,423,692 **	3.41%

**Source:** \* Augusta State University, Financial Report (FY 02 - FY 03)

\*\* PeopleSoft, Budget Transaction Detail (FY 02 & FY 03)