

April 16, 1982

Report of the Libraries Committee to the Faculty Senate

I am reporting for the University Libraries Committee as mandated by the Senate in its Resolution 81-38 which was passed at the meeting of April 21, 1981. That resolution reads as follows:

"Motion placing the Materials Allocation Plan for Joyner Library into effect on a temporary basis, requesting that the University Libraries Committee hold hearings in the Fall with regard to any portion and mandating that the Committee report to the Senate no later than the last regularly scheduled meeting of 1982 concerning its recommendations regarding the Research Factor."

Before reporting on our final recommendations with regard to the inclusion of a research factor in the Materials Allocations Plan, I would like to outline briefly some of the actions and deliberations of this committee which have resulted in the recommendations we are presenting today. I believe that roughly one third of the current membership of the Senate was not present at the original presentation of this formula in 1979, so in the interests of avoiding misunderstandings, I would like to make a few points about the formula as a whole.

In April of 1979, the Libraries Committee presented the Senate with this formula--now called the Materials Allocation Plan--for determining departmental budget allocations to be used in purchasing books and periodicals for Joyner Library. That original presentation to the Senate was lengthy and supported with a substantial document of figures and explanation. The essence of the plan has been distilled for you in the brief description you should have before you--a description which many of you saw last year. Two modifications of the original plan were adopted by the Committee in 1980-81 and are recorded in the last two paragraphs of this brief summary:

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They are:

Stipulation 1: No department shall receive less than \$2,000 for their monograph or serials allocation, provided that that amount is clearly justified. (Some departments can not justify a \$2,000 allocation: they never use it.)

Stipulation 2: No department shall receive more than 12 1/2% of the total annual monograph or serials allocations for the Library.

There were many reasons for developing this new formula, but two were paramount:

- 1) the librarians were increasingly made aware of inequities in the past formula through their constant encounters with students from certain departments who were unable to locate sufficient materials for their research projects-- materials which could not have been purchased by the departments due to their apparantly unjust budget allocations: and,
- 2) the fact that there had never been any formula applied to the distribution of funds for the purchase of serials.

This second item has become a matter of urgent concern in recent years. The inequities in serials allocations was initiated in an early period of the growth and development of the University when there was no clear cut collections development policy in Joyner Library. At one time, funds were readily available and departments were permitted to order serials without restrictions. Under this policy, some very active departments (much to their credit) developed substantial serials subscriptions, while other, less active, often smaller departments did not take advantage of this situation. When inflation finally forced restrictions on further ordering, those departments were locked into a relatively underfunded position. Meanwhile, their faculties had changed, enrollment

patterns had changed and those formerly "less active" departments had become substantial units on campus with inadequate library resources to support their programs. Further complicating this problem was the fact that certain departments on campus were once singled out for development of doctoral programs and were awarded special funds for additional serials and monograph purchases, but those doctoral programs failed to materialize and accentuated the unjust distribution of funds to programs already in existence. Finally: the rate of inflation in serials costs in recent years has been, in many cases, double or more than double that of other significant factors in the economy and this has all but crippled the library budget. A serious reevaluation of our serials holdings and cuts in our current serials subscriptions became absolutely mandatory a few years ago. The Library staff desperately needed this formula to provide it with guidelines in initiating budgetary reforms to meet the demands of this difficult situation.

In spite of what seemed to this Committee more than justifiable reasons for adopting this formula, the Senate, in the Spring of 1979, rejected it, returning it to the Committee with the stipulation that a Faculty Research Factor be incorporated into the Formula before it would be considered for adoption by the Senate.

Subsequently, a Subcommittee to Develop a Research Factor was formed by the University Libraries Committee in the Fall of 1979, following the Senate's mandate. That Subcommittee first addressed the problem of defining research, fully committed to the position that the definition chosen should give fair consideration to the varying nature of research or production within all departments of the University. Consequently, the definition selected was to give consideration to, not only publications within departments, but also to grants, professional lectures, exhibitions and performances. At the time, it seemed that the next logical step would be to consult the Annual Faculty Reports for a period of roughly ten years in order to gain sufficient data for developing a Research

Factor. After consultation with Vice Chancellor Maier on this matter, it seemed that we would be duplicating much of the research which would have to be undertaken by the then newly-formed Subcommittee on Academic Programs and we were directed to work in conjunction with them. The Subcommittee, under the direction of Professor Eugene Ryan, agreed to provide us with the information then being compiled for its 10 year publications report, as soon as that information became available. Also, at our request, the Subcommittee sent another questionnaire to all departments requesting additional information on those activities which our Subcommittee had considered "research" in its definition, but which would not be covered in the 10 year publications report.

This necessary information was finally available in the winter of 1980-81. With that information the Subcommittee was faced with a number of problems. There were, for example, a number of inequities in the way various departments reported their productions. But the Subcommittee went ahead to develop a trial research factor, determining a weight for it and working out a method by which it could be incorporated into the formula. But it was then faced with two major problems, which it had always foreseen and which it found finally to be insurmountable. These were:

- 1) The problem of quantifying the materials before us. We were faced with questions such as: Should an article in a refereed esoteric professional journal be given the same weight as an article in a popular publication like Scientific American? or an article in the Greenville Daily Reflector? Should a book be given greater weight than an article? In some disciplines, such as mathematics, a three page article might easily require as much research as an entire book would require in other disciplines. Should a dramatic performance equal a musical recital? Are all artist's exhibitions to be considered of equal merit? Should an exhibition for an artist be considered equal to a concert by a musician or an article or a book by an author? Moreover, many artists

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might be sending the same two or three works to a number of exhibitions, whereas an article is rarely published in more than one journal. And so forth, ad infinitum.

It was obvious that the University Libraries Committee could not make judgments for many if any of these matters alone. Those judgements would have to be referred to departmental committees which would be responsible for ranking its ten year productions according to some predetermined scale of, for example, 4 or 5 points. There was no time to even consider such a project before the end of that academic year, and we were extremely dubious about the success of such a project in any case. But even if that could have been accomplished, we were still faced with a second, perhaps even greater problem.

- 2) This was the problem of determining what portion of those individual research projects were actually dependent upon library usage. The Committee recognized that every department on campus needs access to adequate basic resources for research in its discipline, since any research must begin with an examination of the current state of knowledge on the topic under consideration. But once that is accomplished, in many disciplines the library may be left behind while concentration is placed on the computer, in the laboratory, on field resources, on observation, and a host of other sources of information outside the library. We are assured by the librarians that there is no totally accurate way to measure library usage according to the various disciplines. Circulation is one thing, but the methods for measuring the usage of serials and reference materials which are not checked out is at best severely limited and open to error.

In view of these problems, which the committee considered insurmountable, the Committee returned to the Senate last April

with the recommendation that the Senate accept the Materials Allocation Plan for implementation without a Research Factor. Whereupon, the Senate passed the resolution I read at the beginning of this report.

This year, wearily but with great determination the University Libraries Committee has research<sup>ed</sup> and deliberated on this matter at great length. At the beginning of the year, five faculty members who had spoken on the Senate floor about the Formula and the Research Factor were asked to meet with the Subcommittee to develop a Research Factor in order to clarify and explain their views and offer any proposals for Committee consideration. Several departments wrote to the Committee with further proposals or considerations for Committee action and that correspondence was distributed and given serious consideration in debate. In November, the Committee announced open hearings for two different dates. Since only four speakers asked to be heard, all were scheduled for a single meeting on November 11. At the conclusion of those hearings, the floor was opened to all visitors and the Committee heard questions and discussion from a number of interested faculty present.

Though much of this investigation was quite interesting, it revealed nothing which could assist us in solving our problems in development of a Research Factor. Many of the communications received by this Committee were highly self-serving and clearly aimed towards maintaining a particular department's privileged ~~position~~ in the status quo. Moreover, many showed a distinct lack of understanding, and in some cases an appalling ignorance of the needs and priorities of other departments on campus.

In conclusion: I would like to quote from the final paragraph of the final report of the Subcommittee to Develop a Research Factor--chaired this year by Professor Robert Bunker:

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"Although the subcommittee on the Research Factor does not object in theory and principle to a research factor, we have found the problems of deriving such a factor insurmountable.

"First: it is clear to us that such a factor, since it is a library research factor, should refer only to research done with library materials. Several persons who spoke to the committee obviously felt that it should be used to encourage and/or reward research and/or publication in general. With this we cannot agree. Even given this, the task of measuring the library usage that results in any publication, or in other forms of research, i.e. class preparation, seems hopeless. Neither measuring the size of the publication, the number of references cited, or the number of visits to the library, time spent there (as would have to be reported by the individual) is without serious pitfalls and the possibility of serious inequity. Obtaining consistent and true information from all parties might also be a problem as well. Research drawn up with the humanities in mind would not fit the case of the social and physical sciences where research may involve extensive use of laboratory experimentation, computer time, participant observation, etc. To determine which portion of which research in social and physical sciences are library derived and to what extent becomes an enormous problem. To try to leave this to the individual departments and schools simply invites divisive self-justification, mutual suspicion and struggle. When attempts are made to extend the research factor problem to the creative arts and the pre-professional and professional fields, the difficulties are multiplied many times over. There is no logical reason for assuming that all research and publication are based on library usage nor that all library usage results in research and/or publication.

"Therefore the Subcommittee on the Research Factor recommends that on grounds of insurmountable problems in deriving and applying a research factor to all departments and schools in a fair manner that no research be added to the MAP. We also recommend that the Faculty Senate not refer this matter to this committee in the future."

Today the Library Committee requests that the Faculty Senate adopt the Materials Allocation Plan on a permanent basis. In so doing it should be assured that the Committee will continue to observe the administration of this formula for its fairness to all departments and to consider and examine any further modifications that seem appropriate.