


NC STATE UNIVERSITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: NC State Deans and Department Heads

FROM: Susan K. Nutter 
Vice Provost and Director of Libraries

SUBJECT: Collections Review and Journal Subscriptions

Date: 16 February 2009

Under the guidance of the University Library Committee and in consultation with the NC State community, the NCSU Libraries is preparing for reductions to the FY 2009/2010 collections budget. Uncertain economic conditions, anticipated budget cuts, and continued price increases for journals and databases above standard inflation rates require a review of current collecting to identify up to \$1 million dollars – 10% of the 2008/2009 collections budget allocation – in potential cuts. This review will include reductions to the book budget and a comprehensive review of all journal and database subscriptions.

The Libraries is working directly with Departmental Library Representatives (www.lib.ncsu.edu/collectionmanagement/libreps_current.html) – including a faculty member from each department and a graduate student from departments offering advanced degree programs – leaders from student government, and the University Library Committee (ULC) to disseminate the collections review site (www.lib.ncsu.edu/collectionmanagement/serials/CollectionsReview2009/) and broadly solicit feedback from faculty, staff, and students. Please work with your representatives, colleagues, students, and staff to ensure that your department's input is fully represented during the review process. The collection is at the center of what we do and is essential to research and teaching. Faculty, staff, and student input is crucial in making the best possible decisions related to the collection during this difficult period.

Staff from the Libraries met with Departmental Library Representatives and the ULC in January to discuss the strategy for reviewing titles and a communication plan for soliciting feedback. The Departmental Library Representatives suggested and strongly endorsed a data informed process where subject specialists from the Libraries review usage data, citation and publication activity at the university, disciplinary trends, price, and impact factor to compile a potential cancellation list for review by the NC State community. Per that recommendation, a list of potential journal and database cancellations is presented for review and feedback using an interactive, tiered input system at www.lib.ncsu.edu/collectionmanagement/serials/CollectionsReview2009/. The interactive review site includes the various data points, such as online usage, requested by the ULC and Departmental Library Representatives along with options for filtering and sorting by subject.

Timeline and Feedback

The review process will include multiple opportunities for feedback and discussion. Initial rankings of titles posted for review by faculty, staff, and students is requested by March 10th. The web form includes a tiered ranking system that will enable the Libraries and the ULC to apply input from the review to evolving budget scenarios. Individuals and departments that use the tiered rankings for titles in their areas of teaching and research, rather than listing every title as critical, will have the most significant and beneficial impact on this process.

The Libraries will incorporate community feedback with the data points on usage, citation activity, impact factor, and cost, and, in consultation with the ULC and Departmental Library Representatives, post a revised potential cancellation list by April 10th for follow-up review. The Libraries and ULC will post a final list of cancellations in early May and submit them to our vendors in August.

Background Information

Along with the title lists and feedback system, the Collections Review webpage (www.lib.ncsu.edu/collectionmanagement/serials/CollectionsReview2009/) contains extensive information on the process and timeline, background about the sources of data used in the review, and contact information for subject specialists in the Libraries. There is also an FAQ (www.lib.ncsu.edu/collectionmanagement/serials/CollectionsReview2009/FAQ.html) available that addresses a number of potential questions about the review, including the Libraries' commitment to document delivery access for canceled titles, moving journal titles to electronic only to realize 5-10% savings off the print subscription rate, and suggestions for scholars interested in learning more about the system of scholarly communication.

The Libraries is comprehensively reviewing its budget, making strategic, programmatic reductions, slowing hiring, reducing equipment expenditures, and extending existing collaboration with our Triangle Research Libraries Network (www.trln.org) partners. We understand how central the collection is to research and teaching and are doing everything we can to limit the impact of budget cuts. However, because the collections budget is a large part of the Libraries' overall budget, we cannot avoid collections reductions in the face of significant cuts. Thank you for your input into this process and please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

C: Larry Nielsen, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Terri Lomax, Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies
Matt Ronning, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration
University Research Committee
NC State Research Centers and Institutes
Jay Dawkins, Student Body President
Greg Doucette, Student Senate President
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