



## LSU A&M Faculty Senate Resolution 22-05

### **“Increasing Library Funds to Meet Research University Standards”**

*Sponsored by the LSU Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee*

Whereas President Tate shares on his official website the vision “Imagine a university where scholarship is the primary objective. Scholarship reigns. The immediate focus is on positioning LSU to be a place where scholarship grows and flourishes in a fashion consistent with the pressing needs of society”;<sup>1</sup> and

Whereas faculty members across the university welcome and endorse this vision; and

Whereas every scholar, no matter the discipline or area of specialization, relies on access to both recent and historically relevant publications or published data sets in conducting research projects; and

Whereas every editor or peer reviewer in any field of research expects that submitted articles or books take into account recent publications and the current state of scholarship on the subject at hand; and

Whereas President Tate announced recently that “Our Lady of the Lake and LCMC Health have committed \$245 million to LSU over the next 10 years, the largest philanthropic investment ever made to our university” and that “this support will advance our pursuit of the National Cancer Institute designation, catalyze STEM education and research in Louisiana, strengthen the talent pipeline for the future of healthcare, alleviate financial barriers to quality healthcare for our students, and provide elite wellness programs to our student-athletes,”<sup>2</sup> and

Whereas faculty members applaud this initiative and wish to support the President and the University in achieving the goal of advancing LSU’s national and international standing; and

Whereas a cancer researcher must first have access to up-to-date publications and become familiar with the most recent developments in this field before he, she, or they can even begin to look for novel cancer treatments; and

Whereas the vast majority of scholarship is published in subscription-based journals or book publications, either in print or in electronic formats; and

Whereas all researchers, be this undergraduate students, graduate students, or faculty members, routinely use databases to find and select publication titles within specific fields of research; and

Whereas the primary function of the LSU Libraries is to provide LSU students, staff members, and faculty with access to research and teaching resources by either purchasing or subscribing to scholarly print journals, e-journals, books, e-books, and databases along with non-scholarly publications in the arts and sciences; and

Whereas a well-funded library is essential to fulfilling the research mission of a research-intensive institution; and

Whereas, a well-funded library is equally critical to the educational mission of a large public university system as it seeks to offer up-to-date instructions and resources to undergraduate students, but even more so for the cultivation of research skills and fostering of intellectual growth of its graduate students; and

Whereas in one year, the Dean of Libraries reports, the total turn-away number for electronic resources at LSU exceeds 100,000, which means that over 100,000 times in one year, or 274 times on every single day of that year, a faculty member, staff member, or student tried to access an article in an e-journal through the library portal, only to find that it is not available at LSU; and

Whereas LSU Libraries ordered in 2019 22,525 books or articles from other universities through its Interlibrary Loan Service; and

Whereas the demand of the Interlibrary Loan Service increased by 29% compared to 2018; and

Whereas Interlibrary loans are of great use for electronically submitted articles or chapters and those hardcopy titles that a researcher requires briefly, they cannot always adequately address the needs for making publications accessible as course material or for long-term research uses in the context of large projects since repeated ILL borrowing of the same materials is both expensive to the Library and time-consuming to the researcher; and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee reported to the President's Office, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Research and Economic Development evidence that some faculty members in Humanities and Social Sciences, who make up 19% of the faculty but account for 35% of the Interlibrary Loan requests, routinely rely on work-around strategies, which include payments with personal funds for research materials, travel, often long-distance, to other university libraries, and avoidance of projects or mentorship of projects which they do not deem feasible due to limited availability of resources at LSU<sup>3</sup>; and

Whereas LSU's expenditure for the libraries has been for over a decade at less than 50% of the mean expenditure reported by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL); and

Whereas LSU ranks 13<sup>th</sup> among the 14 SEC universities in its funding for libraries and is only followed by Mississippi State University; and

Whereas LSU's total library expenditure of \$14,669,172 in 2019 amounts to 30% of the library expenditure at Texas A&M University (\$48,107,898), to 42% of that at the University of Florida (\$35,161,790), to 49% of that at the University of Tennessee (\$30,074,049), and to 64% of that of the University of Kentucky (\$22,846,210); and

Whereas the overall inflation rate in the United States as tracked with the consumer price index rose to 7.5% in February 2022;<sup>4</sup>

Therefore be it resolved that LSU commits to an annual increase of at least 6% to the allocated budget for the LSU Libraries until such a time that the total expenditure is on par with the mean expenditure reported by the Association of Research Libraries.

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<sup>1</sup> LSU Office of the President, LSU <https://lsu.edu/president/index.php> (last accessed on 2/2/22)

<sup>2</sup> Broadcast e-mail "LSU Receives Transformational Investment to Elevate Healthcare in Louisiana", by William F. Tate IV to Broadcast\_LSU\_All\_Faculty, 2/11/2022

<sup>3</sup> LSU Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee, "Report on Library Resource Shortages at LSU," dates of circulation: May 7, 2021 and September 23, 2021

<sup>4</sup> "U.S. Inflation Charges Higher With Larger-Than-Forecast Gain," *Bloomberg*  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-02-10/u-s-inflation-charges-higher-with-larger-than-forecast-gain> (last accessed on 2/25/2022)