

ALL STAFF
Elsie de Bruijn
Woodward Library

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[Handwritten initials]

FROM Doug McInnes

..... Jan. 16/84

DATE PHONE

Re: Report of the Advisory Committee on Cost Reductions for 1984/85

I am pleased to be able to circulate to you a copy of the report of the Advisory Committee. The Committee is to be commended for completing its assignment within the time available and for providing such an extensive summary of the information it received. I would also like to thank all the staff members who took time to respond in writing to the Committee and the many others who spoke to Committee members about their concerns. Given such short notice, the response (133 written replies) was exceptional and very welcome.

While I should not attempt to comment in detail on the report, a few general observations can be made:

1. The suggestions submitted will be seriously considered. Members of the Library administration have read the report and will be examining the individual responses as well. Since we are currently working on an initial response to Vice-President Smith, the Committee's report will be considered in formulating that document.
2. As the Committee has noted, many of the suggestions should be pursued as part of long term measures which may help to preserve the level of excellence in the Library despite the effect of budget cuts. Others will be of more immediate assistance in responding to the current financial problem.
3. It is important to recognize the fact that any reductions we are asked to make in 1984/85 will have to be met through the saving of continuing funds, not "soft" money which might be temporarily released. I do not know, at this point, which proposals might be considered acceptable by the University - some of the suggestions made to the Committee require action which the University may for various reasons be reluctant to take. For that reason, it is impossible for me to estimate the extent to which "irrevocable changes or reductions" can be avoided or postponed. It may be some time before we find out.

With the understanding that the Committee's report represents an overview of suggestions received from staff members rather than a document outlining Library plans or policy, I would ask you to make the report available to staff members in your Division.

DM/j

RECEIVED

JAN 19 1984

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[Handwritten signature: Doug McInnes]

"Truth or Consequences"

**Report
of the
Advisory Committee on Cost Reductions for 1984/85**

**Brian Owen
Mary Banham
Jocelyn Foster
Julie Stevens
Patrick Willoughby**

January 1984

The University of British Columbia Library

The Advisory Committee on Cost Reductions for 1984/85 was established by Doug McInnes to solicit and consider suggestions from staff about reducing library operating costs for the next fiscal year and beyond. The Library Administration wanted ideas from staff about how the Library might operate with a reduced budget, and the staff felt, given the level of restraint that might be necessary, everyone needed to be involved and aware.

The Committee distributed a short questionnaire to all staff members, inviting both written and oral responses. Of the over 400 questionnaires distributed, 133 written responses were received. The Committee also received many oral responses, and the report that follows is more than a summary of the written replies. It reflects as well the opinions of staff members who spoke to Committee members, often at great length. Given the shortness of the time available, and the Christmas season, the Committee was gratified by the returns and thanks all staff who responded. The response also indicates that staff appreciated the opportunity to contribute ideas.

The Committee divided the responses into eight main areas: public services, technical services, library reorganization, collections, staff, systems development, fiche and card products, and fundraising. These seemed natural divisions in the responses and in the library system. The Committee tried to evaluate the suggestions with as much collective expertise as it could muster. The responses reported are those which were most popular or seemed possible. All need further review. The Committee also tried to distinguish between those that offered immediate cost savings without staff dislocation and those that would be useful in the long-term.

Some general observations can be made about the mood of the library staff. Sometimes these feelings were stated explicitly in the returned questionnaires or were expressed orally to Committee members during visits and discussions.

The financial difficulties facing the Library and the University have led to tension and concern about the direct impact that financial cutbacks will have. Many individuals are worried about the possibility of being laid off. Although these fears are more widespread amongst staff with low seniority, they are not absent from those who have been with the Library for a long time. Collectively, support staff believe they will be more adversely affected than librarians by any major cutbacks. For example, several felt that the absence of support staff on this Committee indicated that a distinction had already been made between librarians and non-librarians. It would be unfortunate if hardships were not shared equitably by all staff.

There is some cynicism evident in many staff. Some wondered if many of the decisions for dealing with the financial problems had already been made at higher levels. There was also scepticism about the purpose of this Committee and whether its report would be seriously considered.

Many staff also realized the serious nature of the financial problems facing the Library. This realization was accompanied by a willingness to accept, or adjust to, some of the negative aspects of cutbacks. They have a strong commitment to the Library and the services that it provides and are concerned about the library-wide implications of cutbacks and not just the immediate impact on themselves. Many of the suggestions for more cost-effective, or efficient, ways of performing various tasks originated from the individuals responsible for them.

PUBLIC SERVICES

One of the most frequent suggestions made was to reduce the number of hours libraries are open. Variations included:

1. Cutting week-end hours
2. Closing small branches in the morning
3. Closing all branches earlier in the evening
4. Alternating evenings open amongst the three major branches

Hours of opening could be extended at certain times of the year, especially during exam periods.

Nearly everyone agreed that the late evening hours, especially Sunday, are used not for library purposes but for study. Staff who work these hours say that evening class students come to the library before classes, not after. Long, dreary evenings when staff must remain at service points can be demoralizing when there is much work to be done away from desks. The result of reducing hours would be a direct saving in salary costs or an improvement in quality of service, with more circulation staff available during the day to work at tracing, overdues checking, maintaining the stacks, etc.

The university administration should be urged to provide study space requiring little continuous expenditure. Classrooms could be used, or the old bookstore site with perhaps the provision of lockers, and copy machines maintained by an outside agency.

If study space cannot be supplied, we might consider having one library branch open late, but with no reference service.

The Main Library's problem of staffing four turnstiles was mentioned several times. The idea of having a central check-out was again brought forward. It is unfortunate that construction costs to achieve this are prohibitive because of the upgrading required to make the old building conform to fire regulations. If necessary, the Humanities/Social Science Division turnstile could be closed by locking the doors and having access to the reference area through the stacks. Science Division turnstile is already closed on week days except for the early evening.

Reserve collections in Woodward and Main could be serviced more cheaply if they were located in their circulation areas but space problems would have to be solved.

A myriad of other suggestions would in the aggregate cause considerable hardship to our patrons. The library's philosophy of providing free access to information again comes into question as we consider charging for services. One respondent pointed out that ours is a publicly-funded institution and we should be cautious about making people pay for service. Several other people suggested the following:

1. Charge UBC borrowers for interlibrary loans.
2. Charge students the full cost of computer-assisted bibliographic searches.
3. Charge other patrons more for computer searches than they now pay.
4. Charge more for copy machines.
5. Charge a fine on all overdue books, whether called in or not, and raise it from \$1.00 to \$2.00 a day (the library at present does not receive money from fines):

Many people suggested cutting out phone renewals. In small branches this might not result in a saving. In the Main Library one person is assigned to answer the renewals phone; the keying of the renewals takes considerable time also. The result of stopping phone renewals would have to be considered; certainly the queues at the Main Loan Desk would grow.

Several people thought unbound periodicals should not circulate because of the time spent manually charging them out and maintaining files. Others thought time would be saved if we could bar-code unbound periodicals. It was also suggested that anchoring of periodicals would reduce losses. For this measure to be effective the Main Library would need a separate and secure area.

TECHNICAL SERVICES

There were many responses about effecting savings in technical services, particularly with regard to cataloguing functions, and serials processing. Comments regarding the acquisitions process focussed primarily on the need for redevelopment of the Acquisitions System, and implementation of the invoice processing system. Some proposals will not provide immediate cost-savings, but would afford savings and improve service in the long run.

There were a number of very detailed submissions regarding cost-cutting in cataloguing. The outstanding "themes" are:

1. Identifying classes of materials for which full cataloguing is inappropriate (examples include exhibition catalogues, storage items, theses, Slavic materials, etc.) and using alternative methods of listing them, such as DRS. This issue was addressed in 1981 by the Task Force on Cataloguing Alternatives.
2. Exploring alternatives to UTLAS: e.g., an in-house cataloguing system.
3. Reviewing original cataloguing priorities: e.g. "creative backlogging" --do original cataloguing only for high demand items, and wait until catalogue copy is available for items not requested.
4. Reviewing work loads of technical services units, in order to share work fairly.
5. Using UTLAS more effectively: developing local programmes to edit records "automatically" at off-peak hours, scheduling staff to use UTLAS at off-peak hours, examining communication line requirements to UTLAS, etc.
6. Reviewing certain cataloguing practices (e.g. uniform titles) and some basic housekeeping tasks.

It is difficult to assess at this point how much the Library would save by following the numerous proposals made (chiefly) by processing staff; in the long-term these measures to increase efficiency would produce some significant savings in utility and staff costs.

Many respondents were concerned about serials processing, both in public and technical service areas. The major issues and proposals are:

1. Eliminating duplicate check-in of serials: the automated system is not being effectively utilized by branches and divisions.
2. Examining centralization versus decentralization of serials processing: a clear policy on serials management needs to be formulated, and Serials Division's role as it relates to training, support, etc. for other check-in locations needs to be defined.
3. Defining the role of the serials system: should it be used for recording monographic holdings, or only serials?

4. Examining the need for cataloguing serials on UTLAS.

The implication of suggestions two and three is that clearer goals will reduce duplication of work and employ staff more efficiently.

LIBRARY REORGANIZATION

Many staff felt that if restraint were used creatively and the library system considered critically, library reorganization could be a positive experience, not just saving money but also deploying staff more effectively. The subtheme of many comments was that UBC Library's decentralization may no longer be affordable. Some shrinkage has occurred, and more may be necessary, even desirable. Then, too, if parts of the library are subject to pruning for immediate cost savings, rationalization elsewhere is a way of maintaining staff morale. Cynicism may result if all do not share the restraint.

Many suggestions implied new construction, the Library's need for which is not less than it was before. Mentioning the configurations suggested for new buildings and branch reorganizations may be redundant in light of the planning already done, but the most popular are:

1. A new Science Library was frequently mentioned. Mathematics and MacMillan Libraries could be amalgamated with the Science collection from Main. The other natural union would be Woodward and Science, perhaps using LPC. Another was Data and Math Libraries (in the old Bookstore?) to create a Math/ Computing Library. Creating a Science Library by moving the Sedgewick collection to Main and using that space for a Science Library was another suggestion.
2. The question of whether we could afford Sedgewick Library on its present scale was also raised. There were suggestions to move the collection back to Main, maintaining only a separate course reading area somewhere. Others felt that Sedgewick, in its present space, should serve only first and second year students, thus reducing duplication of collections and services. Combining the reserve functions of Sedgewick and the Reserve Book Collection was also suggested.
3. If the Main Library became a SSD/HD Library (with a separate Science Library), the Curriculum Laboratory collection could either be completely integrated with Main, or at least its role reduced to providing only teaching materials, the 'professional education' materials moving to Main.

Other suggestions are on a smaller scale:

1. The most frequently suggested of all those about reorganization, and requiring little renovation, was the integration of Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions. It was noted that, not only could staff be used more efficiently, but some savings in processing would result. Another suggestion was to combine all three reference divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, Science) in Main.
2. The separate existence of Government Publications was questioned. If disbanded, its reference functions could be assumed by Humanities/Social Sciences, and its processing by technical services.
4. Smaller branch libraries or divisions might disappear. Social Work and Math were the two most frequently mentioned, for either reading room status, or integration with Main or a Science collection. The Information and Orientation Division was also a candidate for integration.

Another cluster suggested deploying staff in Main more efficiently by:

1. Combining unbound periodicals in one area, so fewer staff could maintain these services and equipment could be more efficiently used.
2. Combining collections and public service staff into a unit to handle all reference and selection duties, ie., integrate bibliography and reference.

Numerous and detailed suggestions about reorganizing technical services were also received. Processing routines have been much affected by automation, but some responses suggested more changes may be desirable. Duplication of work was frequently mentioned. Specific suggestions were:

1. Combine the Oriental languages units and do not fill the Japanese cataloguing position.
2. Combine Data Prep and Book Prep and reclass LA1's to LA2's to share keying and marking duties.
3. Move Serials cataloguing unit to Serials Division.
4. Centralize some aspects of technical processing. Acquisitions and serials checkin were the most frequent candidates. Amalgamating government publications processing, especially serials, with the processing divisions was also suggested.

The Reading Rooms problem has not gone away. The report of the summer survey of Reading Rooms may have other recommendations, but suggestions received favoured reducing services still further, including microcatalogue distribution, on the grounds that the library cannot afford to support such peripheral services.

COLLECTIONS

Eliminating or reducing duplication was the most frequent suggestion to save money from the collections budget. Several individuals referred to the duplication of books and reference sources, especially between Main and Sedgewick, but also between Main and Woodward, Main and Social Work, and Main and Curriculum Laboratory. Most suggestions, however, concerned reducing the duplication of serials. Some of the comments included having only one subscription no matter what, having only one set of "popular" journals, having multiple copy sets only in microfilm or having a maximum of two subscriptions in the system. Other common suggestions were to eliminate low use foreign language books and serials and some expensive microfilm sets, for example, French Books before 1601, NTIS Selected Resources in Microfiche (\$12,000), and United States Government Publications on Microprint (\$30,000).

The rest of the suggestions ranged widely:

1. Bind only one set of a serial to save replacement costs.
2. Bind some journals in cheaper covers.
3. Reduce the book budget and rely on private funds.
4. Reactivate the TRIUL committee on collections and rationalize the collection of research material between the three universities.
5. Scrutinize before cataloguing all gifts, unsolicited material and ephemeral material, especially government publications.
6. Stop accepting theses and/or stop sending them to the National Library.
7. Sell parts of the collection.
8. Reduce retrospective and replacement buying.
9. Cancel low use indexes, especially if available on-line.

Many respondents felt that it was very important to maintain the collection. The suggestions indicate, however, that the collection responsibilities of the various libraries are unclear, with unnecessary duplication often the result. The interdisciplinary nature of many fields today and an established decentralized library system makes duplication unavoidable. Duplication is necessary to provide an acceptable level of service to many students using the same material. To eliminate duplication without harming service cannot be done without examining the overall goals of the library. In the long-term, decisions will have to be made about the overall role of each of the campus libraries vis-a-vis the teaching and research goals of the university to establish a rational program of cuts in specific collection budgets. In the short term, maintenance of the collections budget is essential.

STAFF

The suggestions in this area indicated that the majority of respondents wanted to share the effects of budget cuts rather than have layoffs. By far the most frequent suggestion was to close the library for a period of time during the year, the most favored being between Christmas and New Year. For example, this year University of Calgary, McGill and Western closed at that time. All staff would take unpaid leave or, if they chose, holidays. Another frequent suggestion was to provide opportunities for job-sharing or part-time work with prorated benefits. Voluntary vacation without pay, temporary voluntary lay-off, unpaid leave and early retirement were also mentioned. The third most frequent suggestion was to eliminate the flexible work week.

Some of the more extensive submissions strongly recommended that comparative studies of work loads in each division or branch be done before any staff cuts were made in order to equalize these loads. There were many different suggestions for staff cuts.

1. Consider making some public service positions sessional.
2. Use part-time staff on weekends and evenings to save on the number of full-time staff needed to cover shifts.
3. Examine use of student help. Some public service staff favoured more use of students; some technical service staff felt students required too much training time.
4. Use library assistants for some librarians' positions.
5. Use volunteers for special tasks not covered in job descriptions.
6. Librarians' vacations should be reduced or salaries frozen
7. The number of administrative librarians should be reduced or salaries reduced

There were also ideas for saving money or increasing productivity:

1. Branches and divisions should cooperate in the deployment of staff.
2. More attention should be paid throughout the system to observing work schedules, including breaks.
3. Travel grants and expense accounts should be eliminated temporarily.
4. Motivation should be provided for increased productivity

SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Many of the suggestions for saving money depended on the Library undertaking some local automated systems development or enhancement. The redevelopment of the local acquisitions system was either explicit, or implicit, in many of these. Others ranged from major projects, such as developing an in-house cataloguing facility to replace UTLAS, to relatively minor modifications that would make workflows more efficient or labour saving.

There is interest in systems-related solutions because they can save money while preserving, or even improving, current levels of service. However, most of the systems development suggestions are long-term solutions, cannot be expected to save money immediately, and will require a significant amount of staff time and effort to develop and implement. There were also several cautionary comments about systems projects. It was suggested that no unnecessary, or "experimental", projects should be undertaken.

Potential systems development projects were recently reviewed by the Library, and many of the suggestions from that exercise re-appeared during this survey. The earlier review categorized those projects by their desirability and potential cost saving, and it is not necessary to repeat them here. However, it is evident that the re-development of the acquisitions system should be given a high priority.

FICHE, CARDS AND OTHER LIBRARY PRODUCTS

The cost-saving suggestions for Library products can be grouped into three general categories -- elimination and/or merger of certain products, reduction in frequency or quantity, and format or entry point changes within specific products. In some instances, reduction in frequency or quantity was offered as a less severe option than complete elimination.

Potentially large savings could be achieved quickly in this area without a major impact on either staffing or services. However, some of the suggestions would require either local systems development, or initial capital expenditure.

Library products, especially fiche, recently underwent an extensive review by the Microcatalogues Task Group. In fact, many of the suggestions forwarded to this Committee probably originated from that review. Therefore, it would be useful if the Microcatalogues Task Group examined cost saving measures proposed in this area, especially those that have an impact on widely used library products.

Cost savings suggestions pertaining to fiche products were numerous. Some of the more common, or significant, ones are:

1. Eliminate daily circulation fiche produced for Saturday and Sunday. This would save almost seven thousand dollars annually and would not have a severe impact on service.
2. Replace daily circulation fiche with an on-line system that would include all current circulation transactions. This proposal would not require extensive systems development and would provide terminals in most public service areas that could be used for other purposes. Unfortunately, it is dependent on initial capital funds to purchase and install terminals, and any cost savings, albeit considerable, would not be realized for several years.
3. Reduce the frequency of the Microcatalogue from three to two times a year. This would save approximately seven thousand dollars. This suggestion was reviewed by the Microcatalogues Task Group over a year ago, but was rejected as having too severe an impact on users.

However, it is worth re-considering. It was also suggested that current copies of the Microcatalogue no longer be sent to the Reading Rooms. This would save over thirteen hundred dollars each time the Microcatalogue is produced.

4. Eliminate the Serial Master and Govt. Serial Master fiche sets for an annual saving of approximately eight thousand dollars. These are not public fiche sets and the technical processing areas that presently use them have on-line access to the serials file. Even a reduction in frequency to quarterly would save about seven thousand dollars.
5. Reduce the frequency of other fiche sets such as the IPL Supplement and the Serials Supplement. Again, significant savings are possible. However, frequency reductions or even complete elimination would be more feasible if on-line access to local processing files were widespread, especially in public service areas.
6. Re-format certain fiche sets by using briefer record displays or eliminating certain types of records or access points. It was suggested that briefer record displays could be used in the Microcatalogue, or that serials records could be eliminated from it in conjunction with some enhancements to Serial List. Again, some savings are possible, but the difficulty of reaching any clear agreement on what is reasonable, plus the potentially negative impact on users, makes it unlikely that any quick decisions could be made.

Suggested savings on card products ranged from complete elimination (except for non-Roman materials) to elimination of various shelf-list or NUC cards. The Library currently spends about fifteen thousand dollars annually on card products from UTLAS (each card costs eight and one-half cents). An annual saving of about ten thousand dollars could be achieved if all shelf list cards were discontinued, except those for the main shelf list. Affected branches would have to relinquish their local shelf lists, including the Health Sciences Union shelf list. It would also be necessary to re-examine the current practice of reporting holdings to the National Union Catalogue by card.

It was also suggested that several locally produced paper products, the Serials Payment and Check-in Books, could be eliminated in order to save money. However, the Library would not save any 'real' dollars with this suggestion as those lists are produced at the UBC Computing Centre. In any event, those products will probably disappear in the next few years as the processing activities associated with them continue to be converted to the on-line system.

FUNDRAISING

Many staff members think that the Library should engage in fundraising of various kinds.

Some people mentioned bakesales, dances, or selling library discards; others suggested that the Library should explore grant sources even more than it does or that an energetic Friends of the Library organization could encourage local funding. It would require committed planning, investment of staff time and probably money, but there are many examples of cultural institutions cultivating local financial support that the Library might consider. Fundraising could have useful repercussions by increasing awareness of the strength and value of the Library's collections.

Other assets that the Library might use to raise revenue are:

1. Computerized literature retrieval, already done for some off-campus users, might be further advertised and exploited for more funds.
2. Using the expertise of our systems staff. The Library already produces microcatalogues for two local colleges. Could this service be expanded to become a revenue-producing

operation? There are also examples in the literature of computer firms providing hardware in return for marketing rights to software developed. Could Systems negotiate something?

3. Firms that use the library might make donations for collection building or supporting reference services.
4. Implement an article/book retrieval and delivery service and charge for the service.

There were also a number of suggestions about charging or increasing charges for services. The Library is a public institution and has to bear this in mind when thinking of charging for services rendered. Restraint is no excuse to restrict our services only to those who can afford to pay for them. But that is not the same as promoting our collections and services in the local community to solicit financial support or to explore grant sources.

MISCELLANEOUS

A wide range of essentially small-scale suggestions were made, including:

1. Using less paper: fewer printouts, fewer copies of documents, using on-line facilities and verbal communication where possible, reducing the number of library publications, recycling paper, etc.
2. Reducing the number of telephones.
3. Purchasing good quality used, rather than new, equipment, where possible.
4. Centralizing LPC stock control.

CONCLUSION

The Committee distinguished between suggestions on the basis of immediate or long term applicability. Generally, staff are prepared to accept certain global and equitable measures as a response to the immediate fiscal shortfall, but feel that more comprehensive and significant organizational and policy changes will be required to deal with the continuing problems of chronic underfunding.

Therefore, the Committee recommends both immediate and long-term plans to deal with financial cutbacks and their consequences in the Library. Apart from dealing with the 1984/85 fiscal shortfall, the immediate plan would provide the Library with the necessary time to formulate and implement a more comprehensive long-term plan.

The immediate plan should avoid irrevocable changes or reductions in collections, services or staffing, and should concentrate on easily implemented, global, or voluntary measures such as:

1. Library wide closures or compulsory unpaid vacation. Each day of system wide closure would save the Library about thirty four thousand dollars in salaries. Many staff indicated that such "across the board" measures were vastly preferable to staff layoffs.
2. Reductions in hours of opening.

3. Cost-saving measures that do not affect staffing, such as reductions in fiche and card production and distribution, telephones, supplies, etc.
4. Encouragement of voluntary measures for staffing reductions such as additional unpaid leave, less than full-time work, or early retirement.
5. Sharing staff resources to ease the burden of positions left vacant by the hiring freeze. More branch and divisional co-operation, both formal and informal, could help maintain service levels.

Formulation of a long-term plan needs to begin immediately. In addition to dealing with chronic underfunding it could also address some of the other problems that were highlighted in this report. Long-term planning could be a positive exercise and would include:

1. Review of library organization. There are at least two issues. Are work loads and work flows as equitable and efficient as possible? Are library services too decentralized?
2. Clarification of collections policy. Issues such as responsibility for collecting in certain subject areas, elimination of categories of material, or duplication must be resolved.
3. Development of "in-house" automated systems. The re-development of the acquisitions system and the development of a local cataloguing system as an alternative to UTLAS have considerable cost saving, and improved service, potential.
4. Implementation of a fund raising program. Many suggestions were offered in this area, but they require planning and effort before they can become significant sources of funding.

There are compelling reasons for both an immediate and long term plan. As one respondent pointed out it is difficult for the Library to make any collection or service cuts until the University has made decisions about program cuts. Similarly, the Library should try to avoid layoffs until it has undertaken a thorough organizational review. Attrition will reduce staffing levels during the time such a review is underway and provide the Library with "room" to re-deploy people and avoid layoffs.

It is very important that the Library Administration communicate openly and fully with all staff. Staff should be kept informed of significant developments or final decisions about cutbacks. Different methods could be employed -- memos, newsletters, regular administrative lines of communication, branch/division and library-wide meetings. The Administration should continue to encourage input from staff. The establishment of this Committee was a good first step; the volume of response to the survey indicates that it was a worthwhile one. Many staff are apprehensive, and open communication is an effective way to reduce their fears, dispel rumours, and maintain Library morale at the highest possible level.