

University Budget Advisory Committee

Minutes – 10/22/2020 meeting

Prepared by Michelle Pickham

Voting members present: Nabil Al-Tikriti (Chair, At-large)
Stephen Davies (Secretary, At-large)
Laura Bylenok (At-large)
Liane Houghtalin (CAS)
Kyle Schultz (COE)
Suzanne Sumner (At-large)

Voting members absent: Chris Garcia (COB)

Non-voting members present: Michelle Pickham (Staff Advisory Council President)

Patrick Catullo (Athletic Director)

Guests: Rosemary Arneson (University Head Librarian)

1. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to a presentation from Ms. Arneson about the University Libraries and related budget implications. Ms. Arneson provided written presentation notes (Appendix A) as well as a PowerPoint presentation (Appendix B). Some specific points from the presentation:

(a) The cumulative changes to the UMW Libraries' budget over the past 10 years has shown a steady decrease; about a 13.16% decrease in overall library budget over a 10-year span.

(b) The library assesses user experience and cost effectiveness, product administration, and how well the vendor supports the product/service in order to evaluate whether a product/service they use is essential or could be considered for a cut if needed.

i. The library relies heavily on vendors to provide accurate usage data in order to measure the performance of a product/service. Not all vendors provide good data.

(c) Staffing:

i. The library has experienced cumulative and progressive staffing declines over the years. In 2004 they had 25 staff; in 2020 they had 18. One more position will be vacant at the end of 2020 due to an upcoming retirement. This has resulted in some knowledge-specific positions to go unfilled, such as the web services librarian. Right now, the library has non-experts trying to support various systems they don't have the expertise for.

ii. The loss of staffing has mainly come after someone retired or leaves and the position is frozen and not subsequently filled. There are currently 5 full positions unfilled.

iii. Librarians used to be full members of the faculty and with that comes a voice within faculty governance and more visibility as a critical resource. Currently, the library's classification of employees is staff, with most being Administrative Professional Faculty.

- Dr. Al-Tikriti asked when/why the library's faculty status changed. Ms. Arneson believed it was around the time of President Anderson. President Anderson made the decision to change a lot of positions at the University from faculty to A/P staff. *This could be an advocacy point for the library to seek that some librarians

become research faculty.

(d) Consequences during COVID with a reduced staff force in the library means:

- i. Reduced open hours and reduced services, such as no in person reference services, limited face-to-face instruction, special collections/archives services limited to appointment only, an impact in inter-library loans, group study spaces closed, and a limited ability to get “deep quiet” because of the reduced hours and availability of seating/private spaces.
- ii. The library is a place where you can get reliable computers and internet access, so reduced hours and seating areas mean less access to this resource.
- iii. Because of COVID and the budgetary considerations, the library is not buying anything that faculty don't request for specific classes, so the university's collections are greatly reduced.
 - As the University is not buying any collections the faculty do not specifically request, the library and university as a whole is going to have a hole in our collections over time that will only get deeper.
 - Libraries all across the state are in the same situation. Even larger institutions are not able to purchase everything they normally would. The “crack” in the infrastructure may be small now but could get wider as materials and resources are harder to come by over the years.
 - If the library can't buy things for other departments, faculty may not be able to expand their course offerings and expanded opportunities for students.
 - This year the library canceled 55 journal titles and several databases to account for cuts for FY21.

(e) Crack in the wall in the back of Simpson picture (PowerPoint presentation) – symbolizes that the cumulative effect of all the budget cuts, reductions in staffing and collections, etc. is like having a crack in the infrastructure of the University. At the present time we're holding it together but the future of these effects is unclear.

(f) Dr. Davies asked how much savings have there been through reduced staff and through reduced subscriptions?

- i. Whenever there's a campus wide budget cut it comes first out of the collections budget because that's the area with most of the discretionary spending. Most of the operating budget items are fixed. Because of the collections budget being more fluid – that takes a disproportionate hit. The staff savings have come in the way of freezing positions.
- ii. The Stafford campus library closed because there were only 2 staff over there – not enough to warrant having that library open. Those positions were moved to the Simpson library.

(g) The library requests that when we come out of COVID and we're recreating higher education and UMW, that the faculty and staff be willing to speak to the importance of the library and the critical resource it provides.

(h) Any opportunities for fundraising or awareness efforts?

- i. Reaching out to staff, faculty, and alumni? Could there be asks for donations to the collections, etc.?
 - ii. Make an argument that the library is a place where people are going to go when they don't have anywhere else to go.
 - (i) Ms. Pickham asked if she thinks that the library's staff classification changing from full faculty to A/P staff contributed to her concern regarding lack of representation from the library in university matters and decisions and feeling "left out of conversations."
 - i. Ms. Arneson thinks so. The library used to be part of every academic affairs committee meeting but once COVID hit, library representation has dwindled in councils/committees. Less representation means a decreased opportunity to advocate on behalf of the library.
 - (j) Dr. Al-Tikriti stated that he has observed improvements in the library over time, including the available and employed use of technology and website enhancements. In terms of collections, it seems the whole industry has evolved to a more digital world. Is the new digital world today in an information and collections sense cheaper than yesterday's print world? Ms. Arneson noted that when everything started going all digital, collections and titles started costing more. Subscription prices escalate every year at the highest percentage because of lack of ability to negotiate lower with the giants in the industry.
 - (k) Dr. Davies asked if there were any efforts to regionalize acquisitions? Ms. Arneson noted that there are initiatives like that such as trying to think of the Virginia academic libraries as one big library.
 - i. VIVA (The Virtual Library of Virginia, managed and operated by James Madison University) discovered that state higher education institutions were all buying too much of the same thing and that we should be diversifying our buying to get better use out of the commonwealth's money.
 - ii. UVA is working on a centralized way to share accessible documents.
 - (l) Library engagements and awareness:
 - i. A while ago there were Choice cards that were circulated for short reviews of books for different areas – what happened to them? Ms. Arneson noted that the Choice review lists are still produced but in an effort to reduce the amount of printing and paper used, the cards stopped being made and circulated. Ms. Arneson took note of a question asked on how can we use the tools that we have to let faculty know what the new things are to provide feedback on what the university should buy. Several members of the committee expressed that they miss the opportunity to give feedback via the Choice cards and would like to see them (or something like them) reinstated. Both prompting faculty to give regular feedback on acquisitions, and informing faculty of new titles in their discipline, were very valuable elements of this process. Simply knowing that there is a way to provide such feedback in general, but not being directly prompted via Choice cards (or some other direct communication from the library) is a loss.
 - ii. The library doesn't seem valued as much as it should be. In what ways can the library better engage the faculty? How could we do it in a digital manner that doesn't kill trees? In what ways
2. Dr. Al-Tikriti announced that for our meeting in two next weeks (Nov. 5), Kathy Sandor and Melva Kishpaugh from Business Services and Procurement Services, respectively, would be

presenting.

3. Ms. Pickham's previously raised question of whether the Staff Advisory Council President should be a voting member of the committee or whether the committee should be expanded to include more staff representatives. Due to time constraints and availability of members at the end of this meeting, it was decided that the committee discuss this topic at a meeting devoted only to this topic on October 29.

Appendix A

Rosemary Arneson UBAC Presentation Notes

October 22, 2020

Over the past ten years, the budget for the UMW Libraries has experienced a series of cuts that have negatively impacted our collections and services. The FY2021 budget is 13.16% less than it was in FY2011.

Earlier cuts in the budget led to the cancellation of almost all our print journal subscriptions. We also eliminated databases that were not essential to our support of the UMW curriculum. Over the years, we have also seen a shift in our collections spending so that electronic resources now account for 60% of the total. (In FY2010, it was 31%.)

The cuts that have come this year have been significant. We had no more “fat” in our collection, and we have had to eliminate databases that are critical to some disciplines. The best example of this is L’Anne Philologique. This database is considered essential to Classics scholarship. Low use, a problematic user interface, and recent price increases brought us to the reluctant decision to cancel this resource.

Our database decisions are based on a careful analysis of multiple metrics, using a system developed by Summer Durrant, Collection Services Librarian. Our Value Metric looks at cost per use, curricular support, vendor responsiveness, and other factors to rank each resource on a 100-point scale.

The other impact of the series of budget cuts the Library has experienced has been to the Library staff. In 2004, we had a staff of 25 FTE, including two positions working on the Stafford Campus. We begin this year with a staff of 18.

The consequences of these staff cuts are numerous. We have had to reduce hours and services, and we have had to adjust our instruction program. We are not the robust academic library that we were in 2011.

I ended this presentation with a photograph of the crack in the wall in the rear of Simpson Library. The budget cuts the UMW Libraries have experienced over the past 10 years have created similar fault lines in our information infrastructure. We are no longer able to provide adequate collections and services to the university community. UMW needs to make rebuilding the library infrastructure a priority for its post-COVID future.

Appendix B

PowerPoint Presentation

A photograph of a modern library interior. The scene features a prominent curved staircase with a white railing, set against a backdrop of large windows and colorful architectural panels in shades of blue, green, and brown. The lighting is bright and even, highlighting the clean lines and materials of the space.

UMW Libraries Budget

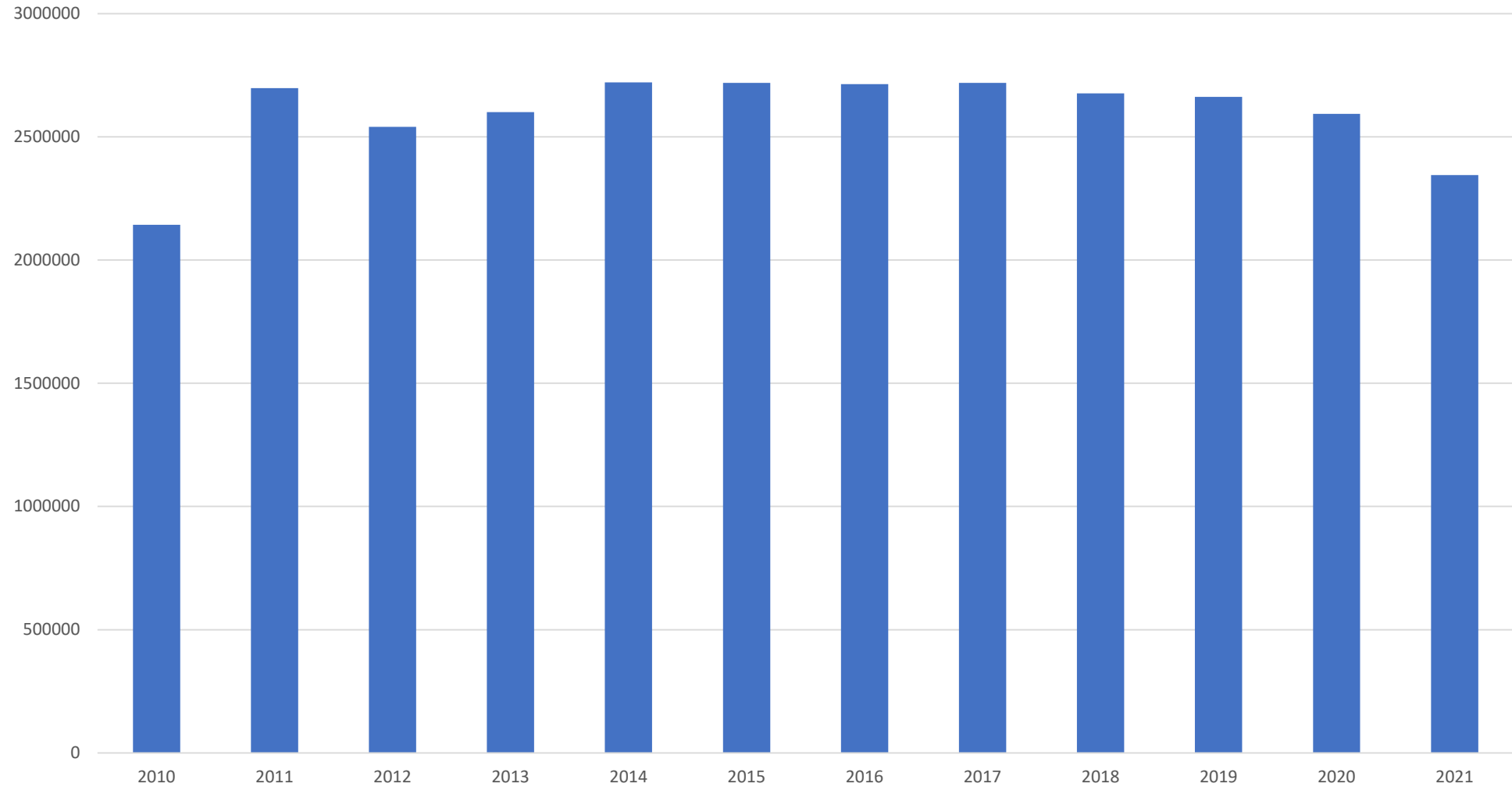
Report to the University Budget Advisory Committee

October 22, 2020

Budget History 2010-2021

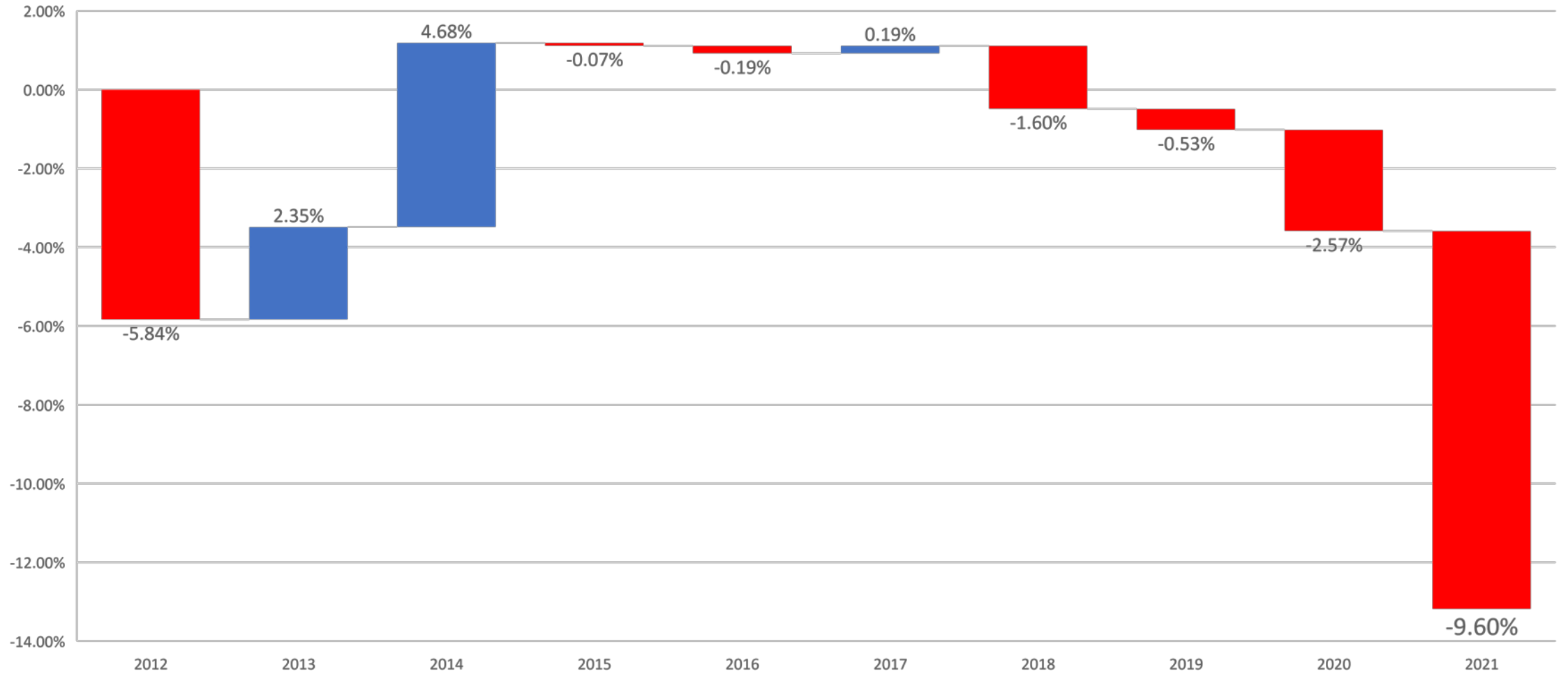
Year	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget
2010	2,143,326	2,107,046
2011	2,697,710	2,415,018
2012	2,540,246	2,557,961
2013	2,599,894	2,572,291
2014	2,721,444	2,694,432
2015	2,719,452	2,628,868
2016	2,714,204	2,678,487
2017	2,719,452	2,628,868
2018	2,675,893	2,684,721
2019	2,661,667	2,543,521
2020	2,593,292	2,584,045
2021	2,345,261	2,345,261

Adopted Budget



Budget Changes 2012-2020

■ Increase ■ Decrease ■ Total



2011

\$2,697,710

2021

\$2,345,261

-13.16%

Cuts for FY21

- 55 journal titles cancelled
- Databases cancelled
 - Gale Literature Online
 - Literature Online (LION) -- VIVA cost share discontinued
 - Philosophers Index
 - L'Anne Philologique
 - ARTFL
 - Operations Research Letters
 - TAIR

Staffing

2004 = 25



2020 = 18



COVID Consequences

- Reduced hours
- Reduced services
 - No in-person reference services
 - Limited face-to-face instruction
 - Special Collections & Archives services limited to appointment only
 - Impact on interlibrary loans
 - Group study spaces closed
 - Deep quiet

