

Council of Librarians: COVID-19 Budget Resolution

Drafted by the Council Executive Committee: May 7, 2020

Submitted as amended for a full Council vote: May 21, 2020

Resolution adopted: May 27, 2020

Whereas the Council of Librarians has shared interests in and responsibilities for collection development, and whereas we wish to safeguard the future of LAI as an essential resource within the University, the Council of Librarians recommends that, should the University require FY21 LAI budget reductions, we prioritize collections cuts over staff furloughs or layoffs.

We believe in the primary and vital importance of staff to the continued success of the University. This is especially important given the constraints under which LAI is already operating as a result of layoffs in 2015 and 2016 and subsequent vacancies that the current hiring freeze has prevented us from filling.

Journals, books, and databases that we do not acquire this year will likely be available for acquisition next year or the year after. As engaged professionals, Council Librarians are prepared to develop resourceful, innovative solutions in the face of financial uncertainty. Cuts to LAI staff, in addition to putting people's livelihoods and health at risk, leave gaps in organizational knowledge and capacity that will impede our effectiveness in supporting teaching and research for years to come. Every position across the entirety of LAI, not just in the Council of Librarians, is invaluable to LAI's on-going work and the academic mission and values of the University.

In these unprecedented times we believe that it is important to affirm that people matter more to the success of a library than its collections. The loss of staff within LAI will further devastate morale and stymie innovation within the organization. Now more than ever, the University needs the expertise, dedication, leadership, and capacity for care at which LAI staff excel. Therefore, in accordance with the roles and responsibilities of librarians as outlined in Section X of the Council of Librarians Code, we urge that if necessary, and with due consideration given to the constraints of the university's fiduciary obligations, FY 2021 collections funds be repurposed in order to protect LAI's most important resource: its people.