

May 10, 2010

I recently conducted a series of presentations on the [Proposed 2010-2011 Budget for the George A. Smathers Libraries](#). I used these as opportunities to communicate our fiscal circumstances and to convey our requirements for sustained and increased funding for the new fiscal year. The budget I presented was based on what I believe is necessary for our libraries to serve our faculty, students and researchers adequately. Although the total increase requested is substantial, approaching \$5 million, this is not a budget that was predicated on growth or addressing historic funding circumstances. Rather, I sought to restore \$2.4 million in lost purchasing power for materials to the 2006-2007 level and \$650,000 to close a long-standing materials budget gap in the Health Science Center Libraries (HSCL). Similarly, over \$675,000 has been requested to maintain our current level of salaries and benefits, offsetting the potential for loss of funding for the proposed budget recall and the retirement incentive program, and an additional \$220,000 has been requested to replace the loss of external funding for two positions, one of which is in the HSCL. \$765,000 is requested to establish new positions to support underserved disciplines and user groups.

To support the [Proposed 2010-2011 Budget for the George A. Smathers Libraries](#), including the needs of the Health Science Center Libraries, I have assessed how the resources of the UF libraries and the demands of our university compare to other similar institutions based on published statistical data. As you will see, the data has been interpreted using a number of different approaches and the interpretations are based on a variety of measures for library resources and university characteristics that influence the demand for library materials and services. The two consistent findings throughout are that the scope of the population and programs at UF are significantly above average and the fiscal and human resources available to the libraries are significantly below average when compared to those of peer institutions. Said differently, the data collected indicates there is a considerable and uniquely steep gap between the scale of our university programs and populations and the resources of the library system.

I hope that this information will lend context to my requests for increased and sustained investments in the UF libraries. As the university transitions to managing its budget under RCM, there is an opportunity to redress the chronic underfunding of the libraries and establish a level of funding that is more appropriate to the size and complexity of the university. While I understand that there are competing demands for limited resources, I have proposed a budget that addresses the needs of the UF libraries, not in themselves, but in order to better serve our users.

#### Selection of Peers for Comparison

A wide variety of institutions was considered before arriving at the following as comparators: University of Michigan, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of Wisconsin, University of Washington, Ohio State University, University of Pittsburgh, University of Minnesota, and Michigan State University. Each university is a member of the Association of American Universities and the library system for each is a member of the Association of Research Libraries. Each university is a large, public, research institution, with four or more health colleges and a law school. Four (Wisconsin, Washington, Ohio State and Michigan State) are Land Grant institutions, as we are. All of these universities are ranked in the top 30 public universities by *US News & World Report* for 2010 (see table). UF is ranked 15.

	US News Ranking
University of Michigan	4
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	5
University of Wisconsin	9
University of Washington	11
<b>University of Florida</b>	<b>15</b>
Ohio State University	18
University of Pittsburgh	20
University of Minnesota	22
Michigan State University	29

In analyzing the collected data, we based a number of comparisons on two groupings of these peers: all 8 of the non-UF institutions and those 4 institutions with higher rankings than our own. This layered comparison is possible due to the fortuitous placement of UF in the middle of the 9 rankings. Where relevant, the peer group used in the comparisons is indicated.

#### Data Analysis

The data used in this report was collected from two sources. The university data came from the institutions' fall 2008 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report submitted to US Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences. The library data came from the most recent published (2008) ARL Statistics from the Association of Research Libraries.

The data and analysis are depicted in 5 charts that are linked from this narrative.

#### 1. [Total Library Expenditures as a Function of Total University Expenditures](#)

The table reports the total university and total library expenditures for each peer institution. Included is a scatter chart reflecting this data and the resulting trend line. The data for our university and library system is also depicted and its plot is considerably below the trend line. Please note the correlation coefficient (r-squared) for these two data series is .83, representing a strong correlation. Using the formula from the linear regression analysis of this data for the peer institutions and applying the figure for UF total expenditures, the projection for comparable library expenditures is calculated at \$37,899,670, while the actual expenditures for this period were \$28,573,302. Accounting for the size of the university's financial resources, this figure represents a considerable gap in the level of investment in library resources between UF and these 8 peer institutions.

#### 2. [Library Expenditures as a Percentage of Total University Expenditures](#)

This table and bar chart reflect library expenditures as a percentage of the total university expenditures. The UF library system's expenditures as a percentage of the university expenditures are the second lowest for all peers. The only lower percentage is for Michigan, which is a result of the huge level for total university expenditures (more than double the total expenditures for a number of the peer universities). The total expenditures for the Michigan libraries were \$51.6 million, which is the highest for all peer institution libraries and 38% above the average for library expenditures of the 8 peer institutions. The expenditures by the UF library system as a percentage of the university's expenditures is 10% below the average percentage for both peer sets (all 8 institutions and the 4 higher ranked institutions). Without the downward skewing of the average percentages caused by Michigan, the gap between UF and its peers would be even more pronounced.

#### 3. [Comparison of UF Library and University Statistics With Peer Institutions](#)

This table compares library and institutional statistics across UF and the 8 peer universities. UF statistics are compared to the averages for the 8 peers (blue highlighted heading) and the 4 higher ranked peers (orange highlighted heading). The yellow highlighted cells reflect UF as a percentage of the averages. The Library Statistics represent resources and the UF library system falls significantly below the average for each of these measures for both peer sets. The University Statistics are a reflection of demand and UF is above the average for each of the measures for both peer sets. There is a definite disparity between library resources and the characteristics of the university that reflect demand for library services and materials when compared to these peer institutions. These resource and demand statistics are further interpreted in the final two charts.

4. [UF Library Compared to Average Resources of Peer Libraries](#)

One of the challenges in analyzing data across institutions is the need to reflect differences in the scale of the institutions. In selecting the peer group, we attempted to produce a group of similar universities, but there is still variance in programs and populations. These tables compare three library resource measures (Library Material Expenditures, Professional Staff FTE and Total Staff FTE) to several factors intended to capture the parent institution's size or scale: full time Faculty, PhD Fields, PhD's and Professional degrees awarded, Graduate and Professional Student count, and Total Student Enrollment. The statistic used here is UF's percentage of the average of each resource measure divided by the indicated university statistic. For example, UF's materials expenditures per faculty are 64% of the average for all 8 peers. As another example, UF's total library staff per total student enrollment is 68% of the average for all 8 peers. The second table compares UF to just the 4 higher ranked peer institutions. While the exact percentages vary and no one factor is authoritative when viewed by itself, it is notable that in no comparison for either peer group does the UF library system exceed 68% of the average.

5. [Library Resource Measures v. University Demand Measures \(2 pages\)](#)

For each peer institution we collected data reflecting library resources: Library Materials Expenditures, Total Library Expenditures, Salaries and Wages for Professional Staff, Total Salaries and Wages, and FTE counts for Professional Staff, Support Staff and Total Staff. We also collected data reflecting the scale and diversity of the university's programs: PhD's awarded, Professional Degrees awarded, combined PhD's and Professional degrees awarded, PhD Fields, full time Faculty and Total Student Enrollment. For each measure the average, excluding UF, was calculated along with the percentage for each institution compared to this average. For example, looking at Library Resource Measures in the table, Michigan spent 138% of the non-UF average for library materials. As another example, looking at the Demand Measures, Michigan State only generated 72% of the non-UF average for the number of PhD's awarded. The average percentage of each university's resource and demand measures is reported, respectively, in the orange and blue highlighted cells of the table. The bar graph reflects these overall averages and shows the relationship of resource and demand for each institution. For example, the University of Washington's Library Resource Measures are 20% higher than the Demand Measures, while the comparable measures for UF show that Library Resource Measures are 69% below those for Demand Measures. The graph depicts the uniquely large gap between the UF library system's comparison to averages for resource versus demand measures compared to these peer institutions. The conclusion is that our library resources are not measuring up to the demand measures for such a large and complex institution.

If you would like additional information or have any questions or comments regarding the library budget proposal, please contact:

Judith C. (Judy) Russell  
Dean of University Libraries  
George A. Smathers Libraries  
Phone: 352-273-2505  
E-Mail: [jcrussell@ufl.edu](mailto:jcrussell@ufl.edu)