



**FAIRMONT STATE  
UNIVERSITY™**

*Department of Social Sciences*

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Dear President Davis and our colleagues on the Faculty Senate,

The Fairmont State University Library has been facing a major budgetary crisis, as indicated in the Library Committee's 2022-2023 report to Faculty Senate: the costs of maintaining essential online resources (such as databases) continue to increase by 5% to 10% each year while the Library's budget has not been adjusted to meet these rising costs. As of this academic year, the relevant budget is facing a gap of approximately \$20,000. During the October 10, 2023 meeting of Faculty Senate, the Library Committee was tasked with proposing possible ways to address this situation. We offer the following options:

- To increase funding, the most straightforward option is to introduce a **library fee** for each enrolled student each term, meant to supplement the financial resources already allocated to the Library by the University. Even a modest fee (\$5/student/term) would end this budgetary crisis (assuming a student population of 3200). It would give the Library to address other needs in the short-term; and as costs continue to increase, it would be sufficient to address them for some time. As needed, this fee could be increased while still remaining rather small.
- To increase funding, it is worth considering whether **Foundation funding** can be acquired. This could include seeking donor support from alumni, philanthropists, or local businesses interested in supporting education or the University more generally.
- To increase funding, the Library could consider writing **grants** to any of the following organizations: CIBER, HEPC, NIH, or the US Department of Education. (While this could help in the short-term, it would not guarantee the required revenue in the long-term.)
- To increase funding, it might be worth exploring **public-private partnerships** with companies or organizations with interests in education—either local businesses or organizations aiming to gain a foothold in the region. (This has promise, but the specifics would require a bit of research to spell out and pursue.)

These options are offered in light of the fact that the Library staff have already made cut-after-cut to online resources, and repeatedly reallocated resources to meet this growing budgetary gap. Still, there is one qualification worth making, based on a very recent development. To help control/share costs, the FSU Library has long been a member of a consortium of Libraries for regional institutions. While West Virginia University and Marshall University originally declined to join this group, that situation appears to be finally changing. The result will be in a change to the cost-sharing model (i.e., to FTE-based model in the near future which will potentially result in some cost savings for FSU). Though the specifics are currently in flux, this will likely ease the pressure on the Library somewhat. However, it will not solve the budgetary crisis outright. So, the proposed options (above) can be considered in the short-term based on the current budgetary gap; and they might eventually require revision in light of this recent development.

If the Faculty Senate has any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Adam C. Podlaskowski  
Professor of Philosophy, Fairmont State University  
Chair, Library Committee