



FAIRMONT STATE  
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*Professor Charles Shields*  
*Faculty Senate President*

Dear Professor Shields and our colleagues on the Faculty Senate,

As chair of the Library Committee, I submit the following report for the 2021-2022 academic year. Two committee meetings were held over the course of the past year, with the information collected in those meetings informing this report.

To open with a bit of good news, Provost Phillips allowed for the Library to fill two badly needed positions. With filling these positions positively affected the services Library staff could offer to our students, the Library continues to be short two full-time positions. Failure to fill these positions has negatively impacted the Library's operating hours. As the campus continues to reopen, this will surely be felt by our students, as they continue to reengage with the physical spaces comprising our campus.

Speaking of the physical spaces in the Library itself, there are three concerns worth bringing to your attention:

- First, given that the Library can be seen as a recruiting tool for drawing promising students, it would be worth updating the furnishings and carpet on the third floor of the Library. They are badly outdated.
- Second, the Library continues to require more study spaces for students. Currently, there are five study rooms available, and they are usually filled (by students) five days of any given week. In addition, two-to-three students are usually on a waitlist. The demand might be even greater, as the Library staff have not recorded how many students request the use of study rooms but don't bother to be added to a waitlist. In any case, creating two or three additional study spaces would be a great start to addressing the matter. Not only would the added spaces be immediately utilized by students, the Library staff would also gain a better sense for how many more study rooms would be needed in the long run.
- Third, proper light switches are *still* required on the second and third floors—a matter that has been raised in the past three annual reports. The lighting for the second and third floors of the Library are currently controlled directly by the associated circuit breakers, as in the breakers are being used as though they were light switches. But most circuit breakers are *not* designed to be used in this way. While this can lead to their early demise, there is also some controversy as to whether circuit breakers being used as such meets the relevant regulations. Frankly, it is surprising that such a basic matter has not yet been addressed, as it is a simple task for any competent electrician.

While issues associated with the physical constitution of the Library are significant, the most pressing issue continues to be tied to the vital services provided by the Library. As you all know, the Library has been facing a worsening budgetary situation for several years now; this has been repeatedly related to the Senate in past reports. As you also know, the loss of financial support (to the Library) from PC&TC resulted in cutting a number of (online) research database resources. The situation has been exacerbated by the fact that the cost of such resources increases annually by 5% to 10%. Last academic year, the Library was brought to the point where there was little fat to trim, given both a shrinking budget and increasing costs. But this academic year, the budgetary situation is

even worse: it is now just about cutting resources, never expanding them. Indeed, the Library staff have even been forced to reallocate the funds originally devoted to both acquiring books and to staff training/development in order to just help maintain available databases. These databases are *crucial* to our work as a university, as they help students make critical decisions and learn to rigorously vet information. So, by failing to move on this budgetary crisis, there is a real risk of undermining students' academic success (while also jeopardizing some programs' accreditation efforts). As this budgetary situation is clearly *unsustainable*, we recommend that the Faculty Senate strongly urge the Executive Leadership Team to address this matter. In the last few years, this budgetary crisis—one similarly facing many libraries across the state—presented FSU with the opportunity to provide leadership state-wide in this respect. But since absolutely no movement has been made on the issue, this opportunity will soon pass us by.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adam C. Podlaskowski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "P".

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