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Some Recent Issues Considered by the Stony Brook University Senate Library Services Committee

The responsibility of our University Senate Library Services Committee is to advise on all aspects of the library. We have representatives on our committee from Humanities and Fine Arts, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, and the Melville and Health Science Libraries. At our monthly meetings we hear the Library Director's report on ongoing activities in the library. The Director through late 2009 was Chris Filstrup, and the current (interim) Director is Dr. Andrew White. The minutes of our committee meetings are accessible on the Senate archives. We have discussed a number of important issues in our meetings over the past several years. A major issue is the funding for the library. Another issue has been the proper balance in how these funds are allocated for the purchases of digital resources/access versus conventional media, such as books (and CD's for the music library). Some publishers of scientific and biomedical journals have increased their subscription prices much more rapidly than inflation. This has had a considerable impact on the allocation of library funds. In September, 2009 an external review committee examined the library and subsequently submitted a report containing its evaluations and recommendations for changes. Our committee has given careful attention to this report. Provost Eric Kaler has taken actions to implement the recommendations in the report. Some other issues that we have discussed include the structure and organization of the library, relations between library personnel, storage of volumes in off-campus facilities when there is insufficient space in the on-campus library buildings, the interlibrary loan program, installation of more computer terminals for enhanced student access to the internet, library hours, construction of the library at the Southampton campus of Stony Brook University, and connections between the Melville and Health Science Libraries. We anticipate that these issues will continue to occupy the attention of our committee during the coming year.

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