Library Committee – Report for 2015/16 Academic Year

Members: Greg Rybarcyck, Chair (ERS); Brian Blume (at-large); Nubwa Gadzama (SGC); Vicki Johnson-Lawrence (PHHS); Abdelmajid Jondy (SGC); Suzanne Knezek (Education); Seyed Mehdian (SOM); Elizabeth Svoboda (Library); Bob Houbeck (ex-officio)

The Library Committee has met twice (October 2 and December 3), and will meet at least one more time (April 8).

• The Committee approved the Library’s proposed allocation of funds to the departments for purchases of books (a 5% increase for each department over 2014/15 allocations).

• The Committee was supportive of the short- and long-term plans the Library Director outlined for renovations to the Thompson Library facility. Short-term, the Library is working with Student Government Council to convert a storage room (319 FWT) into a quiet study room with spaces for 10-12 students. Long-term, the Library is planning a comprehensive 3-floor renovation to improve study facilities for students. The project has been added to the University’s campus Capital Outlay Plan. The Library Director outlined elements of the plan in his open January 22 budget presentation to the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for Budget and Strategic Planning.

• In connection with renovation plans, the Committee supported the Library Director’s plan to withdraw backfiles of most cancelled print journals. The Library Director outlined this plan to the CAS governing faculty at its January 13 meeting. The non-CAS committee members have volunteered to review this plan with the faculty of their respective schools. The withdrawals of print journals will free up space for creation of additional study space and rooms.

• The Committee was supportive of the Library’s pilot project to identify digital textbook options for faculty, and to test the usefulness of acquiring selected expensive (> $100) print textbooks.

• The Committee was supportive of Library efforts to expand hours of public operation (the Library will extend hours to 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays) and to continue its collaboration with SGC to offer extended hours during exams, including 3-day 24-hour opening. In Fall 2015 the Library averaged 1,200 student visitors per day Monday-Thursday. During the 3-day 24-hour extended study period, student visits averaged 2,200 per day (or about 25% of all students).

• The Committee acknowledged and supported the Library’s ongoing collaborations with the UM-Ann Arbor libraries, and noted with approval that those efforts have significantly expanded UM-Flint access to both print books and digital journals (in 17 of 20 subject areas, UM-Flint faculty, as compared to their UM-Ann Arbor colleagues, have desktop access to 90% or more of the 100 most-cited research journals in their disciplines). The Library has been able to greatly strengthen its digital holdings because of the ongoing collaborative efforts of the Thompson Library faculty to reach out to their Ann Arbor colleagues, as well as through the consistent budget support of the University’s administration.

• The Committee supports the Library Director’s 2016/17 budget request for funds to cover inflation in the price of its digital journals and for funds to acquire journals for new faculty.