Motion

The University Committee moves that the attached motion, passed at an informal meeting of approximately 90 department chairs, Ph.D. program directors, research center directors, and other faculty and academic staff leaders held on February 26, 1988 and formally endorsed by the UWM Faculty Library Committee on February 29, 1988 be endorsed by the UWM Faculty Senate.

Rationale

As one of the two doctoral campuses in the UW System, UWM is designated, in its official mission statement, as a public service institution which must "help meet the societal, governmental, and industrial needs of metropolitan areas, and meeting the continuing educational needs of the public..."

At the very core of this service mission lies the UWM Library -- the repository of knowledge that we must provide and share through this designated service mission.

Thus, it is of utmost importance that the Golda Meir Library has funds to continue acquiring, in timely fashion, important publications which are necessary to fulfill our UW System mission and continue providing access to other sources of knowledge through the newly installed computer catalogue access system. Funds must be provided immediately to ensure that there is no break in important acquisitions and in maintaining the catalogue access system.

The University Committee
Barbara Borowiecki, Chairperson
Robert Greenstreet
Robert Ingle
Moises Levy
Erika Sander
Jack Waldheim
Kenneth Watters
Motion:

That this assembly of chairs of departments, directors of research centers and doctoral programs, and other faculty and academic staff leaders expresses alarm over the growing financial crisis in the Golda Meir Library that threatens the integrity of our academic programs. Although the Library's budget needs are too large for UWM alone to meet, campus officials should immediately allocate funds to address the most pressing problems. Part of the overhead funds coming to the University should be assigned annually to the Library for acquisitions. We urge the Faculty Senate and the Chancellor to seek financial help from State and UW System officials. We urge the University Committee to ask the assistance of Milwaukee-area legislators. We also urge that our alumni be informed about the crisis and requested to use their influence on behalf of the Library. We consider the situation so serious that we believe the campus must make adequate library funding its highest priority.

Rationale:

Problems in the Library budget have been apparent for some time. In the last year or so, however, growing costs have plunged the Library into a major fiscal crisis that has jeopardized the future of many UWM academic programs. We note with dismay the following facts:

1. In 1980 the Library purchased 55,000 books, microfilms, sound recordings, and films. In 1988 only 7,200 such purchases are projected. This is a decrease of 87%.

2. Since 1985 legitimate faculty requests for $900,000 worth of non-serial purchases vital to instruction and research have been rejected because of lack of funds. The number of rejected faculty requests for non-serial purchases has increased 900% since 1980.

3. Since last year there has been a 47% decrease in the Library's part-time help budget. This has caused, among other things, reductions in the hours the Reserve Room is open and hampered shelving of materials.
4. The Golda Meir Library may have to discontinue the Network Library System on-line catalog application at UWM. This system gives faculty and students direct computer access to 2.1 million bibliographic records in the UWM and UW Madison catalog database. This would mark a significant step backward for our research and instructional programs.

5. Since 1980 the Library has been forced to cancel over 10% of its serial subscriptions because of the financial crisis. During the 1988-89 academic year the Library estimates that an additional 25% to 30% cut must be made in the serials budget. No new journals will be purchased.

These facts are only illustrative of the problems our Library is confronting. No University, particularly one that has major commitments to graduate education and research, can long survive without a strong, well-financed library. Without library collections that keep pace with the growth of knowledge in the many areas we offer degrees, our academic programs must necessarily decline in quality. Indeed, many departments are already suffering because of inadequacies in library resources.

The UWM Golda Meir Library is not only vital to faculty and students, but it must also be seen as a statewide resource. Its substantial holdings and its specialized collections such as the American Geographical Society Collection serve many citizens beyond the campus. It is commonplace to talk of the information-based society. As Wisconsin adjusts to new economic realities, it cannot afford to lose one of its most precious knowledge centers.

For these reasons, we believe immediate action must be taken on behalf of the Golda Meir Library. There is a compelling campus obligation immediately to help the Library financially, but State and UW System leaders must also act to preserve an important State resource.

2/26/88