

## PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Annual Report 2020–2021

According to the Faculty Governance Guide, the Library Committee should be comprised of at least two members each from Arts & Humanities, Science & Engineering, and Social Science.

Committee Chair: Léa Millay (UNST)

Committee Members:

Katrine Barber (HST)  
 Carrie Collenberg-Gonzalez, (WLL)  
 Richard Dozal-Lockwood (SPH)  
 Karin Magaldi (TA)  
 Gerald Recktenwald, (MME)  
 Jelena Schiff (MUS)  
 Nikolaus Grimsby (Student Representative)

Library Consultants:

Michael Bowman (Interim Dean)  
 Cristine Paschild (Associate Dean)  
 Molly Gunderson (Interim Assistant Dean)

Library Committee meetings were held on November 6, 2020; February 12, 2021; and May 7, 2021.

The focus of our meetings for the 2020–2021 academic year has been on the Budget; Library Services; The Thomas Bielavitz Graduate Student Collaboration Hub; Personnel; Archives, Records Management, and Special Collections; Library Building Access and Security; Library Resolution on Vendor Surveillance; and the Senate Resolution from Spring 2019 (follow-up).

### **Budget**

The Library received a 1.45 percent budget cut for the next academic year. Thus the Library will cut money from acquisitions, reduce spending on technology, reduce services and supplies spending, and eliminate salary savings from its vacancies.

### **Library Services**

<https://library.pdx.edu/services/library-services-2021/>

### **The Thomas Bielavitz Graduate Student Collaboration Hub**

On May 24, 2021 there will be a virtual groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the future space of the Thomas C. Bielavitz Graduate Student Collaboration Hub on the 4th floor of

the Library. Faculty and staff will share memories of Tom at the ceremony. Members of the community are invited to contribute to the Collaboration Hub and Library graduate services fund (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/iytzuf/m515nkc/ej7kzgb>) or Oregon College Savings Funds for Tom's daughters

Stella (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/iytzuf/m515nkc/qw9kzgb>) and

Kazmira (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/iytzuf/m515nkc/a48kzgb>).

### **Personnel**

Many members of the Library have been on furlough all year. While two people were hired to cover Michael and Molly's positions, OAA has otherwise mandated a general hiring freeze that impacts one faculty and one staff vacancy. The Dean's search has been delayed until next year or perhaps longer. The Library will need to manage with fewer people.

The committee acknowledges that the present hiring freeze hurts the Library. Is this necessary? The Library could hire needed classified staff and still not overspend its budget. Tech 3 positions in particular are integral to the Library's important work on accessibility.

### **Archives, Records Management, and Special Collections**

There have been several new acquisitions in Special Collections.

<https://library.pdx.edu/research/special-collections-university-archives/>

Carrie Collenberg-Gonzalez found a facsimile of the Nuremberg Chronicle (1493) and in her medieval German literature class she introduces students to the beauty and mystery of illuminated manuscripts. Making use of Special Collections, Carrie and her students discussed how to research pre-modern manuscripts and texts.

### **Open Education Week**

The Library sponsored three events during Open Education Week:

March 1 "Achieving a Socially Just Open Education during the COVID-19 Era" Keynote Address, Jasmine Roberts

March 2 "How does OER meet our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Goals?"

March 5 "Open Pedagogy and Student Content Creation"

### **Library Building Access and Security**

Turnstiles that scan ID cards will be installed near the circulation desk. The turnstiles will be necessary before non-PSU students and faculty can enter the library building, which will probably occur winter 2022.

The Library is still uncertain about fall 2021, but will try to open the second floor as a study space—or open the building as a whole, though not the study rooms. The main issue is building hours. Once the school year starts, the Library can begin hiring students and increase building open hours.

Students will probably not be permitted long-term checkouts or access to the stacks before winter 2022.

Cris Paschild affirmed that people really do miss the Library and there will be a renewed interest in the Library as a physical space.

### **Library Resolution on Vendor Surveillance (see addendum)**

Library faculty will discuss the Resolution again at their June meeting.

The Library has a year's extension with Elsevier and then will re-evaluate the journal package.

### **Senate Resolution from Spring 2019**

The members of the Library Committee would like to remind OAA of the Resolution of the PSU Faculty Senate to Increase the Allocation of Fees to the Library that was passed two springs ago. The discussion needs to be broader than it is and will be revisited by the committee in the fall.

\*Overall, the Library Committee meetings have provided an effective channel for communication among library staff and faculty members, as the committee continues to serve the Library with dedication and diligence. The Library in turn contributes to the health and prosperity of Portland State University in an ongoing and vital way.

# Portland State University Library

## Resolution on Vendor Surveillance

### Background:

Over the last year, Librarians at Portland State University became increasingly aware of troubling surveillance activities by library content providers/vendors. In particular, we are concerned about Proctorio and RELX (the parent company of Elsevier & Engineering Village & Thomson-Reuters who provide LexisNexis & Nexis Uni). Here are the major concerns outlined with these providers/vendors:

**Proctorio:** Proctorio is a remote testing software which recently [partnered with Mc-Graw-Hill](#). Shea Swauger, Department Head for Research Support Services at the University of Colorado Denver, has researched and written extensively on how Proctorio's algorithmic surveillance can harm students, especially [students with disabilities](#). The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is [ending their contracts with Proctorio](#) for these and other reasons. Our concern is the precedent set that would enable other publishers to use browser locks on individual students or groups of students and prevent students from accessing competitors' resources through library databases.

**RELX:** RELX is a multinational corporation whose subsidiaries include Elsevier, Engineering Village, Thomson-Reuters, Nexis Uni, and LexisNexis. In April 2021, LexisNexis signed a multi-million dollar contract with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). [According to reporting on the ICE contract by the Intercept](#), LexisNexis databases "offer an oceanic computerized view of a person's existence" and will provide the agency with "the data it needs to locate people with little if any oversight." There are growing calls among academics and librarians to [boycott](#) the products provided by these companies on college campuses.

Unfortunately, while Proctorio and RELX are the most egregious examples, this behavior is not limited to two vendors. The [Library Freedom](#) organization promotes the [Vendor Privacy Scorecard](#) rubric to evaluate providers' respect of users' digital privacy. Almost every content provider in academia has room to improve their privacy practices in regards to end user data.

### Whereas:

In November 2016, then-President Wim Wiewel declared Portland State University a [sanctuary university](#). Being a sanctuary campus means:

- The Portland State University Campus Public Safety Office does not and will not enforce federal immigration laws as is required by State law.
- Portland State University will not facilitate or consent to immigration enforcement activities on our campus unless legally compelled to do so or in the event of clear exigent circumstances such as an imminent risk to the health or safety of others.
- Portland State University will not share confidential student information, such as immigration status, with the US. Federal government unless required by court order.

Portland State University Faculty Senate amended a resolution endorsing this statement at the December 5, 2016 adding in:

“This endorsement, however, should not be interpreted to imply that the Senate necessarily approves compliance with any future state law, federal law, or court order that would require the University to release confidential student information or otherwise assist in enforcement of federal immigration law. Should such a situation arise, we ask the President to consult with the Senate regarding the appropriate response.”

This amended resolution passed with 43 votes in favor and 2 abstaining votes.

Further, President Stephen Percy has issued three [different statements supporting DACA students](#) labeled as important messages from PSU Leaders starting in 2019.

## Whereas:

Portland State University hosts multiple services and resources for [Dreamers](#), and Dr. Óscar Fernández led a successful allyship campaign in Fall 2020 garnering signatures from faculty across campus. Faculty were asked to sign onto the following principles:

1. Pledging to advocate for DREAMers by examining barriers they may face in my academic unit and/or university work
2. Pledging to display posters in my office, my online classroom, and/or my syllabi in support of DREAMers.
3. Pledging to continue to educate yourself about the aspirations and challenges facing DREAMers.
4. Sharing contact information with Global Diversity and Inclusion to include faculty names, affiliations, and contact information via websites.

## Be It Resolved:

The University Library will immediately begin a review of surveillance practices of Library vendors and reserves the right to cancel purchase or subscription of products by content providers with known inappropriate use of surveillance techniques. The Library will inform library users of cancellations based on ethical concerns. The University Library will strive to replace content canceled based on unethical activities with viable alternatives from companies that act more ethically in their overall business practices.