MEMORANDUM

March 3, 2003

TO: Georgia Tech faculty

FROM: Richard Meyer; Dean and Director of Libraries

SUBJECT: Journal Subscriptions/Library Serials Review Project

Campus program additions and changes in research emphases over the past decade along with increasing prices and with a mandate from faculty to switch from print to electronic resources requires the Library’s Information Consultants to thoroughly review the library allocation of funds for journals. This review will benefit from faculty input in assigning priorities to determine the best titles to add or retain.

Price projections from vendors lead us to believe that we will experience a serials inflation rate of 10 – 12 % for 2004. In the face of such an increase, the library must be prepared to substitute higher priority titles for lower priority titles. Implicit in this process is the concept that serial cancellations will release sufficient funds to cover anticipated inflation on the remaining core journals, to support the continued purchase of essential electronic databases and to preserve some dollars for monograph purchases. Up to $500,000 in serials titles may be identified for reallocation. If the acquisitions budget is larger than expected, or if the inflationary increase is less than projected, we will cancel fewer titles, and can optimize the collection by pruning underutilized titles and purchasing unsubscribed titles that are necessary to support current faculty research and teaching.

Each school is being asked to evaluate the journal subscriptions in their core area, and also in areas where there is strong interdisciplinary crossover. Lists of titles that are overpriced or diminished in value, and are identified as possible candidates for cancellation, will be sent to each school chair in mid-March. (This list will also be available at https://www.library.gatech.edu/serialsreview.htm at that time. A complete title list of all Georgia Tech journals will also be posted on the web, for reference.) Faculty will have ample opportunity to review the titles identified for possible cancellation and to provide feedback to the library. The title lists will contain information on cost, ranking/impact, and holdings by other libraries. Schools will need to review and return the lists by April 30, 2003. Faculty input is critical to our making well-informed decisions and your collaboration is greatly appreciated. An essential part of the process is to ask you to identify the journal titles essential for your teaching and research activities, before the decisions on cancellations are made.

We hope the collaborative process will preserve those journals that are most important to the Institute and will allow us to add other titles equally as important. We continue to make progress on alternative methods of accessing scholarly information. Improved resource sharing, cooperative subscriptions, electronic subscriptions, and collaborative projects among universities and learned societies help us provide more acceptable solutions to coping with the rising costs of academic journals. Librarians and
faculty members locally and nationally are pursuing a variety of collaborations which may eventually
decrease our dependence on high priced journals. We are aware of the competitive disadvantage
cancellations may place on your scholarly activities and will be making every effort to minimize this.
We will also continue to pursue new and affordable models of scholarly communication. (For example,
we support the SPARC initiative. See http://www.arl.org/sparc/home/index.asp?page=0 for
information.)

The schedule for this process is as follows:

January/February, 2003: The library will gather and collate data and develop a preliminary list of
titles proposed for cancellation.

March 17, 2003: Title lists will be sent to school chairs and will be posted on the web. Each school
will review the proposed lists of titles to be cancelled, and rate the titles, as specified. For the Primary
list for the school, each title should be ranked from 1 to 3. A ranking of 1 indicates the school believes
the title ‘must be kept’. A 2 ranking indicates that the title ‘should be kept, if possible’, and a 3
ranking indicates ‘OK to cancel’. Not more than 40% of the titles on any given list should be ranked
as ‘1’. For any Secondary lists, we ask that the school simply indicate those titles that are of rank ‘1’ –
‘must be kept’. Again, not more than 40% of the list may be ranked as ‘1’. In making these ranking
decisions, faculty are urged to consider level of current use, price (and price increases), rating of
journal (based on Impact Factors, rank within the specific field, reputation, etc.) and availability at
other area libraries.

April 30, 2003: Schools return cancellation list to the library. The ‘ranking’ list needs to be returned
as one, unified list. Comments from individuals - on any or all journals - are welcome and appreciated;
however the ranking list needs to reflect the overall ‘School Voice’. Each school can determine the
best mechanism to provide us with this information, based on their particular circumstances.

June 30, 2003: A complete list of all proposed cancellations will be available for faculty review.

July 30, 2003: Schools return any additional comments/requests to the library.


Thank you for your assistance on this project. The support of the faculty helps assure that we meet
your needs effectively. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you and/or your school about this
and any other library issues. Please let us know if you have any specific concerns or questions about
the process, or if you would like to meet with a library representative.

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