COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY
Thomas B. Newman, MD, MPH, Chair

TO: Patricia Robertson, MD, Chair
Committee on Academic Planning and Budget

RE: Request for Chancellor’s Discretionary Funds for UCSF Library

DATE: April 13, 2006

I am writing on behalf of the Committee on the Library to request Academic Senate support for new permanent funding in the amount of $150,000 for library materials beginning in fiscal year 2006-2007.

Maintaining the breadth and depth of UCSF’s collection in the face of continuing increases in the volume and cost of scholarly publication is one of the single greatest challenges confronting the library. To meet this challenge, the UC libraries have collaborated closely and pooled their resources so that all UC faculty, students and staff, irrespective of their location, have access to library collections required of an eminent research university.

The UC libraries working together have leveraged their size and shared assets to negotiate very favorable prices for the more than 8,000 journals and 200 databases. The Library will need to find an additional $80,000 next fiscal year simply to maintain its current level of participation in system-wide packages that are core to the mission of UCSF. From 2001-2005 the average price of a health sciences journal increased 38%. Estimates for the coming year predict that journal prices will rise between 8-9%, yet down from the 10-15% in past years. So while we continue to see annual inflationary increases it has moderated over the past five years.

The inflationary increases are only one of the pressures on the library budget. Faculty are requesting that the library add new databases and journals. For example, a site license to Scopus, a database that offers greater coverage of the science, technology, and medicine than MEDLINE would cost $45,000 a year and Embase, a database with strong coverage in drug research and development, would cost $10,000 a year. Other resources, such as Faculty of 1000 Medicine and Journal Watch, keep faculty abreast of new research but would cost approximately $8,500 a year. Publishers continue to create new journals in areas of increasing specialization. Nature Publishing Group, once a relatively small publisher, released eight new journals in 2005/6 and recently announced three more titles for 2006/7. Newly developed clinically-oriented resources such as DynaMed and InfoPOEMS cost $35,000 a year.

Faculty and students are requesting journals and databases in disciplines new to UCSF including optics, physics and applied mathematics. Resources such as Safari Online offer more than 200 online computer and programming books to assist desktop support staff. Costs that were one-time are now annual. Electronic textbooks and older, archive files of journals now require yearly fees to maintain access where they were previously they were one-time costs.

Systemwide collaboration has significantly expanded UCSF’s access to digital collections but campus contributions are required for participation. We also recognize that digital access has enabled faculty to reduce their departmental and personal subscriptions shifting costs to the library. It’s clear that the Library is making effective use of the
resources it receives when one considers that UCSF’s budget for library books and journals is, in fact, 23% less than its peer institutions.

To address the static budgets in previous years, the Library cancelled journal subscriptions in multiple formats. This strategy preserved core resources and supported faculty and student preferences for digital subscriptions. I’m sure you will agree that the current digital content, while more expensive than print content previously available, also provides a much higher level of service to the campus community. For example, where I used to have to go (or later send someone) to the library to photocopy articles, now I can print most of them in a minute from my desktop. I no longer need to subscribe to many journals, and do not need to keep them on my shelves because the digital content is so quickly available. Researchers and clinicians both have benefited academically and financially from this wonderfully available digital content. However, the library has reached the end of this strategy and without new funding will have to eliminate essential resources.

UCSF proudly continues to attract new researchers and programs at an amazing pace. Investigators are expanding into new research areas without funding for the library to purchase journals, databases and other materials to support that work.

We are therefore requesting Academic Senate support for $150,000 in permanent funds to cover the cost of inflation and to purchase a limited number of new journals and databases for fiscal year 2006-2007.

If you would like additional information, please contact Thomas Newman (newman@epi.ucsf.edu) at (415) 514-8007 or Karen Butter, University Librarian (karen.butter@library.ucsf.edu) at (415) 476-5557.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Newman, MD, MPH
Chair, Committee on Library