The Senate Committee on Libraries (SCL) has met seven times during the 2015-16 academic year; three in the fall and four in the spring. The more significant topics for discussion have included:

1. Reviewing the Libraries’ acquisitions budget and planning process

Our mandate includes receiving regular briefings on the status of the Libraries’ budget and making ourselves aware of the planning and response options the Libraries face. The UVic Libraries is unique in the campus units in that a significant proportion of its overall expenditures are paid in US dollars, and over half of acquisitions expenditures are paid in US dollars, primarily going to five international publishing companies that control the majority of the world’s academic journal market, all of which take annual profit margins well in excess of 30%. This means that the Libraries face an extremely tumultuous forecasting problem when budgeting for standard academic resources (like access to journals) in the face of fluctuating exchange rates and unpredictable price increases. Both external factors have been extreme and adverse in the last year and despite additional funds from the university have created unprecedented difficulty for the Libraries in meeting what is the currently expected level of access to resources. This is occurring across Canada.

At every meeting this year, the committee has received updates on the situation including the status of discussions about additional funding options from the university, the potential need to invoke a de-acquisition plan towards certain expensive publishing contracts, and the existence and sufficiency of backup plans. The committee was and still is assured that the Libraries and the administration were doing due diligence in managing the situation, but still, with no fault by UVic the budget continues to face a significant shortfall. Therefore, the committee continues to take a very active role in challenging the Libraries in its planning process and in advising the Libraries on its communications plans. We hope to help the Libraries and the University manage this issue as proactively as possible, but wish to note to the Senate that we can’t anticipate any easy solutions going forward (due to the Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse mentioned above).

2. Helping the Libraries develop a robust communications strategy and change management plan for acquisitions

The committee is well aware that the overall dysfunctional economic environment around the publishers is forcing our University into difficult positions and is promoting the idea of educating our community on the pressures to avoid adding surprise onto unpleasantness. The committee has helped the Libraries develop a more effective communication plan including a preliminary presentation to all the units and a strategy for reaching out to all stakeholders at least once before the fall. The communications plan
will be reassessed in the fall once the relevant budget and publisher contract terms become available. We will also be sure to pass notice of big contract changes up to the Senate if/when the Five Horsemen ride again at our expense.

3. Developing an Open Access Policy statement for the university

The committee is intensely committed to developing a policy statement for the university that will guide its activities supporting the principles of open access publishing. Not only will a policy help the university promote an environment supporting socially-inspired global knowledge exchange which is consistent with its mission, but it will also help to create an alternative to the current for-profit publishing environment. While a policy statement is only a first step, and may be a small one at that, the committee universally believes that it is a critical step in being in the forefront in creating the research environment that best serves our university. We have currently created a draft document for a preliminary policy that will be reviewed and released for wider consultation in the fall. Hopefully, it will be ready to present to the Senate for consideration next year.

4. Reviewing other major activities of the Libraries

We have received briefings from the Libraries referencing space planning in the Mearns Centre/ McPherson Library, in the Digital Scholarship Commons, and in the development of renovation projects.

Finally, the SCL continues to delight in the associated accomplishments of UVic Libraries, their staff, and the university community at large. We embrace the truly positive and collaborative nature of our role in helping UVic Libraries provide such excellent support to the university endeavors.
Membership

During the 2015-16 session, the Senate Committee on Libraries (SCL) was comprised of the following members:

**Faculty Representatives**

Dale Ganley, Business  
(Chair)  
Miranda Angus, Continuing Studies  
Colin Bennett, Social Sciences  
Daniel Brendle-Moczuk, Library & Reference Services (FALC)  
Oliver Schmidtke, Council of Centre Directors  
Tom Fyles, Science  
Robert Howell, Law  
Patricia Kostek, Theatre  
Michael Nowlin, English  
Andre Kushniruk, Health & Information Science  
Kathy Sanford, Curriculum & Instruction  
Charlotte Schallie, Germanic & Slavic Studies  
Venkatesh Srinivasen, Computer Sciences  
Leigh Anne Swayne, Medical Sciences  
Bhupinder Dulku, UVic Students’ Society  
Seamus Wolfe, Graduate Students’ Society

**Ex-officio members**

Jonathan Bengtson, University Librarian  
Ken Cooley, Associate University Librarian, Reference and Collection Management Services  
Lisa Goddard, Associate University Librarian, Digital Scholarship & Strategy  
Kim Nayyer, Associate University Librarian, Law  
tbd (President’s nominee)  
Nav Bassi, acting CIO, University Systems  
Sheila Cresswell, Secretary, University Librarian’s Office

Dale Ganley, Chair, Senate Committee on Libraries