

# Library funding explained

By Carol Woods

"Woefully inadequate for a graduate university," was Dr. Edward Walters' description of the hours the UTD library is open. Dr. Walters, director of university libraries, feels that the library should be open 84-90 hours a week instead of the present 70 hours.

The library has five reference librarians, each of whom also has a functional job. All are expected to work one night a week as well as every fifth weekend. Additional hours would require not only more reference librarians, but additional peripheral staff, and the money is not currently available, according to Dr. Walters.

Dr. Walters and his staff have observed that library use is heaviest Monday through Thursday until 4:30, with intensive use again at 6:30. There is a dramatic drop-off after 9:15 p.m. He says there is a need for the library to be open to serve the 8 a.m. classes, but extending the weekend hours to an 8 or 9 hour day, with a focus on extensive Sunday evening hours, is most pressing. A limited-service plan for off hours is being considered. This would feature an information desk and limited personnel in the copy center and circulation. This would cost less than full-staffing for additional hours, but would require that students be knowledgeable enough about the library to help themselves.

The library funding problem is not unique to UTD. Figures evaluated by the National Center for Education Statistics show that total operating expenditures for the nation's college and university libraries lagged nearly 7 percent behind the inflation rate between the 1978-79 and 1981-82 school years. NCES showed that federal funding for libraries has dropped and that total book acquisitions at the 3,000 campus libraries surveyed decreased by over 9 percent. David Sweet, of NCES's Office for Educational Research and Improvement, found that while costs continued to go up, li-



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brary expenditures had been lower than the inflation rate. These cutbacks are seriously affecting the quality of college and university libraries across the nation.

The UTD library is relatively young, and is still in the expensive collection-building stage. This, coupled with hyper-inflation in the print media, especially in the science field, makes it necessary for all available discretionary funds to go to building the book collection.

Dr. Walters is working closely with the Library of Congress and UTD's local congressman, Steve Bartlett, to receive books free. This plan could result in thousands of needed volumes. There is also a possibility that the permanent University Fund could provide financial help, but presently the most likely source of aid is the state legislature, should Governor White call a special session for this

summer. The credit hours produced in the summer term before and the fall term after the legislative session, plus the following spring term determine the actual number of dollars granted by the legislature.

In a study done by the UT System, and issued January 28, 1983 by the office of the Chancellor cited the library as being 150,320 volumes below standard.

The collection is measured by the Clapp-Jordan formula, which requires a university the size of UTD to have a basic collection of 85,000 volumes plus additional volumes determined by the number of students and of faculty, as well as factoring in every master's and doctoral programs to arrive at a minimum number of volumes.

Dr. Walters and the school administration are in agreement with the students that the library hours need to be expanded, but that building the collection is the first priority.