

**FACULTY UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES**

The Faculty Council on University Libraries met at 12:30 a.m. on Monday, **February 8, 2001**. Chair Richard Kielbowicz presided.

**PRESENT:**     *Professors* (Richard Kielbowicz, Chair), Chance, Greulich, Kerr, O'Neill, Sullivan, Schepp, Sullivan, Sutton, Tanimoto and Zick;  
                  *ex officio members* Booth, Easterling, Soper, Spillum, Williams and Wilson;  
                  *Invited guest* Charles Chamberlin, Deputy Director of Libraries.

**ABSENT:**     *Professors* Dunston and Harrison;  
                  *ex officio member* Fuller.

**Approval of minutes**

The minutes of January 18, 2001, were approved as written.

**University Budget Committee - Betsy Wilson**

Wilson said she briefed the University Budget Committee on the Libraries' cost increases over the next biennium. (The University Budget Committee includes, among others, the President, the Provost, the chair and vice chair of the Faculty Senate, and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.)

Wilson told the committee that the Libraries will need upwards of \$2.3 million for purchasing of Library Materials. Funding is needed for facilities planning, and for the Libraries' role in the effort to sustain and to archive digital information so as not to lose the intellectual property and intellectual capital of the University. (As has been mentioned, the Libraries would use its expertise in preserving and indexing information to support the Digital Cooperative: to support alternative means of scholarly communication.) Wilson also told the committee about the Libraries resources budget transformation process, which Gordon Aamot, Steve Hiller and she addressed at the last council meeting.

The administration is starting to build the budget for the next biennial request, but with the realization that funding will be severely limited. The goal for the Libraries, said Wilson, is to make the case that funding for the cost increases is critical, and that well-conceived strategies are necessary to make the best possible use of limited funding. She said her remarks to the Budget Committee were well-received, and that the committee asked thoughtful questions. Overall, she said she had a most receptive audience.

**Discussion of the Users' section of the ad hoc Facilities Master Plan Report**

The council identified aspects of the ad hoc Facilities Master Plan Committee's Report that needed closer scrutiny. Members were asked if they had recommendations for additions; if they thought there were important omissions; and if they had disagreements with individual sections of the Report, or with the Report in general.

Greulich said he is concerned about the Report in general, although he thought the Report "was good at laying out where we are going in this transformational time." He highlighted two problems: 1) specificity: He finds the Report overly specific in its recommendations; and 2) the Report fails to condition its recommendations.

Greulich said that, with the present lack of conditioning in the Report, some of the recommendations could be "bad to serious mistakes," and could, potentially, put the administration in an awkward position. In particular, some of the "siting" recommendations could be controversial as regards environmental issues. Environmental impact has become an increasingly sensitive issue over the last decade, and promises to be so in the present decade. Greulich said there are significant "social costs" involved in such decisions. He said it might be better to refer to these decisions as "considerations" rather than as "recommendations." It

might, in brief, be better to employ a more “cautious” wording. “These guides to action should be conditioned,” he reiterated.

Kielbowicz wondered in what ways, and to what degree, “browsing” will be possible electronically. “Is there a way systems will be able to flag something one is looking for?” he asked. Sutton suggested that “pure serendipity” will not be possible, but that “other behavior can happen in electronic browsing as it does in physical browsing.” Kielbowicz said, “Perhaps it’s a question of behavior on the part of the users.” He said it would be worthwhile determining, insofar as possible, whether “remote access” is going to be a problem, and, given that people like to “wander” in shelves - be those shelves physical or electronic - in just what ways “serendipity” will be affected in remote access. Williams said her own experience is that students do not want to browse with any frequency. Kerr said she has to remind her students that “there are volumes on the shelves.” Easterling said, “This must be a pedagogical issue as well.” Kielbowicz said, “A lot of this has to do with what faculty do in the classroom.” Wilson said, “That’s part of the issue here: the appropriateness of using electronic or printed material.” Williams, who serves on the Libraries survey committee, said the survey asks: “How often do you browse the shelves?” O’Neill said a study of which she was made aware revealed that students retain information better from printed sources than they do from online sources.

Kielbowicz said the “hidden social costs” may need extra attention. It was noted that the “consolidation issue” is complicated; there could be “more, and not less, serendipity with consolidation.”

Zick said that, when new methods of making material available are considered, dollars per square foot is a crucial issue, “and we have to consider the advantages of the intercommunication possibilities of online serendipity.” He suggested the ad hoc Committee could give greater cost-benefit breakdowns in its Report.

Asked about surveys of users, Wilson said this spring the Libraries will conduct one of its tri-annual major user surveys, and that the survey will contain many of the same kinds of questions as those raised by the council in this discussion.

Asked how frequently students use the Libraries now that they are turning more and more to the Web, Wilson said students do use the Libraries heavily, notwithstanding the emphasis on new modes of learning and new forms of pedagogy. For a great many students, the use of the Libraries and the use of new technologies are complementary, and not competing, activities. As to the Libraries’ significance to off-campus users, Williams said the physical space is still important to off-campus people, though the discipline involved certainly affects the user’s decision to physically come to the Libraries. (In the business world, for instance, there is so much quality information available online that most users do not need to come to the campus.) Ironically, many off-campus people have to come to the University to be able to use our online services. But the desire in the community at large to use the Libraries directly does not seem greatly to have altered. Boeing and Microsoft, however, are businesses in the community that rely heavily on the Libraries for document delivery services, and requests of all kinds are received regularly from all over the country.

Tanimoto said that as electronic access worldwide accelerates, the question will be asked: What is unique about a specific university? What is uniquely available at the University of Washington? How does the University maintain its students’ special experience here? Kielbowicz said he is sympathetic to the point raised by Tanimoto. At the same time, he said it is exceptionally hard to gauge what is unique about the learning experience the University of Washington - or any university, for that matter - can offer its students. One unique feature that this and all other councils agree upon is the irreplaceable value of face-to-face interaction between students and faculty, and between students and students. Though this feature is important to students at all levels of education, it is crucially important to undergraduate students.

As for council recommendations, one that all members agreed upon is the importance of being mindful of different users’ needs. Each decision needs to be mindful of the specific concerns of individual units within the University. The council will finalize and submit its specific recommendations to the ad hoc Committee by the end of Winter Quarter.

### **The Libraries' branches at UW Tacoma and UW Bothell**

The questions were raised: What are the implications for the Libraries of the other campuses?, and: How will the different constituencies of the three campuses best be served? Wilson said the libraries at UW Tacoma and UW Bothell are part of UW Libraries. The Libraries' materials are moved to and from those libraries as needed. All materials (volumes, journals, and all other materials) are ordered from and catalogued at the Libraries at UW Seattle.

As faculty groups have grown at UW Tacoma and UW Bothell, different questions have arisen as to what needs to be housed in the libraries of the three campuses. It was noted that students and faculty move back and forth between the campuses, and that the Libraries will want to keep access open to all three campuses.

Wilson said that at this point the driving force of collection development at UW Tacoma and UW Bothell is their respective curricular needs, which are different at both campuses. (This will change in time, she noted, as new driving forces emerge.)

### **Educational Outreach and Distance Learning**

Asked about the Libraries' concerns with Educational Outreach, Wilson said that there is a vast range of Distance Learning programs that do not have great need of Libraries' materials. This is an increasing area of concern, however, she added. Students might, for instance, need access to data bases for which the Libraries do not at present have licenses which cover these students.

### **Next meeting**

The next FCUL meeting is set for Thursday, March 8, 2001, at 12:30 p.m., in the Petersen Room of Allen Library.

Brian Taylor  
Recorder