

Faculty Council on University Libraries

Annual Report 2005-2006

Beth Kerr, Chair

The Faculty Council on University Libraries functions as an advisory board/focus group for the Provost and the Dean of Libraries. The council met seven times. Two sessions were field trips – the first to the remote storage facility at Sandpoint (see minutes for December 13, 2005) and the second to the East Asia Library in Gowen Hall (see minutes for May 25, 2006).

This report highlights two topics that are certain to be ongoing issues in 2006-2007. Additional topics covered in the minutes include: 1) A report on the Undergraduate Library, 2) A report on the East Asia Library, 3) Plans for expanding storage space and increasing shelf space at the remote storage facility at Sandpoint, 4) Library budget and resource plans, 5) The library task force on bioscience services and resources, 6) Diversity and organizational culture issues, 7) A report on Surfacing Hidden Collections: Digital Efforts such as the Central Eurasian Interactive Atlas, and 8) The Digital Futures Alliance.

DSpace and Institutional Repository

Ann Lally (Head, Digital Initiatives) briefed the council at the November 16th meeting. In March 2003 the libraries installed a barebones institutional repository system called DSpace. D stands for Durable. MIT Libraries developed DSpace in partnership with Hewlett Packard. By establishing the UW DSpace, University Libraries assumes long-term responsibility for maintaining file information in the repository. Lally has been working with departments to set up DSpace communities within the Repository. Lally noted that there isn't a software constraint on how these communities are created. She encouraged creative thinking about ways to use the system. The Libraries has been working on DSpace policies, but prefers to wait to see how usage unfolds before establishing strict guidelines. It is likely that D-space will be used to house dissertations, theses, and related papers such as undergraduate honors theses. Another function could be to house faculty publications and preprints. Another function could be to share images or data internally or with users at other universities. Material in DSpace can be open or closed.

Journal Costs and the need for new forms of Scholarly Communication

Journal costs continue to increase. This year, University Libraries budgeted approximately \$6.5 million just for periodicals. If other serials are added to the total, the bill is approximately \$8.5 million. FCUL is concerned that University Libraries will not be able to continue to absorb the ever-increasing subscription prices. We suggest that the University address the issue and take active steps to promote alternative forms of scholarly communication.

The Library Council discussed “An Open Letter to All University Presidents and Provosts Concerning Increasingly Expensive Journals” by Theodore Bergstrom and R. Preston McAfee and the prices for profit and nonprofit journals in different disciplines.

We followed up the efforts of past library councils to education the campus about high journal prices and possible alternative forms for scholarly communication. These earlier efforts included a report and presentation for the Faculty Senate, a report and presentation for the Senate Executive Committee, and a University Week article by FCUL past chair Seeyle Martin. This spring the Faculty Council promoted the publication of another article in University Week. The article also appeared linked to the University Website. Our goal was to brief and engage faculty and students on journal costs and scholarly communication issues. The article contained questions asked by Beth Kerr, council chair, on behalf of the FCUL, and answered by Betsy Wilson, dean of University Libraries; Tim Jewell, director of information resources, collections and scholarly communication; and Mel DeSart, chair, Libraries Scholarly Communication Steering Committee.

Beth Kerr, Tim Jewell, and Mel DeSart will be attending the American Research Libraries Institute on Scholarly Communication July 2006 at UCLA and plan to brief the 2006-2007 library council in the fall.