

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

The Faculty Council on University Libraries met at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, **December 15, 2003**, in the Petersen Room of Allen Library. Chair Seelye Martin presided over the meeting

PRESENT: *Professors* Martin (chair), Bulgac, Kerr, Moy, Sutton and Wilkinson;
 Ex officio members Ogburn, Sercombe and Wilson;
 Guest Alan Grosenheider, Head, South Asia Section, Libraries.

ABSENT: *Professors* Brown, Lavelly and Schepp;
 Ex officio members Fuller, Ullman and Zabel;
 Regular guest Charles Chamberlin, Deputy Director of Libraries.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of November 24, 2003 were approved as written.

Update from Betsy Wilson, Director of University Libraries:

1) University Libraries nominated for the 2004 ACRL Excellence in Libraries Award

Wilson told the council, with observable delight, that University Libraries has been nominated for the 2004 ACRL Excellence in Libraries Award. The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) composite index ranks the UW Libraries 12th among 120 academic research libraries in North America.

University Libraries was commended in particular for three outstanding achievements: 1) its creative responses to user needs; 2) its development of programs for other libraries; and 3) its excellent relationships with faculty and students at the University of Washington.

Wilson said it is a great honor to be nominated for the Excellence in Libraries Award. She distributed the Libraries' application for the competition, which contains an overview of the Libraries' accomplishments in the last several years. She said the award is presented on the campus of the winning library. She will apprise the council as to the outcome of the competition in January.

2) 2004: Year of the University Libraries Triennial Survey

Wilson reminded the council that the triennial surveys began in 1992, and are comprehensive surveys of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. It is an "immense longitudinal survey, the largest of its kind in North America," said Wilson. The survey will be sent out in Spring 2004. Questions for the survey are still being garnered and evaluated.

Wilson noted that professional staff will be included in the survey for the first time this year. The goal had always been to include professional staff, and this year it became financially feasible to do so. Sercombe, the Professional Staff representative to the council, said she hoped all professional staff would be included in the survey. She said all PSO members should have something valuable to contribute. Wilson said, "Professional Staff is a growing group on campus, and plays an important role in research."

Questions for this year's triennial survey include: a request for an evaluation of the Libraries' liaison effectiveness; and a request for an evaluation of the Libraries' effectiveness in supporting funded research on campus.

Wilson said the survey will be both web-based and paper-based. The professional staff survey will be exclusively web-based.

Kerr recommended targeting faculty who have grants. "It's a better way to get them to respond." Wilson said, "There should be a way to isolate those faculty who are on grants."

Bulgac asked, "How will this [survey] help you get more money [for the Libraries]?" Wilson said, "We have used the data before in our budget requests. And we will continue to do so."

3) January 5, 2004: 4th Annual Tour of all UW libraries and branches by Director Betsy Wilson

Wilson said she is looking forward to her annual peregrination to all 54 units and branches of University Libraries in a single day. This includes every library and branch library in Seattle, Tacoma and Bothell. Only the Friday Harbor library will not be visited by Director Wilson on her omnivorous odyssey. If "Energy is Eternal Delight," as William Blake avers, Director Wilson's day will be one of eternal delight.

Excellence in Collections / Digital Resources – Alan Grosenheider, Head, South Asia Section, Libraries

Grosenheider distributed a brief statement on "Excellence in Collections / Digital Resources." The statement says, in part: "To remain a world class academic library, we must do all we can to develop and maintain our collections at the highest level possible across all relevant subjects and across an ever broadening spectrum of formats. Our collections must evolve in response to the needs of learners and researchers and be preserved for future generations. By *collections* we mean not only the entire aggregate of what is traditionally meant by collections, that is, the information resources housed by an institution (e.g. archival records, ephemera, graphics, manuscripts, maps, monographs, newspapers, recordings, serials, scores, &c.) but also remote information resources to which an institution provides access, whether via licensing of electronic resources, free Internet resources, or cooperative collection building and sharing."

The statement also recognizes "that we cannot own every resource, that we must find novel ways of providing them via advanced information technologies. Increased sharing and cooperative collection development among institutions can provide other resources, so that all can benefit from each other's strengths."

Facilities are given a crucial role in the statement as well. "As important as our collections are, we cannot ignore the facilities that house them. The Libraries strives to provide inviting and modern facilities for collection maintenance and use, and to preserve our resources in the best environment possible."

Finally, the statement suggests that "we must work with partners internationally to influence the development of standards for institutional repositories for digital assets as well as lead local implementation. Likewise, we must continue our efforts to provide guidance and leadership as changes occur in scholarly communications that have a tremendous impact upon libraries and those they serve."

Grosenheider identified a key action area. "We met with different groups in the summer and fall of this year. The chief purpose of these meetings was to keep the conversation going about the excellence of our collections, and to identify items to focus on in the collections and in digital resources: to identify action areas for the Strategic Plan, and changes and improvements we want to make."

Grosenheider said, "Since 1981, there have been regular serial reviews in the Libraries. The Libraries' thinking has centered on the questions: How can we provide the best possible teaching and research support for the University of Washington?; and: How can we identify partners both on and off campus?"

Grosenheider said that he and Joyce Ogburn (ALUW representative to FCUL, and Chair of the Information Resources Council) and others on the IRC have so far met with several different groups. "A task force is being formed to consult with staff and faculty, and to improve the Libraries' collections."

Ogburn said the IRC is addressing: collections development; how to deliver resources; how best "to do our budgeting"; issues involving serials; fund managers, subject librarians, and acquisition / digital initiatives / preservation folks."

Grosenheider said, “Two things were discussed intensively by these groups: 1) how to develop and maintain our collections at the highest level possible. The question arises: Is that what we should strive for?; and 2) free internet collections. Are *they* desirable? They’re out of our control; they could go away at any time.” (Grosenheider said, “Collections are like concentric circles, with the tangible collections being in the center and inner circles, and the digital collections being on the outer circles.”)

Bulgac said, “You should make sure you retain access to a journal – if we paid for it – even if it is dropped, whenever possible. It is so important to retain whatever you can of the collections.” Wilson said, “Most of these are licensed. They would have to be in our contract.”

Ogburn said, “In some cases, we have arranged to maintain access to journals even if we quit paying for them, but that’s rare.” And Sutton added: “You can’t underestimate the difficulty of doing this.” Wilson pointed out that “there are some groups that are making long-term access to what we pay for. These are not commercial publishers; they’re not-for-profit publishers. We’re at the beginning stages of setting up the model for these repositories. Increasingly, journals are becoming available *only* electronically. There is no comprehensive print collection of many of these journals now.”

Grosenheider referred to the Orbis / Cascade “cooperative development with peer institutions” about which FCUL members have heard in past council discussions. “*This* university could collect *these* [volumes or journals]; *that* university could collect *those*. Patrons would be borrowing copies through interlibrary loans, or purchasing on demand. Different people have different comfort levels with what our collections should be.” [As council members know, the Orbis / Cascade interlibrary loan arrangement is now active, and is working well.] Grosenheider stressed, “We have license agreements that assure us a significant degree of control, but trust and faith in other institutions is still very necessary.”

Martin asked about internet resources. “What do you do with them?” Grosenheider said, “They are cataloged. Changes are noted. Content is trickier, indeed.” Ogburn observed, “Quality is a characteristic, *and* the hope of a long-term presence and permanence. We put those records on the online catalog. And we can use those records to generate other records.” Sutton said, “With respect to E-*only* journals, the problem is: We don’t own them. Web material is unstable, but the whole nature of the medium is changing. If we have access to material – even online material – that’s still real access, whether it’s there tomorrow or not.”

Wilkinson said, “If I were a new faculty member, I’d look to see what online access is available. We have to look at that in defining excellence, as long as there *is* access.” Sutton said, “I could throw out the term ‘collection’.” Bulgac added: You have the ‘collection’ and the ‘E-collection’.” Sutton replied, “But in talking about excellence, it’s the *whole* collection, and in terms of what we have access *to*.” Wilson said, “As regards resources, there was a Collections Development Council, which became Information Resources to include the main collection, the E-collection, and the other collections.”

Grosenheider said he was interested to hear the council’s “take on ‘excellence’.” He said examples from other groups with whom he has met include: quality, uniqueness, quantity, delivery, and collections that attract support. Moy offered “breadth and accessibility” as signifiers of excellence. Martin said that, for graduate students, “you would stress online resources, in referring to excellence. Graduate students want online access: faculty too, of course. Then there’s the question: How many books will be around in 100 years.”

Kerr said, “We want an electronic serial or book, but we want to be able to *print* it.” Bulgac said, “You can define excellence in terms of the number of complaints you get. When could the Libraries *not* meet your needs in the last two or three years?” Grosenheider said, “A group with whom I spoke brought up people who don’t pick up their ‘holds’. Do they find what they need elsewhere? It would be helpful to know why they don’t pick them up.”

Martin said, “We have regional responsibilities as well: for instance, papers of political representatives and figures.” Wilson said, “We have the papers of [Senator Henry] ‘Scoop’ Jackson and [Senator] Warren

Magnuson. And the papers of many other important political and cultural figures in the Northwest.” Sutton said, “The size [of a collection] is a criterion of excellence, or *can* be.” Grosenheider said, “We talked [in the Collection Excellence Discussions at the IRC Meeting of November 13th] about preservation issues: recordings, photographs, etc.; of burning them onto CD’s or DVD’s. And we spoke of reformatting issues: What role does reformatting have in our maintaining an excellent collection?”

Bulgac asked, “Are some things – intellectually, financially – *worth* preserving?” Sutton said, “With unique items, preservation is critical. But whether all institutions have to do this, for excellence to be achieved and sustained, is another question.” Wilson said, “Through consortium arrangements, responsibility for preservation of unique items can be dispersed.” Grosenheider said, “We hold regional, national, and international responsibilities for preservation. We have regional papers of important people in the state, as has been mentioned; and we have important collections – such as ancient Buddhist manuscripts or some of the international studies collections such as the Scandinavian and Baltic collections – that are known internationally. Are *these* part of our excellence in collections? Many would say they are.”

Bulgac asked, “Should the UW *have* such collections?” Sutton said, “That *is* a measure of excellence. It contributes to the ‘celestial jukebox’ we’re all listening to. And we feed out of other centers of excellence around the world.” Wilson said, “[Former Governor and Senator and current member of the Board of Regents] Daniel Evans offered the University of Washington his senatorial papers, but all of his papers went to the state archives, because his gubernatorial papers *must* be there, and it is considered desirable, when possible, to have all of a public figure’s papers in one repository.” Wilson noted that there are 50-year long-term loans that are sometimes made to institutions of higher learning.

Grosenheider said, “The next step will be to form a task force and various focus groups.” He thanked the council for sharing its thoughts on excellence in collections and digital resources in University Libraries.

Next meeting

The next FCUL meeting is set for Tuesday, January 13, 2004, at 2:30 p.m., in the Petersen Room of Allen Library.

Brian Taylor
Recorder