

University Committee on Libraries
March 18, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. Café DeGrasta by Chairman David Smith. Also in attendance were John Adams, Gail Bederman, Corbett Redden (for Wesley Calvert), Ryan Finlen, Roger Jacobs, Walter "Jack" Pratt, Charles Rosenberg, Mihir Sen, Marsha Stevenson, Gordon Wishon, Jennifer Younger, guests Nigel Butterwick, Gay Dannelly and Dan Marmion, and secretary Melodie Eiteljorge.

The minutes of the meeting of February 12, 2004 were approved with amendments.

Director's Report: Younger reported that four members of the library faculty met with Tom Monaghan regarding library IT needs. Wishon added that they are trying to prepare a strategy to approach the Officers with a budget request in the fall. The committee is looking at IT needs across campus, particularly with the teaching and learning community. They are gathering information through a variety of means.

University Blue Ribbon Committee: At the March 2 Faculty Senate meeting, Provost Nathan Hatch announced the formation of a blue ribbon committee. Last summer Younger and the associate directors met with John Affleck-Graves to talk about pros and cons of the Big 5. Joining the Big 5 packages meant we had to cancel other journals. The provost provided funds this year for the over commitment, but this will be an issue again in the coming year. Hatch will sponsor the blue ribbon committee, and we will contribute to the committee's charge.

Dannelly added that as a first step we are pulling together title and cost data as well as use data for material not in the packages. There are several pricing dynamics, and it varies among disciplines. We are asking: What do we need to do to provide the best access to our users? Where does the library fit within the University's academic mission? We are also looking at state-wide resource sharing. We are not sure how the coming year will be structured.

Younger reported further that there are two possible timetables. We can stay in the packages while we undertake a year-long review, or we can take the short track to make a decision by the end of April.

Rosenberg asked if the committee will be driven exclusively by financial issues or whether it will look at philosophical issues and the role of the library. The two are linked, because affordability is defined by needs. Younger agreed that they are linked and that we can't talk about one without the other. However, right now the cost of packages is driving the need to cancel. Bederman asked what was new in this approach: in recent

year's we've always purchased whatever we could afford, even as that has dwindled due to inflation and library budget cuts.

Younger noted that we have not had regular increases to meet inflation. We are asking: Are the packages affordable or not, and at what cost? There is a lot of sentiment on campus to get out of the packages. However, we are concerned that while not being in the e-journal packages would give a needed and greater flexibility in choosing journals for subscriptions, not being in the packages would yield little in dollar savings.

Jacobs asked why the provost wants to establish this committee in the face of a library staff that has the ability to evaluate all of this information. Is he looking for corroboration, another voice? Wishon added that another possible objective is that it's an opportunity to engage a broader constituency in articulating strategy. Younger agreed. This is an ongoing problem, not just over commitments for this year or next year.

Pratt stated that he hopes the charge for the committee will be written in such a way that it does not become a fence in looking at issues beyond whether or not to stay in the packages.

Adams stated that there has to be some philosophical consideration. Otherwise you don't change the paradigm, which is the dependency on the journals. For the long term we should look at moving toward open access journals and other alternatives. This is not just a University problem. It is a crisis everywhere.

Younger noted that the library has put up a web site regarding the crisis in scholarly publishing at http://www.nd.edu/~colldev/library_budget_cuts/serials.shtml .

Printing by Notre Dame Students in the Library: Marmion reported that the Libraries are facing a dilemma regarding user printing. We have a commitment to service but also to good stewardship of the budget. We have noticed in the past two years a tremendous growth in printing, particularly in the Hesburgh Library Reference Department. Right now printing is free. The public reference printers have produced nearly two million copies over the last 12-15 months. Large stacks of printing are abandoned. To address this, the Libraries appointed a task force. Their conclusion is that we should connect our public printers to the University quota system. We know this would have an impact. Marmion has talked with Bill Kirk in Student Affairs, and he suggests that we next meet with the president and vice president of Student Government to get more input. He will pursue that.

We are also assuming that in the long run student quotas will need to be increased. We are exploring how that might happen and what would be a reasonable adjustment.

Smith asked what kinds of things students are printing. Stevenson replied that they are printing articles and course packets, but also flyers, petitions and mass mailings. She concurred that abandoned printing is a problem.

Finlen agreed that if we join the University quota system we will need to add to the quota. Electronic journal articles are often large. He suggested that duplex printing as a default might save paper, though not ink or wear and tear. Smith asked if it's possible to implement a duplex default or to limit the number of copies that can be printed at one time. Stevenson will check on that. She added that we could also move the reference computers behind a service desk, but that would mean added staffing costs.

Jacobs noted that part of the problem is in the way we provide access. Many things are not available in paper.

Bederman asked whether faculty teaching classes requiring heavy usage of online journal articles could add to the quotas of the students enrolled in their classes. Wishon responded that we already provide that option. Originally the quota system was to influence behavior, and it seems it is successful. We are sensitive to special needs and projects. 80% of students stay within the quota. He noted also that there are some things happening on the printing front that could change printing patterns. Student Government has requested that we place printers in the residence halls, and the OIT is considering the impact of that in terms of staff and maintenance. Printing patterns are ever changing, and whatever is done needs to be flexible.

Sen asked if this will also affect the branch libraries. Marmion responded that the branch libraries are not currently in the University quota system. If we join the quota system for the Hesburgh Library, we anticipate some impact in the branches and prefer to look at including all libraries in the quota system. There are also space issues, however, because the additional equipment for the quota system would take floor space that is already tight in the branches.

Adams asked if students have the option to send articles to their AFS space from the public computers. Stevenson replied that they do and that we encourage that. We provide free CDs.

Finlin agreed that the quota system is the best solution to make people more selective as long as we are flexible for special projects or assignments. He noted that you cannot highlight while reading online and that it is easier to use a hard copy.

Communication Strategy for the University Committee on Libraries:

Younger left the meeting early to join a meeting of the Provost Advisory Committee. Smith explained that on February 20 a subcommittee of UCL met with Cynthia Maciejczyk, Director of Communications, Projects and Planning. The subcommittee was

himself, Bederman, Weber and Younger. After the meeting, Maciejczyk sent a draft memo on a communication strategy.

The committee reviewed the document and made some suggestions for changes and clarification. Smith will discuss these with the subcommittee and incorporate some changes. Suggestions included:

* Jacobs: The document suggests that the old model of acquisition was inappropriate, and that is not necessarily true. Research is often based on what you can get your hands on, and that is what is in the library. Without that model, you don't need a library.

* Adams: We should focus on subject needs, not department needs.

* Adams: Branch libraries should be more like community centers, part of everyday life.

* Bederman: We are talking about two issues. You are discussing what our acquisitions policy ought to be. The goal of our Communications Strategy is to alert the faculty about the acquisitions policy currently in place.

* Jacobs: We put all the emphasis on packages and journal cost, but we still spend a lot of money on books.

* Bederman: Yet with budget cuts and inflation, we lose purchasing power. Each year we purchase fewer books.

* Adams: There is no book budget in Biological Sciences.

* Wishon: The focus is on communicating with faculty. Should there be some mention of other constituency groups, e.g. the Board of Trustees?

* Jacobs: This would be better coming from deans. Faculty already receive too many mass mailings and email messages. They don't read them.

Smith suggested that we continue the discussion at the next meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodie Eiteljorge
Secretary