

University Committee on Libraries (UCL)

Minutes of the Meeting of May 14, 2009

8:00 a.m. Decio Hall Room 131

Present: Ed Edmonds, Sherri Jones, Jennifer Mason McAward, Malcolm Phelan (undergraduate student representative), Joseph Powers, Andrew Sommese, Laurence Taylor, Paul Turner, Jennifer Younger (ex officio)

Absent and excused: Dennis Doordan, Barry Keating, Mary Keys, Semion Lyandres, Mikolaj Kunicki, Kasey Swanke (graduate student representative)

Observers / guests: Julie Arnott--Head, Preservation Department, Hesburgh Libraries, Gay Dannelly—Associate Director for Resources and Collections Services, Hesburgh Libraries, Tracey Thomas (recorder),

The May 14, 2009 UCL meeting was called to order by Laurence Taylor at 8:08 a.m.

Welcome and approval of minutes for April 22, 2009 meeting – Laurence Taylor

Chair Taylor welcomed members to this last meeting of the year. He asked for comments and corrections on the April 2009 minutes. Gay Dannelly made several data corrections. Andrew Sommese made a motion to approve the minutes as so corrected; Sherry Jones seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Chair Report

Taylor said that the committee is facing a membership problem in 2011, when a majority of the current members will finish their current terms. The only rule governing committee membership is the three year term limit, and strict adherence to this rule would result in never correcting the problem. In anticipation of this continuity problem, Taylor is proposing a Fall 2009 agenda item to consider possible solutions. Some suggestions include randomly selecting a minority portion of members for participation in an early election or extend some terms for four years.

Director's Report

Younger began her report by noting that the Hesburgh Libraries is now sharing its interlibrary loan system, ILLiad, with the Kresge Law Library.

Next Younger briefed members on the library renovation project. Referring to her email of May 8, 2009, she said a new timetable has been drafted for the project, based on several newly arisen program needs. As intended, the focus groups formed in April, 2009, expanded understanding of how faculty and students use, and want to use, the library. The complexities of these emerging program needs and issues, which include a music library, reading rooms and scholarly research (deep reference) collections, and an open workspace environment for library departments, will require additional time be spent in developing the program elements. In regard to a music library, Younger said that a small subcommittee of the Campus Committee, incorporating as appropriate individuals and activities from the Libraries' Audio-Visual Subcommittee, will be set up.

For these reasons, work will continue into the summer on defining the program elements. Although some work will also continue on the schematic design during the summer, completion of the schematic design is anticipated to be in October, 2009. An initial timetable indicates a Summer 2010 commencement of phase one, with phase two set for Summer 2011. Periodic assessments will be made during the next six months to refine this plan. At this time, it is thought to begin with the first floor, although some stakeholders prefer the second floor to be first, so that staff, whose work space will primarily be located on the second floor, have only to be moved one time. It is unknown at this time how the extensive heating and duct work will be integrated into the construction. Younger expressed satisfaction with the manner in which the architects, Shepley Bulfinch, have responded to the new sets of data.

Thirdly, Younger announced the May 21, 2009 conference on mass digitization to be held at ND. Organizers have brought in speakers of national importance on this topic. She noted that shared discussions on what Google is doing and how best to make use of it will be a significant feature. ND is particularly interested in discussions of mass digitization of Catholic Experience materials.

Next Younger turned to a continuation of the discussion on sustainable collections. She noted that Gay Dannelly and Julie Arnott were in attendance to provide some data requested by members at the April meeting. Younger noted, as mentioned in April, 2009 minutes, that her discussion with the deans about sustainability resulted in two significant outcomes: 1. the deans encouraged the library to 'flip the question' to focus on what is important to retain at ND, rather than on what to discard, with attention to local usage and ongoing future scholarship; 2. Development of a process with attention, through discipline by discipline discussions with faculty, on criteria for use, retention and preservation.. Younger said the library has had the good fortune to learn that the stacks are not as crowded as had been thought, meaning that there is more time available to consult with users and to develop an effective process.

On the question of duplicates, Younger said she had assured Medieval Studies that the library recognizes the value of this rich, comprehensive collection. Members also discussed the special situation of the Engineering Library, which is requesting a move to a smaller footprint. From her discussion with Dean Peter Kilpatrick, Younger said that continued good service is important to Engineering, and that a meeting is planned with engineering faculty to determine what physical materials are needed on site. Sommese mentioned that the Math department often makes use of the Engineering Library. Younger asked Dannelly to report to Denise Shorey the need to include all stakeholders, such as Math faculty, in the conversations about retention of materials.

Younger turned over the report to Dannelly and Arnott, who provided some data to support the sustainability discussion. Dannelly reported 57,891 duplicate titles, with copies or volumes totaling 126,000. There are 23,981 duplicate titles with no loan records from the last ten year period. Dannelly noted that determining circulation figures was imprecise in part because of the inability to determine if duplicate titles circulated simultaneously. There will be continued experimentation to try to retrieve this data. She said that it is visually clear that some duplicates have been used, some are in good condition, and some are in poor condition. But there is little data to establish when use is occurring. Those in poor condition could be candidates for removal on this basis. And for some titles there are often many other copies available in North America for interlibrary loan. She also noted that not all stakeholders share similar views on the functionality of removing duplicates. Clearly, not every duplicate has to go, but not every duplicate ought to stay, either, members agreed. Gifts and legacies had a value beyond duplication.

Members agreed that if those titles about which there is clear agreement were removed first, that would provide a significant initial space savings. Creation of a database which might automatically notify

subject librarians of the age of duplicates would provide a longer term process for responding to this problem.

Dannelly reported on the fill rate, the rate at which the shelves are filled up. Assuming the library collection continues to grow at today's level, there is 7 years of capacity left. Younger said this was better news than had been anticipated. Traditional estimates of the stack size of Hesburgh Libraries is 3 million volumes, and the collection at present is over 3 million. This discrepancy is likely due in part to the movable shelving installed in the basement of Hesburgh Library. 7 years provides some growth room for the collection, which is considered filled at 80%. Dannelly said estimating growth rate is challenged by the addition of large subject collections, as have been received in recent years. The disciplines of music, history and science are already crowded. Special Collections, which is crowded, is considering a 'medium rare' designation, in which titles would not circulate but would be subject to fewer handling restriction, in response to the overcrowding.

Paul Turner asked how a fill rate of 7 years would be impacted by the projected increase, over the next 5-10 years, in faculty size and the anticipated increase in 10 years of 1000 new graduate students. Should the university consider a graduate library facility? Sommese suggested that Hesburgh Libraries really constitutes a graduate library, given the scholarly focus of the branch libraries. He said in the main library, the undergraduate collection constitutes the smallest portion of the collection. Younger said that while the impression persists that Hesburgh Library is an undergraduate library, in truth, it largely supports graduate scholarship while still accommodating undergraduate needs. The library's ongoing focus is on creating a library that meets users' needs from wherever they come.

Members turned to the discussion of study space, as the prime need of undergraduates. Younger said the library is concerned to establish what is the role of the library in this campus-wide discussion, since, she noted, it is not the library's responsibility to solve all campus study space problems. She mentioned a task force being conducted by Father Poorman's office in which Ann Firth has been assigned the task of enumerating campus study space. She invited Ed Edmonds to join in her upcoming conversation with Firth about how the study will use the data provided it by Hesburgh Libraries on available study space, as those decisions might well impact the ongoing renovation. Firth's study is primarily an inventory of available study space, which all agreed is the primary need of undergraduates. Edmonds said the campus population is not fully informed about available spaces, which might result in underuse in some areas. Members discussed the possibilities of using classroom space in the evenings, noting the supervisory difficulties of that across a large campus. Edmonds said the Law School has done regular head counts of the entire building during its building and reconstruction phase, to gauge the use of space for studying. The data will be useful in assessing the population's needs and times of use. Members agreed that the students' perspective on study space should be incorporated into any study, and that qualitative data is as useful as quantitative.

Younger spoke of the open letter to the Hesburgh Libraries which has recently been posted by graduate student David Morris in response to the library's solicitation of user needs and wants in the spaces being renovated in Hesburgh. Morris says that the graduate students would prefer an emphasis on resource access rather than on information commons or a cafe, as some users have called for. He has invited other graduate students to offer their specific visions of functional research library space. Younger said Morris' comments are thoughtful and perceptive, and she is composing a response to him. The challenge for the library is to demonstrate that the planned spaces will work for each stakeholder group, and that consideration of that goal has been incorporated into the design. Even stakeholders express a desire for seemingly conflicting needs, such as more serious research and scholarship space and resources as well as more computers in the library. Defining the new space as it is being created is a pertinent task for the library.

Younger spoke lastly about the library acquisitions budget. She said that throughout Noral (North American Research Libraries) member institutions, budget cuts have been horrendously deep. Purdue, for instance, has made a 10% cut; others are at 20-30%. In response, publishers are offering some discounts, as, for instance, the 50% discount ND received recently on a one-time purchase. Journal prices, however, have not declined. Edmonds noted that for some vendors, a reassessment of dual delivery mechanisms may result, meaning that information will no longer be available in both print and electronic formats. Down the road, vendors may find themselves in a very different world. Dannelly said while ND has been very fortunate not to experience a cut at all in budget allocations, Harvard, for instance, has begun laying off staff and making cuts in purchases. This issue will undoubtedly appear as a continuing agenda item, given the national economic situation.

Annual report

Taylor asked members for comments and additions to the draft of the Annual report sent previously by email. After a brief discussion, he said that the second draft would be circulated to members by email for final comments and approval.

Taylor thanked all members for their hard work this year. He said he looks forward to another good year in 2009-2010. Younger spoke for members in thanking Taylor for his commitment and hard work as chair of the committee.

Motion to adjourn was made by Powers and seconded by Sommese; meeting was unanimously adjourned.