RESEARCH LIBRARY COUNCIL

Minutes of the November 7, 2014 Meeting
Room 2601
Du Bois Library

Present: Ganz, Kalmakis, Kinney, Morales, Muriel, Rothstein, Schafer, Schmidt, Shimpach
Absent: Billings, Cable, Degenhardt, Dougherty, Elsden, Hayes, Maloy, May, Ogilvie, Schweik
Guests: Button, Connare, Freedman

A. Comments of the Chair – Arthur Kinney
   Prof. Kinney welcomed all and everyone introduced themselves.
   Prof. Kinney said he has been thinking about things like the Writing Program moving into the Library. He thought that maybe RLC could consider the proper uses and possible uses of the Library, and serve as the watchers of the space. The council agreed. Prof. Kinney and Mr. Schafer will draft a statement for RLC review.

B. Approval of the October 3, 2014 minutes
   There was a motion to approve the minutes, which was moved and seconded. The minutes were approved.

C. Comments of the Director of Libraries – Jay Schafer
   Mr. Schafer attended the Italian Renaissance Harvest Banquet sponsored by the Renaissance Center on November 1. He recognized the great event that Prof. Kinney put on. Prof. Ganz asked if there were pictures. Prof. Kinney said he would bring some in.
   Mr. Schafer gave an update on the following Library programs and projects:
   • The 10th Annual Social Change Colloquium, “A Long and Winding Road: The Legacy of the Back-to-the-Land Communes of the 1960s,” sponsored by SCUA was held on November 3.
   • Open Access Events:
     o Open Access Week (October 20-24) included a number of programs as well as a keynote speech by Peter Suber from Harvard University.
     o Next Friday the Research Council is going to take up the topic of an open access program for scholarly articles for the university. This wouldn’t require faculty to publish in open access journals, but would give the university non-exclusive rights to faculty scholarly articles; this is the same policy as Harvard, MIT, and Princeton have.
     o Announcements were made about the new open access publishing fund to help support page charges and about the fifth cycle of the Open Education Initiative, a program that gives faculty grants of $1,000 for classes up to 200 students and $2,500 for classes over 200 students. In the past, the Library and the Provost’s Office co-sponsored this program; for this round, the Provost decided this should be a Library initiative and not a joint initiative so the Library is moving forward using Friends of the Library funds. There has been great interest already. Next Friday is the deadline.
     o The Library is an associate of the OpenStax initiative out of Rice University. OpenStax makes textbooks available for free online; print textbooks are $30-50. OpenStax physics textbook are being used at the university. Mr. Schafer showed the OpenStax rack currently on display in the Library.
   • The Library has acquired site license to the New York Times for everyone on campus.
   • Mr. Schafer suggested that RLC members stop by the Lower Level on the north side to view the new microclimate installation. As the Library looks towards a Learning Commons renovation, this new furniture has been installed as a way of finding out what students like.
   • The Library is sponsoring a new undergraduate research award in sustainability.
   • A Library Careers Networking Night, an ALANA (African, Latino, Asian and Native American) diversity recruitment event, will be held on November 13.
• A 3D printing center, which would be called the MakerBot Innovation Center, is in the advanced stages of planning and will hopefully be in place by the spring. The project will include 35 desktop 3D printers plus the networking required so they are easily programmed for student projects, as well as 3D scanners. 3D printing is a popular concept used in many different disciplines, not just engineering.

D. Comments of RLC Members

Prof. Rothstein asked about the job market for librarians. Mr. Schafer said the market is improving because of retirements but job candidates need appropriate, 21st-century skills. Due to the Simmons program in South Hadley, there is a larger pool of applicants in this area than there are jobs.

Prof. Ganz asked if having a new Provost has implications for the Library’s budget. Mr. Schafer said he has been in meetings with the deans in which they discussed the budget, strategic planning, and faculty issues. Overall, he doesn’t think the new budget system will have a great impact on the Library overall. Library staff can easily justify the budget the Library currently gets. The Chancellor thinks the Library should have an annual increase for acquisitions to cover inflation; 5-6% per year is required to maintain the resources the Library currently has. Prof. Kinney asked if that is enough. Mr. Schafer said it keeps the Library from having to cancel subscriptions, but that subscriptions are carefully reviewed to make sure they are being used. The book budget has been increased some over the last 1-2 years by putting more of the additional money into that budget.

Ms. Button discussed the Learning Commons Assessment Task Force, which was formed to look at the Learning Commons space and see how it meets student and faculty needs. The task force will be speaking with student focus groups about the space and would also like to talk with faculty. Ms. Button raised this in case any RLC members would like to take part. There will be a focus group on November 12 at 5:15 p.m. for an hour. Ms. Button asked RLC members to let her know if they are interested in participating.

Ms. Ganz asked if the future renovation plans for the Learning Commons will be presented before RLC. Mr. Schafer said they will. The Library will be look at the use of the microclimates and try to come up with a plan. It will likely be next fall by the time there is a plan to present.

E. New Library Website – Carol Connare

Ms. Connare presented the beta Library website. The design is based on functionality, trying to connect people to services, events and resources. The current website was designed five years ago and it is time for an update. There will be focus groups with students and faculty taking place in early December, but feedback is accepted from anyone. Ms. Connare will send the link to the website to RLC members and they are welcome to share it with others.

Prof. Rothstein commented that when he first saw the university’s new website, he found it terribly unintuitive. Part of the problem was that it was designed for mobile use.

Prof. Ganz said she thinks the beta Library website is a good design. She asked about the search engine at the top and what it says beneath the search box. Mr. Schafer said people want to search different areas, such as the catalog, Five College catalog, etc. so users can choose which one to search. Prof. Ganz said she goes to databases first; this is her draw to the Library. She asked if there is one version of the website designed for regular use and one for mobile use. Mr. Schafer said his understanding is the software the website is built with can resize automatically; there is no separate mobile website.

Prof. Kalmakis said there is confusion about the search engine choice below the search box, and maybe a different word other than “SCOPE” should be used.

Prof. Ganz asked if there are any statistics in order to make this a more scientific approach. Ms. Connare said yes, the Library website redesign is based on statistics on how users used the old website.

Ms. Connare said they hope to finish the website by May 2015.

Prof. Rothstein said that 99 times out of a 100 he goes to WorldCat when using the Library website, often for bibliographic details he forgot to take down. Mr. Schafer said WorldCat is a discovery tool that includes journal titles; it is a one-stop shop for people who want more in-depth information. Ms. Freedman asked if the name WorldCat on the website could be changed on the front page in order to clarify what it is. Mr. Schafer said it could be changed. Ms. Schmidt pointed out that WorldCat doesn’t search Web of Science, one of the most heavily used databases.
F. Spring 2014 UNIV 190L Course Update – Kate Freedman

Ms. Freedman gave an update on UNIV 190L, an experimental course in information literacy that she taught last spring. The course was the brainchild of reference librarian Madeleine Charney, who co-taught a course on sustainability and created for that course an online module called “Beyond Google.” This allowed students to do some activities related to developing their research skills as they were doing their assignments in the sustainability course. Ms. Charney thought it would be a good idea to develop the module into a stand-alone course.

As a result, a one-credit course was created, which Ms. Freedman was hired in part to teach. The course enrollment is capped at 30. It was initially aimed at first years and transfers—the students potentially most unfamiliar with the resources at the Library—and was structured to be taught mainly online using Moodle, with a few check-in sessions. The main difference between this course and Ms. Charney’s original module is the course is not attached to a larger subject-specific course; therefore, students could choose their own project focus. Each week students did a short exercise related to their topic and also participated in forum discussions. The students were graded on four things: participation on Moodle, a research journal (which was the core of the course), an annotated bibliography, and the final in which they answered a faux reference question.

The decision was made not to limit who could enroll in the course and the students who enrolled were much more diverse in all respects than what were targeted. There were various academic years as well as graduate students, half who signed up were international students, and half were STEM students. This surprised Ms. Freedman and made this even more of a learning experience for her. There was a broad spectrum of expertise across the students, which made it difficult to meet the needs of all. Teaching the course online was also a challenge since the students were all doing their own research and it was hard to get them to realize there were common processes they were all undertaking. Plans for the future including redesigning the course format to make it an in-person course in the spring, to make it collaborative as much as possible, and to include more dialogue among the students about their experiences and peer-to-peer learning.

In the long term, there are a number of directions Ms. Freedman is interested in taking this course. There is a large demand for the course, so to reach the broader audience she’d ideally like to link it to the Writing Program more firmly and expand the first-year writing course into more semesters than it currently occupies. She said it is interesting how the goals of the librarians and of the Writing Program overlap. More realistically, she’d have this course be a training course for students interested in being peer tutors for a potential future research center that would dovetail with the Writing Center.

Prof. Shimpach asked how many students were enrolled in the course. Ms. Freedman said sixteen. Ms. Schimdt asked if a problem with overenrollment is anticipated if the course is offered again. Ms. Freedman said no; it will be capped at 30.

Prof. Ganz suggested making it into a Commonwealth Honors College freshman seminar, possibly as a 3-credit course.

Prof. Kalmakis asked how the course was advertised, since an eclectic group enrolled. Ms. Freedman said it was advertised to advising and international student advising, and to the general university community through posters in the Library. She said they could have done a better job targeting.

Ms. Schmidt said the Graduate School Office of Professional Development is working on a similar course for graduate students so the enrollment for the course next time might not include master’s students again.

G. Proposal/Process/Timeline for Moving UMass Materials to the Five College Annex – Jay Schafer

Mr. Schafer presented more statistics about the use of sets by floor and said these were not significantly different than the use of monographs in general. He also presented statistics on circulation by age of material.

Prof. Kinney and Mr. Schafer put together a proposed draft of a message to faculty, announcing the process for moving materials to the Annex and letting them know it will involve faculty input.

There was a motion to endorse the message, which was moved and seconded. The message was unanimously approved.