

VCU Arts Library Committee
Wednesday, January 9, 2008
Cabell Library, 4th Floor Special Collections and Archives Room

Minutes

Attendance

Sarah Branigan, Charles Brownell, Steve Cartwright, Jennifer Hamilton, Lea Marshall, Roy McKelvey (chair), Lydia Thompson, Stephen Vitiello, Hilary Wilder

Staff: Pat Flanagan, Yuki Hibben, Kristina Keogh, Kimberly Separ, John Ulmschneider, Sarah Amick (recording secretary)

Guests: Janice McMurray, Melinda Skinner

The meeting was convened at 5:00 p.m. by chair Roy McKelvey.

Business

Review and approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Review and approval of minutes from November 2007

The minutes were approved as presented.

Art exhibits in Cabell and Tompkins-McCaw Library: VCUArts and the VCU Libraries Friends of the Library

Mr. Ulmschneider began by saying that two Friends of the Library members were in attendance to discuss developing a special art exhibit space in Cabell Library. Kimberly Separ, Director of Development and Community Relations at VCU Libraries, introduced the two guests, Melinda Skinner and Janice McMurray, members of the Friends of the Library Board. Mr. Ulmschneider and Ms. Separ explained that the Friends of the Library would like to host two or three arts exhibits each year in the library, showcasing what VCU students and faculty are doing. They asked to open up a brainstorming session with this committee today. There is currently a blank wall in Cabell Library that was designed as exhibition space but is underutilized. Exhibits could be created for both Cabell and Tompkins-McCaw Library, with different types of projects in each. Janice McMurray and Melinda Skinner are currently involved with the art community in Richmond, and are interested in VCU Arts and making art more visible, especially in public areas like the library, particularly with the School of the Arts being a “jewel” at VCU. Ms. McMurray explained that the arts are very exciting, and these proudly displayed art exhibits could open the eyes of all students, and create an interest in the arts for all students.

Mr. Ulmschneider expressed that he is thankful for Ms. McMurray's and the Friends of the Library's love for this institution. Few places are better than the libraries for showcasing and celebrating VCU and the arts. Cabell Library's central location is ideal for something like this, as about 11,000 people a day visit Cabell Library. The School of the Arts could be made more visible, and VCU Libraries is willing to help.

Discussion among committee members followed, and it was agreed that this would be an ideal way for VCU Libraries to work with the School of the Arts. Overall university policies about hanging art would of course be acknowledged. The Anderson art gallery currently exists as a place for displaying art, but people need to make a special trip there just to see the art. Mr. McKelvey discussed the current gallery committee, and explained that it is a body representing each art department. It would be necessary to have someone with the responsibility of maintaining an exhibit schedule and communicating with the departments. Mr. Ulmschneider said that VCU Libraries can offer some management assistance with this. It was suggested that exhibits rotate through the various art departments. Mr. Cartwright pointed out that in the case of the Anderson gallery there is a rotation of the School of the Arts departments, and a different department makes exhibit decisions each time. Mr. Ulmschneider said that this would be a great opportunity to show off what VCU students are doing, but not in competition. There was discussion about possible levels of art student interest in this opportunity.

Some additional thoughts from the discussion include:

- We could start out by trying just one or two exhibits a year
- Availability of lighting and security was discussed as well as availability of space for 3-D art. There is only room lighting, but the exhibit area is in view of the circulation desk at Cabell and some space is available for 3-D items.
- A suggestion for an initial project was discussed.
- It was that the students themselves may be interested in organizing exhibits as they do at the Student Commons.
- It was suggested a program begin next fall semester to allow for planning time. Prospective students and tour groups will then see the artwork.
- Special events and or multi-media displays might be possible, even tie ins with Richmond Friday night art walks.
- The current space is formal and more informal artworks would be exciting. More repair might be required, but the Friends might be willing to help with any expenses.

Mr. Cartwright said that in the fine arts building, the exhibits rotate between graduate students, faculty, and visiting faculty. Discussion followed about the rotation and who would manage it and make the decisions. Mr. McKelvey suggested that we plan for possibly two a semester. Ms. Separ said that if anyone has any other ideas or thoughts on this, to please contact her anytime. Mr. McKelvey asked for a list of specifications on the size and location of this exhibit space to give to the arts faculty.

Ideas for the exhibit space at Tompkins-McCaw Library were also brought up, and Ms. Separ will follow up on how to move forward with them and that she would get more details on the space at TML and Cabell spaces. Ms. Separ and Mr. Ulmschneider

mentioned looking into insurance as state university insurance does not cover some things. Mr. McKelvey state that he will get feedback from arts faculty on this project. Mr. Ulmschneider thanked chair Roy McKelvey, and thanked the two guests and Ms. Separ for their participation. Ms. Separ thanked the committee, and she, Ms. McMurray, and Ms. Skinner left the meeting.

Reports and Discussion

Public access to NIH-funded research: legislative success

Mr. Ulmschneider directed the committee's attention to the handout on the public access mandate that was recently made law. He stated that libraries have had to face the escalating costs of journal subscriptions, and have advocated for more material to be published in open access sources for some time. Mr. Ulmschneider explained that the argument has been that publications based on government funded research should be freely available to the public. Those supporting open access to these publications have asking Congress to mandate that all research funded by the NIH has to be made freely available. The publishing community has opposed the measure, mainly (it appears) because they fear a potential loss of revenues. The industry has lobbied heavily against the measure with some misleading assertions, such as warning that open access could mean the end of peer review or increased government censorship over research. The argument for open access is so compelling, however, that Congress in the end agreed that since government and tax payers' money is funding this research, then all citizens have a right to see the results of the search without being charged for that privilege. The new legislation requires that all publication resulting from NIH-funded research must now be deposited in the NIH open access repository no more than 12 months after publication.

Mr. Ulmschneider noted that this new legislation had the potential to impact all faculty members, and that every faculty member should be aware of the changes. The lasting effect is that it may help reduce the cost of journals over time. He said that as changes like this occur in the publishing system, it will help end the cycle of investigators and libraries from having to pay over and over again for disseminating the results of their research. Mr. McKelvey said that eventually a law like this will reach arts research. Mr. Ulmschneider concluded the discussion by saying that this has no harmful impact that we can see, and should only have positive effects on the academic communities, and libraries, researchers, and students.

Resource guides, podcasts, tutorials for the arts: demonstration and review

Mr. Ulmschneider introduced Kristina Keogh, Reference Librarian for the Arts, who gave a demonstration highlighting VCU Libraries resources on research in the arts. Ms. Keogh said that she welcomed feedback from committee members on anything that should be changed or added to the research resources.

Ms. Keogh stated that for the past year she has been working on resource guides for subjects in the arts, which are available on the libraries' web pages. These guides can

help students get started in their research. Ms. Keogh explained that it is a one-stop shopping source for those who may be unsure of what they need or where to start. She has prepared a number of guides, most for specific disciplines but also for topics such as finding images. Most things that students might need for research projects are included. and Ms. Keogh points these guides out to all students that she works with. Ms. Keogh said she wants to make them more conducive to the different types of research that each department does. She will continue creating these resource guides, and plans to do a guide for each departmental area.

Ms. Keogh then discussed podcasts that are available on the VCU Libraries web site. She said there are little video snippets available on how to use library resources, and that she plans to create some podcasts that are specific to the arts resources. Ms. Keogh showed a podcast example on searching InfoTrac for peer reviewed publications. Ms. Keogh updates her resource guides as the libraries acquire new materials. Mr. McKelvey said that the committee members and arts faculty can look at what is currently there, and give suggestions for the resource guides.

Ms. Hibben brought up one thing from the previous meeting that she wanted to confirm. She said that if a book has an accompanying cd or other media item, then it does have a label on it saying that, and vice-versa. Ms. Hibben also wanted to make the committee aware that the end of the ordering cycle for media and books is the last day of February for this fiscal year and encouraged them to send input for purchasing decisions.

Chair Roy McKelvey adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.