

VCU Libraries Advisory Committee
October 19, 2007
Main Conference Room, Tompkins-McCaw Library
3:30 to 4:30 pm

Minutes

Attendance

Sharon Lanning, Jackie McGarth, Roy McKelvey, Wes Poynor, Gabriel Reich (for Leila Christenbury), Jeanne Schlesinger (for Jan Chlebowski), Mary Secret

Staff: Jean Shipman, John Ulmschneider, John Duke, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Guest: Sam Byrd, Digital Repository Librarian

Business

Wes Poynor convened the meeting at 3:35.

Election of Chair

Dr. Poynor announced that he had accepted the nomination to chair the VCU Libraries Advisory Committee. He then called for any other nominations from the floor. There were none. A motion was then made and seconded to accept Dr. Poynor as chair. The motion was carried unanimously.

Review and approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as presented with the addition of an expression of appreciation from Mr. Ulmschneider to Dr. Poynor for accepting the position of chair and a welcome to the new members of the Committee.

Review and approval of minutes from September 2007

The minutes were accepted as presented.

Starting time for VLAC's monthly meetings

Dr. Poynor asked for a review of the responses to the poll of the Committee, conducted earlier in the month, on the best starting time for the monthly meeting. While the responses indicated that slightly more members had asked for a 3:00pm start, those asking for 3:30pm start were not able to attend at 3:00pm due to conflicts with teaching assignments. It was decided that based on the need, the starting time for this year's Committee would be 3:30pm with a commitment to have the meetings run only one hour.

Use of library facilities and requests for 24-hour access – handouts

Mr. Ulmschneider distributed a handout which showed steadily increasing number of visitors in Cabell Library. Visitor counts for Tompkins-McCaw continue strong but do not show the same dramatic increase as Cabell. He then distributed a second handout that showed a decline in library study and work space available for students as collections and other university priorities absorbed floor space. As a result, Cabell Library now has about 25% less space for students than when it was constructed in 1975, but serves nearly twice the enrollment.

Efforts are ongoing to ameliorate the situation and improve space for students. Nearly 150 seats were added to Cabell in spring 2007 with new furniture funded by the Office of the Provost, and an additional 300 square feet was realized from renovations on the 4th floor. Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the Center for Teaching Excellence, currently located on the 4th floor of Cabell, will be moving to another building in 2008, allowing the VCU Libraries to relocate its administrative offices from the 2nd floor into the 4th floor space vacated by the move. This will free up about 2,500 square feet on the 2nd floor of Cabell for student use. He also reported that the VCU Card Office space in TML has been reassigned to the VCU Libraries and will be repurposed for library use. Mr. Ulmschneider noted that VCU students, particularly Monroe Park Campus students, continue to press for 24 hour access to Cabell Library. He underscored that the VCU Libraries is sympathetic to the request, but that he believes more students will benefit from a larger library than from extended hours. For that reason he has assigned space expansion, particularly for Cabell Library, as a top priority for the VCU Libraries. When adequate space for students has been made available, 24 hour access will be an important next step. Until then, the cost of providing staff and security for 24 hour access is prohibitive.

Ms. Shipman noted that TML has decided to close one hour earlier (10:00 p.m.) because gate counts demonstrate a dramatic drop in building use after that time. In addition, Hunton Hall is open until midnight, offering students a study location option for later hours. In discussion, it was noted that while there is classroom space available for student study use, particularly on the MCV campus, students strongly prefer a “library” type of atmosphere and space for serious study.

Mr. Ulmschneider spoke briefly about the need for off-site storage for lesser used materials in the collection. This would free up significant space for study use at both facilities, as would the further use of compact storage.

Reports and Discussion

Budget reductions update: anticipated effect on library collections for FY07-08 and FY08-09 – handout

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that there has been some good news on the budget. The University leadership has made use of alternative budget resources for part of the cut

proposed by the VCU Libraries. Consequently, the VCU Libraries will only have to accommodate reductions in budget for services and operations, not for library collections. This means that the purchase of JSTOR and several critical nursing journals will go forward this year.

Electronic theses and dissertations: revised proposal – handout

Mr. Ulmschneider referred the Committee to the handout, a draft proposal for implementation of mandatory electronic submission of theses and dissertations at VCU. This revision of the proposal notes that the choice to embargo a work for a period of time from appearing on the Web will be made by the advisor, the Committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School, but does not give specific reasons for the requesting an embargo.

The Graduate School and others continue to express concern about including mandatory submission of thesis and dissertations to ProQuest/UMI for indexing and central distribution. It is not technically necessary to include this step as part of the submission requirements. However, the VCU Libraries strongly supports mandatory submission to ProQuest/UMI so that the thesis or dissertation will be indexed and become searchable in the primary tool for location these works, *Dissertation Abstracts*. There is a fee for submission to ProQuest/UMI, so making submission mandatory places a required fee on the student. Mr. Ulmschneider noted that this fee will nearly cost-neutral to students, since the VCU Libraries will drop all current processing fees once mandatory electronic submission is implemented.

Dr. Chlebowski has expressed a concern about the work flow described on page 2 of the proposal, since it requires a significant role for the graduate program and the Graduate School in verifying the submission. He feels that VCU Libraries and the Graduate School need to continue their dialogue to iron out these concerns.

The draft proposal eliminates mandatory binding fees and binding services from the VCU Libraries. Students who wish to have their thesis or dissertation bound will be able to choose a binder and binding option appropriate for their needs from a list of commercial binders provided by the VCU Libraries.

Mr. Ulmschneider explained that while VCU Libraries would like the ETD process become mandatory by fall 2008, the Graduate School believes that fall 2009 is more reasonable. However, the VCU Libraries does expect to have all processing steps in place by spring 2008, and will eliminate all fees for electronic submission of theses and dissertations by fall 2008. It is hoped that most students will naturally gravitate to the less costly electronic process before it is made mandatory in 2009.

Dr. Poynor asked the Committee to read this proposal carefully. Because attendance was light at the meeting, he also said that the proposal would be sent electronically to all members of the Committee, urging their review. He then asked that this be a topic for discussion at the next meeting, that this was a matter of significant importance and warranted their full attention.

Digital asset management: update and demonstration

Mr. Byrd gave a brief demonstration of how the VCU Libraries is digitizing and managing images and other objects. The VCU Libraries use ContentDM, software specifically designed for library digital asset management, to take in and manage multiple collections of digital objects. There are currently between 20 and 25 collections that the VCU Libraries has targeted for digitization. Mr. Byrd showed the Committee how to search collections for desired material and how to then retrieve and exam that material. He pointed out that there is no charge for the use of the software by VCU Libraries nor for the students to access this type of collection. There are standard guidelines for image, audio, and other data regarding preservation and transmission. One of the primary advantages of digitized materials is that is preserved and available for the future generations of archiving technology.

In discussing one of the collections in the digital archives, Mr. Byrd highlighted *PS Magazine*, which features artwork by Will Eisner. Mr. Eisner's work is highly prized and the annual award for outstanding comic art is the Eisner Award (the Oscar of comic book art). VCU Libraries was chosen last year to house the Eisner Archives.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15pm.