

VCU Library Advisory Committee Meeting
Friday, March 10, 2006
James Branch Cabell Library – 4th Floor Conference Room

Minutes

Attendance:

Sadeeka Al-Majid (Chair), Jan Chlebowski, John Duke, Allen Lee, Judy Lewis, Curtis Lyons, Ernie Martin, Roy McKelvey, Wes Poynor, Jeanese Reiss, Sumana Sharma, Jean Shipman, John Speich, Jodi Teitelman, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary). Guest speaker: Dan Ream

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

Business

Review and approval of agenda

Three items were added to the agenda:

- Change security/login at public computers
- Interviews for Associate University Librarian
- MLA support for nursing program

With these additions, the agenda was approved.

Review and approval of minutes from February 2006

The minutes were reviewed and approved as presented.

Strategic Plan: consideration for endorsement - handout

The Strategic Plan was submitted to VLAC at last month's meeting and the committee had been asked to review it for consideration for endorsement at today's meeting. There was considerable discussion about the fact that the "balanced scorecard", while being efficient and effective, and producing the kind of information needed, removed the "human" component from the data. There was concern expressed about treating students like customers and that there was more information to be garnered than this scorecard approach allowed. Mr. Ulmschneider shared the committee's concern in this area and added that a Director of Marketing and Public Relations position had recently been created to address the personal/human side of library use, to "tell the story" about the library in ways that reveal its powerful role in academic life.

The committee voted to endorse the Strategic Plan as presented.

Changes to loan periods for faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students - handout

Mr. Lyons reported that in performing research to illustrate the various loan periods of peer institutions, it was discovered that VCU was significantly out of step with regard to the loan periods for graduate and undergraduate students. Loan periods will be reviewed in the immediate future to determine if changes should be made at VCU to bring it more in line with similar institutions. Additionally, he reported that the current loan period for faculty is 6 months with up to 5 renewals, allowing for a total time of possession equivalent to 3 years. He also noted that it was no longer necessary to bring

library materials back to the library to renew them. All renewals are sent a reminder email, as well.

Several discussion topics ensued:

- Explanation of the University of Tennessee's policy – UT intentionally gives staff and faculty the same loan rights because of the similar status and work need.
- Post-doctoral employees are not identified in the report because they are not accounted for in the current database. They will be given access to the catalogs by virtue of the "Affiliate Database." Concern was expressed about this and that they should have faculty borrowing privileges.
- Concerns about the conflict between the extended-time user and the need for someone to use the same material within the 6 month to 3 year time period. The second requester's need at this time is being addressed in two ways. First, if there is no urgency, a hold can be placed on the item; if the borrower attempts to renew, the system will require that the item be returned and the requestor notified, and if the item is returned, it will be held for the requestor. Second, if the item is needed quickly, the request is sent through interlibrary loan for an immediate availability of another copy from another source. If that is not a viable option, then the book is recalled and the first borrower has up to 21 days to bring the book back. There was concern expressed about the effect this may have on the graduate student who thought they would have uninterrupted use for 6 months. Mr. Ulmschneider said he would bring some suggestions for remedying this matter to the next meeting and would try to address specifically 1. doctoral students need for a whole semester's use 2. staff loans vs faculty and 3. graduate student needs.

One member asked about the status of the textbook bill currently before the General Assembly. Mr. Ulmschneider reported that wording has been changed in the bill such that libraries at universities and colleges will not be required to purchase a copy of every textbook authorized for use. They will only have to enable students in need to purchase existing ordered copies. Additionally, professors will be required to sign off on book orders thereby acknowledging the specific cost of the texts.

Change in security/login at public computers

Mr. Duke reported that there had been some abuse of public computers elsewhere at VCU. This abuse may have allowed a hacker to capture personal information being used on these computers, such as passwords and credit card numbers. In response, the University, including the VCU Libraries, will be installing a new login system which will require users to log in before every use. This new system will be installed by April 1. Currently no login is necessary to use computers in library buildings, unless the user wishes to access a .com site.

The new login will be used to authenticate the user's identity with VCU, and when the user logs out, the computer will reset and erase all record of use. Concern was expressed by committee members about what information would be recorded and kept and by whom and that these matters, matters of policy, were not being discussed at the level appropriate to generate sound policy. It was also suggested that education in the form of brief instructions and warnings should be employed for the benefit of the student

users. Mr. Duke also explained that in regard to access by persons not affiliated with VCU (the general public) to computers in library facilities, there needs to be a balance. The VCU Libraries is addressing this in three ways: Friends of the Library have access via the affiliate database 2. Academic credentialed users can get a one day pass for computer use. 3. A few computers will require no login but will be restricted to library and academic use only -- .com sites will not be available on those computers.

Regarding the data being collected, the VCU Libraries will not retain any login-related data. However, the University may retain some data on who logged into which terminals and when they logged off. Concern was again expressed that this is being done without policy guidance and that some policy should be developed with the appropriate involvement of University administration. It was suggested that the same group who developed the current computer technology policies might be the best group to establish these security related practices. Mr. Ulmschneider will follow up on these policy concerns and Dr. Lewis will take this matter to the Faculty Senate.

Reports and Discussion

Meeting to deliver resolution on six-year budget plan

Dr. Lewis reported that there were two meetings to deliver the VLAC resolution regarding the six-year budget plan. The first was with Dr. David Sarrett, representative for Dr. Retchin. His reaction was to ask the delegation if the Libraries would surrender its one-time additional funding in return for more funding in the following year. The committee was not in a position to respond to this statement and contacted Mr. Ulmschneider and asked him to immediately send the necessary metrics to Dr. Sarrett so that he could better understand the Libraries' position. The delegation was taken aback by his response to their coming to him, especially since they had come to primarily thank him for supporting the VCU Libraries in the development of the budget plan. The second meeting, with Dr. Gottfredson, was much smoother and he thanked the delegation for coming and for the resolution. Dr. Lewis thanked VLAC for the opportunity to represent them in this manner and Mr. Ulmschneider thanked them for their continued support of the Libraries and their mission.

Library building initiative

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the increasing number of students continues to take a toll on library facilities, especially Cabell Library. Mr. Ulmschneider noted that this is a strategic issue for VCU and requires broad involvement by faculty and students to address properly. He is considering whether to ask Provost Gottfredson to establish a library building commission to study the requirements and design for the proposed learning/information commons addition to Cabell Library that appears in the University's Master Site Plan. He expressed great appreciation of the special monies given by the Provost to meet shelving needs at TML and Cabell, and partial match funding for construction on the 4th floor of Cabell, but he feels there is a pressing need for a major addition to Cabell, especially in light of the intended growth of the student body.

Google tips 'n' tricks demonstration – handout

This demonstrated was postponed to another meeting because of time constraints. The committee thanked Mr. Ream for his time and attendance and welcomed him to come again at a meeting in the future.

MLA support for nursing program

Dr. Lewis reported that with the help and endorsement of the MLA, the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) is making a modest increase in the number of nursing journals being offered. She thanked Ms. Shipman and the MLA for their support and efforts in making this happen.

Interviews for Associate University Librarian

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that there are two and possibly three people being interviewed for the position of Associate University Librarian, with the first interview being the 27th and 28th of next week. There will be a special portion of the itinerary for the VLAC members to meet with the candidates and he encouraged them to do so.

Additional discussion

Concern was expressed about the ranking system recently published for research universities and the status of "Research University (very high research activity)" and "Research University (high research activity.)" VCU is in the second category, and its status is related to the number of PhD's it awards. The University has committed to expanding graduate student enrollment and Ph.D. production, so it is anticipated that the next evaluation will place VCU in the highest category. Mr. Ulmschneider pointed out that most of the institutions in the higher category have much stronger library systems.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The next meeting is April 14th at 2:30 at TML.