

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
Humanities & Sciences Library Committee**

**4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, James Branch Cabell Library  
April 29, 2011, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

**Attendance**

Bonnie Davis (chair), Antonio Espinoza, Sandra Gramling, Les Harrison, Eric Hazelrigg, Rebecca Segal, A. J. Shriar, James Turner, Fang-shen Wu

Staff: Dennis Clark, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Guests: Sam Byrd, John Duke, Jeanne Hammer, Kristina Keogh (VCU Libraries faculty)

**Business**

**Review and approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**Review and approval of minutes from January 2011**

The minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Ulmschneider introduced Dennis Clark to the Committee. Mr. Clark is the new Associate University Librarian for Public Services at VCU and will attend meetings of the Committee to address issues related to student and faculty services for the College.

**HEETF and STF equipment requests, 2011-12 – handout**

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the VCU Libraries staff has been developing the enclosed potential list of equipment purchases in anticipation of the annual call from the University for this information. As of the meeting time, the University has issued a call for Student Technology Fee requests but not yet for higher Education Equipment Trust Fund requests.

Mr. Duke reviewed the list. He noted that several student groups have reviewed the list and endorsed it. He highlighted several areas of interest including the following:

- The requests continue to address the perennial need to upgrade and replace as computer equipment on a regular cycle. He noted that there is a shift in demand from desktop to laptop computers and other wireless devices.
- Classroom technology upgrades for library instruction rooms.
- An expansion in equipment to editing and using digital materials, including a request to create a digital lab for students (more about this later in the meeting).
- Technology Services has included laptops in its STF list for loan to students by VCU Libraries.
- Purchases of more e-readers, including 24 Kindles, 21 iPads, and 24 Nooks, as well as several HD cameras and tripods for student use – this equipment will have longer loan times of approximately 3 weeks.

## Reports and Discussion

### **Media and Reserve Services Review Task Force final recommendations** – handout

Mr. Ulmschneider reminded the Committee of the preliminary report completed by the Task Force prior to the Committee's January meeting. Enclosed is the final report, which provides a set of guidelines and suggestions for change that establish a framework for going forward. He said that the primary focus of the report is the strong recommendation that the VCU Libraries create an advanced multimedia lab available to all students (some departments in the University have small labs for use by their students only), and that this lab have state-of-the-art capabilities to edit video and audio, conduct green screen production, and integrate media, text, and created material into presentations and reports. He said that it's not established yet where the lab will be located or exactly how it will be funded. He noted that in the past, appropriate projects that support student academic work have garnered support from the Office of the Provost, HEETF and STF funds, and VCU Libraries funds. He also said that the Task Force members had visited other universities to review their work in this area, and have found that VCU is quite far behind in providing this type of resource.

Mr. Clark added that establishing a digital editing lab for students is part of moving into a new era where creating and developing digital materials is part of the educational process. He also said that the VCU Libraries hopes that the planned changes might lead towards open media stacks for the use of DVDs just as hard bound books are available.

In the discussion which followed, these points were made:

- Students bring data from many sources to their assignments. VCU needs to support this kind of academic work, as well as give guidance concerning legal issues which students might encounter in using digital sources.
- Academic publishers trail commercial ones in their adoption of standards and technologies for digital materials, so their products often are not compatible with existing e-readers.
- Student liability for e-readers is the same as for laptops and they are so advised. Thus far only one reader has been stolen.
- The VCU Libraries is looking seriously at ending its digital course reserves service. Scanning services will continue (for use with Blackboard), as will print course reserves.
- Conversion from VHS to DVD is possible but constrained by legal considerations. Wherever possible, the DVD version of a VHS item is purchased. While an individual might be able to convert VHS materials for personal use, the University cannot provide this service, since such services generally are in violation of contractual agreements with producers of the VHS media.

### **Elevator lobby redesign: update on selection of quotations** – handout and demonstration

Ms. Hammer thanked the Committee for their submission of possible quotes to be used in the design of the areas immediately adjacent to the elevator doors in Cabell Library. She explained that the over 200 quotes were reviewed by the VCU Libraries Advisory Committee, and the list then further refined by VCU Libraries staff. The final set of quotes is being authenticated for accuracy. She then showed several images of proposed finishes for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building.

### Recent programs:

- **Melissa Harris-Perry, February 10** – Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the event, VCU Libraries' Black History Month program for 2011, had been very well attended. He noted that audience members found Ms. Harris-Perry to be an engaging and exciting speaker.
- **Brown-Lyons Lecture, March 24** – This event brought a full house (500 attendees) and was as engaging and well received as ever. Mr. Ulmschneider reminded the Committee that the speaker, Dr. Jack Spiro, may only do this for another three more years, and encouraged them to definitely try to make it to one of these exciting evenings.
- **Bedpan Elegance, March 31 – June 30, 2011** – Mr. Ulmschneider told the Committee that VCU Libraries has an extensive collection of bedpans. This material was combined with a series of exceptional photographs of bedpans from Professor William W. DuBois of the Rochester Institute of Technology to create a exhibit on bedpans. The opening reception was well attended.
- **Zine Night, April 5, 2011** – This event was hosted by the Special Collections and Archives Department and was a very successful evening, combining lecture, readings and hands-on workshop activities for an attendance of about 60 persons.

### Additional agenda item:

Mr. Ulmschneider announced that in the just-released final draft of the VCU2020 Strategic Plan, the plan still calls for VCU to become an ARL-ranked university. This bodes well for much needed strengthening of collections and services for faculty and students. He encouraged faculty to make their thoughts and preferences known concerning this portion of the plan, or on any part of the new strategic plan, to the task force charged with its presentation. The revised plan and supporting materials are available at <http://www.future.vcu.edu>.

**Demo and discussion: ASERL Civil War project; important recent acquisitions** –demonstration  
Mr. Byrd explained that in commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War, the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) has developed a program among its member libraries to digitize and make available rare and unique materials from their collections related to the War. Because VCU overall is a young institution, its contributions will come from the Tompkins-McCaw Library on the MCV Campus, whose Sanger Historical Files contain records and materials from the central hospital during the War. He then showed how to find the newly-digitized materials on the VCU Libraries homepage. The material consists of records documenting the belongings of soldiers who died in the MCV hospital, and it contains fascinating and touching detail. The records were originally individual, hand-written entries, so the digitized images are being transcribed to facilitate indexing and searching of the materials.

Ms. Keogh then gave an online demonstration of the recently acquired database American History in Video, which contains a large collection of videos dating from the early 1900's forward. Studying these videos allows students to analyze history through visual media, including newsreels and DVDs. The database has accompanying transcripts for notetaking and support. This data can be embedded into Blackboard course work; Kristina will send a link and instructions to the Committee following the meeting. Ms. Keogh then quickly reviewed a database called Underground and Independent Comic and Graphic Novels. This database contains the full text of hundreds of previously unpublished materials and

can be searched and browsed. It is not possible to download or print this material, however, due to copyright laws.

Dr. Davis noted that this was the last meeting of the academic year and wished everyone a pleasant and restorative summer.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.