

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
VCU Libraries Advisory Committee**

**4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, James Branch Cabell Library  
February 21, 2014**

**Minutes**

**Attending**

Lisa Brown, Matt Browning, Charles Byles (substitute for Jose Dula), Corey Davis (chair), Kathy Kreutzer, Gerald Miller, Faye Prichard, Jeanne Schlesinger, AJ Shriar, Carolyn Song, Carolyn White

**Absent with notice**

Meredith Baines, Jose Dula, Whitney Newcomb

**Absent**

David Burton, Les Harrison, Peter Nguyen

Staff: Dennis Clark, John Duke, Jeanne Hammer, Teresa Knott, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Guest: Sara Williams (VCU Libraries)

**Business**

**Review and approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**Review and approval of minutes from January 2014**

The minutes were approved as presented.

**Creating the new VCU Digital Press – handout**

Mr. Ulmschneider announced that as planned, the VCU Libraries has moved forward with adopting the Bepress Digital Commons platform for institutional repository functions and to support a digital press for publishing journals and monographs. The initiative is timely: the State has just extended its requirements for archival storage of reports generated by State agencies, including VCU, and the institutional repository will provide the capability needed to meet that requirement.

The VCU Libraries must develop a name for its implementation of the Digital Commons platform. The name will apply to the entire platform as an “umbrella” name for repository and publishing functions provided by the platform, and will form the underlying URL for all services provided through the platform. However, VCU can brand and promote major initiatives supported by the platform – such as the proposed VCU Digital Press – independently of the “umbrella” name. Mr. Ulmschneider referred to the handout, which listed a range of proposed names. He asked the Committee to consider the proposed names and send him feedback they may have, and also to make suggestions for other names. The VCU

Libraries is on a fast track for implementation: the final decision on the name will be made on Monday, 2/24/14, at a 10:00 meeting. That doesn't leave much time for feedback but Mr. Ulmschneider assured the Committee that any input would help the VCU Libraries zero in on the best name. In discussion the following points were noted:

- Most Committee members did not favor the use of a university mascot, such as the Ram
- Use of an acronym wasn't a popular approach among staff
- Mr. Ulmschneider hoped to avoid any name with the word "Commons", since that term is widespread in other implementations of the platform
- This new system would work with WordPress and be compatible with work being done in the Honors College
- Theses and Dissertations are already being moved to this platform
- Items in the platform would be fully exposed to searchers in Google
- The VCU Libraries will provide training in the use of the platform

## **Reports and Discussion**

### **February 28 visioning session for Faculty and Graduate Student Research Center – handout**

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the plans for the new construction are moving forward and the nearly all the exterior design and floor layouts are settled. The VCU Libraries and the interior design firm are now developing plans for furnishes and finishes. These elements will be especially important to the utility and visual impact of the proposed Graduate and Faculty Research Center on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the new building. To help with the final interior design for the Center, the VCU Libraries has set up a meeting with graduate students and faculty to review options and provide input and guidance. This "visioning session" will be held on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room in Cabell Library.

Representatives from the interior design firm for the project will lead a guided discussion to identify and refine design choices for furnishes and finishes. The VCU Libraries hopes to create a dignified, impressive facility for graduate students and faculty that will support their work and express a sense of VCU as a mature research institution. Mr. Ulmschneider encouraged committee members to attend and/or let their colleagues know about the session. Refreshments will be provided.

### **SACS reaffirmation visit**

Mr. Ulmschneider reported that the SACS visiting team had been at VCU the previous week. In the SACS reaffirmation process, the on-site visit addresses any issues identified by the off-site review of the accreditation compliance documents sent to SACS previously, and also reviews the QEP. The off-site review had identified several areas where SACS needed further documentation, including one concern about the VCU Libraries. VCU submitted to SACS in December additional information for each of the identified concerns.

The SACS on-site team confirmed that the December materials addressed the concerns raised by the off-site review. It also made four recommendations for VCU at the end of its visit, none of which affect compliance issues related to reaffirmation of accreditation. SACS reported that VCU had one of the best reaffirmation reviews of any recent institution, and noted that having four recommendations is a remarkably low number. Two of the recommendations are fairly easy to address. Two others concern

the QEP and will require a bit more work. There is little concern that VCU will fully address the four recommendations, and it is expected that VCU's accreditation will be reaffirmed by SACS.

**Construction schedule for new Monroe Park Campus building** – PowerPoint presentation

Ms. Hammer gave a brief PowerPoint demonstration and outlined the timeline for the construction process. Upcoming milestones include:

- Opening of the new entrance by the end of Spring Break
- Staff relocated in March (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors) to swing spaces
- Temporary loading dock in place in March
- Utility work begins in March
- In late April, most staff will move from swing spaces to final spaces
- Exterior exposed aggregate panels on the north and part of the east side of Cabell Library will be removed during the summer
- Expansion of Special Collections will take place during summer

Mr. Duke reported that the shift of collections to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor had begun, journals have been consolidated, and government documents have been culled and tightened. Collections are being relocated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor, and materials from the area formerly used by MRS on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor will be relocated to make room for administration offices that are being relocated from the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. He said that part of the challenge is to maintain access to the collections during the relocation process. In response to a question about whether items can simply be digitized instead of moving them, he noted that it is actually faster to relocate the materials than to digitize them, which is a more labor-intensive and exacting task. The VCU Libraries staff is doing in six months what normally takes a year or longer to accomplish, and there just isn't spare time to do anything other than relocate materials as efficiently as possible.

**Demo: WestLawNext** – online demonstration

Mr. Clark introduced Ms. Williams, the new Head of Academic Outreach for VCU Libraries. She gave a brief demonstration of the uses, advantages, and options of WestLawNext. She explained that WestLawNext is a modified version of WestLaw that is better suited for use at VCU than the normal full version of WestLaw, which is designed for use by attorneys and law schools. She demonstrated how to find WestLawNext on the VCU Libraries home page and in the catalog and showed how to refine searches and how to use the secondary sources. She pointed out that WestLawNext is a very “forgiving” search engine such that even a close guess as to what the user is looking for will generate options for answers. There is also a tutorial available. This product has applications for use by the History, Criminal Justice, Business and Human Resources departments.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.