

VCU Libraries Advisory Committee, January 27, 2017
Main Conference Room
Tompkins-McCaw Library
2:00–3:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attending

Lorraine Anderson, Meredith Baines, Matt Bogenschutz, Lelia Brinegar, Jose Dula (chair), Les Harrison, Fin Hatfield, Nastassja Lewinski, Cheng Ly, Tom Nelson, Pam Taylor, Kenneth Warren

Absent with notice

Natalie Baker, Corey Davis, Valerie Robnolt, Jeremy Stultz

Absent

MaryBeth DeMarco, Faye Prichard

Guests: Mike Rawls, VCU Libraries, Emily Hurst, VCU Libraries for Teresa Knott

Staff: Kathy Bradshaw, Dennis Clark, John Duke, Jimmy Ghaphery, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Review and approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Review and approval of minutes from November 2016

Members asked about the status of the Elsevier contract. Mr. Ulmschneider explained that the VCU Libraries is collaborating with other Virginia universities to negotiate the contract. The collaborative has agreed that it should put in place appropriate processes to ensure that the new contract will not require renewal when it expires in five years.

With this explanation, the minutes from the November meeting were approved as presented.

Mr. Ulmschneider welcomed the membership back from the holiday break and drew their attention to the major new renovation of TML. Ms. Hurst offered to guide a tour of building after the meeting. Mr. Ulmschneider also said that there will be some sort of celebration of the renovations in March and that the members of VLAC would be invited.

ARL application letter and possible visit – handout

Mr. Ulmschneider reviewed the VCU Libraries long-established plan for recognition by the Association of Research Libraries by an invitation to join ARL. In October ARL lifted its 3 year moratorium on considering new members, and the VCU Libraries immediately submitted a letter requesting that ARL consider VCU for membership.

The VCU Libraries completed the first step in the membership process by submitting a quantitative profile of the VCU Libraries' expenditures, staffing, holdings, and the like in late

October. For the next step, the VCU Libraries submitted a letter describing how it meets the ARL Principles of Membership and otherwise demonstrates and embodies the characteristics of an ARL caliber institution. The handouts contained a copy of that letter; Mr. Ulmschneider asked that the membership not share the letter beyond the meeting. The letter had been transmitted to the ARL membership committee.

If the letter is found acceptable by the committee, the VCU Libraries will move to the next step in the membership process: a site visit by a small team from the ARL membership committee. Following the site visit, the team will send its findings to the full membership committee. The membership committee then will either reject the membership application or make a recommendation for membership to the full membership of ARL. If a recommendation goes forward, the full membership will act on the recommendation at its membership meeting in October 2017.

In Virginia, the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech belong to ARL. If VCU is accepted as Virginia's third ARL member, it will be the first U.S. institution to achieve membership in over 15 years.

Reports and Discussion

Affordable Course Content grant program – handout

Mr. Ghaphery summarized his previous conversation with Committee about reducing the costs of textbooks for students. Following the example of other universities, VCU Libraries now has a working website (<http://go.vcu.edu/textbooksavings>) for educating students and faculty about text book savings.

Working with the Office of the Provost, the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence and the ALT Lab, the VCU Libraries will be launching an Affordable Course Content Award Program to incentivize faculty to adopt or create free or low cost alternatives to expensive textbooks. Academic Technologies, Online @ VCU, the Office of Disability Support Services, and VCU Bookstore have also committed to serve as resources for award recipients. A review panel will evaluate the award applications and include a faculty member from the School of Education. Mr. Ghaphery encouraged the VLAC members to share this information with their home units and said that he would have the URL for this site sent to the membership following the meeting. In the discussion which followed, these are some of the points made:

- One opinion is that online study actually reduces readership and that leads to there being no textbooks in the classrooms
- This was acknowledged as a shortfall and one solution is to have pdfs available for a modified price. If students cannot purchase texts, at least this is a possible option.
- The panel is looking at peer-reviewed materials to be include and being very careful about selection; this includes texts by faculty.
- The use of high-speed printers that bind are a useful resource and can be very helpful to support classroom use.
- Service called “XanEdu” assembles course-pack materials through the VCU Bookstore.
- Elective courses might find this website option especially applicable for supplemental texts.

- Suggested the use of alternate media like YouTube for language learning.
- Course branding is not supported by this type of resource.
- The chief reason faculty or anyone writes a textbook is because they want to provide the best text for the subject; this makes selecting from amongst various authors and works especially difficult.
- Grants for this project would total \$20K.
- Awardees will be required allow sharing and adopting with attribution
- The resulting projects from VCU Faculty will be available for other educators to use.

VCU's new budget model: describing the VCU Libraries for budget purposes – handouts
 Mr. Ulmschneider described the “modified responsibility centered management” budget model that the university is developing. Universities have adopted many different expressions of RCM-based budgets. Broadly, RCM identifies schools, colleges, and other units as either “revenue units” or “non-revenue units”. Revenue units handle student credit hours and otherwise generate revenue for the university; non-revenue units are funded through an overhead assessment on revenue. Libraries are always a non-revenue unit in such systems. RCM budget models require that all units show clearly and succinctly the sources of their budgets and how their budgets are invested.

The handouts showed several ways to model and present this information for the VCU Libraries. Mr. Ulmschneider asked the Committee for their comments and suggestions about how to improve these examples and provide other, perhaps more effective ways to communicate about the VCU Libraries’ budgets and expenditures. Committee members noted:

- Comparisons displayed longitudinally would show growth
- Not sure what the reaction might be to seeing that 1/3 of the collection is in storage; the Committee fully understands what that means but someone viewing that from an “outside” perspective might not.
- Showing digital resources would be impressive
- Growth in use of digital materials would be an impressive visual
- Highlight use of Scholars Compass
- Information about the stored materials is critical; the university needs to know how much is in storage to help understand the need for dedicated library storage
- Show increase in number of “user seats”
- Reflect more of the dynamism of the stored collection; not just the number of items stored. Most other universities have off-site storage, as much as 60% of their collections, and the off-site location is sometimes far from the institution, even in some cases out of state.
- Illustrate the number of student workers. VCU Libraries is a good employer and pays its students well. It would be good highlight this.
- Combining of several data points would explain the seats vs. book space.
- Perhaps a website would be a better way to try and illustrate these dynamics as opposed to a static image.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.