

Notes from the Student Library Advisory Council (SLAC) Meeting October 22, 2012

Attending: Lara Bertoia, Camille Cole, Brian Cuddy, Allan Delesantro, Chris Dunham, Avik Dutt, Susanne Forbath, Rachel Gilbert, Dan Goldberg, Darragh Hare, Andrew Hart, Diana Hong, Ariel Kaplan, Katsuri Saha, Joseph Simonis, James Smith, Evelyn Soto, Saba Vahdat, Peter Wissoker

Also: Anne Kenney, Carl A. Kroch University Librarian; Bonna Boettcher, Director of the Music & Fine Arts Libraries; Chris Dunham, Head of User Services, Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library, Susette Newberry, Asst. Director of Research & Learning Services, Olin & Uris Libraries

1. Future of the Fine Arts Library

Bonna Boettcher reported that the current Fine Arts Library configuration on the third floor of Rand Hall has 9,000 sq. feet and contains 65,000 volumes, pretty much everything that was in Sibley in fall 2010. Two-thirds of the collection, however, is at the Library Annex necessitating a significant number of deliveries. Following the move there has been a slight drop in user traffic (according to gate counts) but an increased use of equipment.

The goal is to expand into the second floor of Rand but that requires the renovation of Sibley East so that architecture studios now on Rand 2 can be relocated. Providing fundraising is successful, planning for the expansion would begin in Spring 2014, with work happening later in 2014 and into 2015.

The Sibley Dome is now home to faculty offices and the IT department but there are also tables and chairs available for study.

Comments and questions included:

- Students definitely want to be able to browse the collection. Having so many volumes in the Annex makes this problematic.
- With expansion to the second floor, will there be more study space and easier browsing? *Bonna responded that everything is on the table and will be discussed with the primary user community in AAP. Potentially 45-50,000 volumes now in the Annex could be returned to the library.*
- Some faculty have suggested that the Fine Arts Library could be more digital. *Bonna and Anne responded that they both see a hybrid library for a while. Access to the printed volumes remains important.*
- The new space feels “crammed” and less pleasant. Stacks in Sibley were more open and amenable to serendipity browsing. Now there is less alternative (non-study) use of the library. In particular students miss the kind of seating they had in Sibley, with user spaces in the stacks. *Bonna responded that she knows this is a concern and that the trade-off had been to accommodate as many books as possible, while still providing some space for users.*
- On the whole, students are enjoying the new space.

1) The Veterinary Library

Chris Dunham reported that the College of Veterinary Medicine is in the process of expanding. Class size will increase and there is a need for larger lecture halls. Planning for the renovation is underway but it will certainly affect library space. We'll have a clearer picture of how the library will be affected by February.

With regard to the third floor of the library, which is now empty, the plan had been to remove empty stacks and provide additional study space, both group and individual. However, the fact that asbestos would have to be removed and that there is no elevator to meet accessibility codes, makes the renovation expensive and more complex. As a result the 3d floor will not be changed until the larger

School plans are better defined. In the meantime, the library is looking to accommodate student requests for more and more comfortable seating.

3) The Europe in the World competition

Susette Newberry reported on Europe in the World, a spring 2013 competition and exhibition sponsored by the Cornell Institute for European Studies and the Cornell University Library that will reward student scholarship addressing European identities and communities within Europe, and in relation to globalization. <http://olinuris.library.cornell.edu/europe2013>. She asked for the assistance of members of the Council in spreading the word about this competition.

4) Comments and concerns about the Library

In response to concerns expressed at the September 27 meeting, Ed Weissman reported that:

- Olin and Uris libraries were making an additional 16 scientific calculators and 10 graphic calculators available for loan.
- Staff at the Olin circulation desk have been asked to be mindful of the noise level at and around the desk.
- “Quiet, research area” signs were being placed in the Kinkeldey Room in Uris Library.
- With regard to extending weekend hours at the Catherwood Library, Anne stated that the budget is not sufficient to keep all of the libraries open as much as is desired but that the Library has maintained library hours in the face of pressure to cut them back.

The following issues and concerns were raised:

- There is insufficient group study space. While many engineering projects are group projects, there is a lack of space to accommodate the groups. Even finding appropriate space outside of the library is difficult. The Upson Hall classrooms, for example, are locked on weekends. Perhaps the Library could identify groups study space, both inside and outside the library, and make this information available to students on a map.
- Other university libraries, McGill, for example, have security guards patrolling in the library. This helps maintain decorum.

Edward Weissman
Assistant to the University Librarian