

Notes from the Student Library Advisory Council (SLAC) Meeting February 4, 2013

Attending: Avik Dutt, Stacy Farina, Rachel Gilbert, Dan Goldberg, Diana Hong, Curran Muhlberger, Katsuri Saha, Kat Schuhmacher, Indrani Singh, Jim Smith, Evelyn Soto, Peter Wissoker

Also: Anne Kenney, Carl A. Kroch University Librarian; Mary Beth Martini-Lyons, Coordinator of Web Design; Maureen Morris, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Research & Learning Services; Marsha Taichman, Visual Resources Librarian, Fine Arts Library ; Ed Weissman, Asst. to the University Librarian

1. Preview of the new library catalog interface and plans for an improved discovery and access experience

Mary Beth Martini Lyons and Maureen Morris provided a brief overview of the project underway to enhance the process for discovering and accessing library resources and then demonstrated the new Blacklight library catalog interface, highlighting key features of the new system. Blacklight is open source software that our 2CUL partner, Columbia, has made available in beta as a front end for their library catalogs. A beta version of the new catalog interface will be available at Cornell sometime this spring. Comments/questions included:

- Like the “request” button which defaults to the fastest option for getting the material requested while offering the requester the ability to choose another option. This might increase the use of Borrow Direct.
- Would like to have ability to personalize the page. Will this be possible? *Personalization is on the development list but not in the first wave.*
- Seems like a big improvement over the current interface

Members of the Student Library Advisory Council can participate in usability testing the new interface. The library pays \$20 for a 30 minute session. Opportunities will be announced on the SLAC-L list.

2. Digital visual resources

Marsha Taichman talked about finding, evaluating and selecting digital visual resource materials for the library and demonstrated a few of the resources the library makes available. While the library has extensive collections of images, we are in the process of branching out and collecting streaming video. The [Visual Resources Research Tools page](#) on the Library web site provides detailed information about our institutional collections. One of the important sources of images is [ARTstor](#), which allows you to build and export image collections if you set up a free account. Marsha said that she reported on the visual resource collections and new resources during instruction sessions and reference consultations. Comments/questions included:

- Just knowing that ARTstor exists would be helpful. I’ve been using Google.
- Can we get more images of value to scientists, e.g., images of scientific facilities, images for applied science/math? The covers of science journals, e.g., *Nature*, have beautiful images and these images have meaning.
- In Google, you can use images to search for images. Is this possible in ARTstor? *This is not now possible in ARTstor.*
- Promote the visual resources on the LCDs in every building, not just in library facilities.
- Reach out to freshman writing seminars.
- It would be good to have visual literacy seminars, covering ethics and plagiarism among others.

- Art history classes use images as “evidence.” Using these databases would have been very helpful instead of browsing through books. Should get this information on the syllabi.
- Faculty need to know about assistance with image research. They often use Google.
- Let faculty know that there is a process to have slides and other images backed up and stored [ARTstor’s [Shared Shelf](#) and the [Grants Program for Digital Collections in Arts and Sciences](#)]
- Participate in the City & Regional Planning Department workshops.
- Reach out to and encourage the Cornell Daily Sun to use ARTstor—the images with credits could help spread the word.

3. Standing workstations in the Library?

Council member Dan Goldberg raised the issue of the library making available standing work stations in the library. He said that during study/finals week after sitting in the library all day and with his back starting to hurt he thought it might be worthwhile to see if other students thought there would be value in having standing work stations available. He read several articles indicating that standing work stations have been gaining momentum in workplaces in recent years. He suggested that perhaps the library should consult with Prof. Alan Hedge of Cornell’s Department of Design and Environmental Analysis and an expert on issues of design and workplace ergonomics. In the discussion that ensued comments included:

- Use a standing desk in my office and like it. Perhaps set up a “library ergonomics area” and test the use and reaction.
- Never wanted to work standing up.
- See these in hospitals. But must be standing desks, not just standing computers. Library could also use better, more ergonomic sitting desks.
- How do you arbitrate the height—have short, medium height and tall people?
- The new student lounge in the Hotel School and Duffield Hall (near the café) have standing work stations.

Anne said the library will approach Prof. Hedge about having his design class do an analysis next fall and may also work with Cornell’s Ergonomics Resource Center to pilot a few set-ups.

4. Comments and concerns about the library

- Just found out about [Passkey](#). It is a good tool and should be publicized better. Perhaps Passkey information could be included in information packets for the Freshman Writing seminars or in class/Blackboard documents.
- At the same time, Passkey is not easy to use on tablets or smart phones. Can this be improved?
- Found recently that eBooks are now available via Borrow Direct. This is a good development.
- It would be good if the link to the library from Blackboard could be more customized for the specific class instead of pointing to the Library website.
- Provide more graduate student workshops with information about image plagiarism/how to link to images in image databases, etc.

Edward Weissman
Assistant to the University Librarian