

## Notes from the Student Library Advisory Council (SLAC) Meeting September 23, 2013

Attending: Taylor Allenby, Sarah Berger, Max Bernstein, Ashton Connor, Avik Dutt, Abigail Duvall, Devra Flatte, Rachel Gilbert, Jason Haider, Darraugh Hare, Brandon Kraft, Josh Lapray, Isabella Mongalo, Curran Muhlberger, Samuel Ritholtz, Druv Singhal, Timothy Song, Dan Temel, Sheena Thomas, Peter Wissoker, Daniel Wong

Also: Anne Kenney, Carl A. Kroch University Librarian; Mary Beth Martini-Lyons, Coordinator, Web Design and Administrative Services; Melissa Wallace, Web Designer; Kornelia Tancheva, Director of Olin and Uris Libraries and the Library Annex; Ed Weissman, Assistant to the University Librarian.

### 1. Update on Library programs and initiatives impacting students

Anne Kenney reported on developments in the Library impacting students. These include:

- Space upgrades in Olin and Uris libraries
  - New reading suite for graduate students on the 5th floor of Olin Library. It replaces all the previous graduate reading rooms in Olin (with the exception of the Classics room.) The room is restricted to graduate students and faculty. Access is controlled through a keypad. Graduate students may request access from Olin circulation staff.
  - Group study rooms: Olin 302, 402 and 404. (to be ready soon)
  - Reading rooms: Olin 301, 304, 305, 401, 405, 601, 602
  - New reading room in 107 Olin to open in 2014.
  - New chairs and carpet in the Uris Library Austen Room
  - New chairs in the Uris gallery and the CL3 lab.
- Mann Library
  - Changes to the arrangement of stacks and study spaces at Mann Library. Stacks were consolidated onto the 2nd and 3rd floor of the Mann building. This fall, a reconfiguration of Mann's 2nd floor space will clear the floor of all modular offices that until now have served as College surge space. This move will make room for stacks shelving as well as improved and expanded study and collaborative work facilities on our 2nd floor. Ultimately, the consolidation of Library stacks is creating space on the building's 4th floor—currently shared with the Bailey Hortorium—to house the Department of Communication. Approximately one third of the collection—only those books and print journal volumes that have not been checked out or browsed within the last ten years --was transferred to the Library Annex over the summer. The transformation of the building's 4th floor will not result in net loss of study space the 2nd floor undergoes improvement in the study spaces offered there.
  - Library now closing at midnight (instead of 2 am) but the lobby and the CIT lab are remaining open 24/5.
- Marriott Student Learning Center opened in the space formerly occupied by the Hotel School Library. Good study space with offices for librarians serving the Hotel School faculty and students.
- New Clark Hall Library Space opened in September in the space formerly occupied by the Physical Sciences Library. Good study space with offices for librarians serving the faculty and students in physics, astronomy and chemistry.

## 2. Blacklight Discovery System

The Library has been working for the past year to develop a new interface for the Library catalog. The Beta Catalog was rolled out over the summer. Mary Beth Martini-Lyons and Melissa Wallace did a brief demo. Comments included:

- The single search box is a good feature.
- It would be great to have a spell checker like with Google search—a simpler, more forgiving catalog.
- Should be able to export to Zotero, Mandalay and other citation managers, not just Refworks and EndNote.

There will be formal usability testing in October and Council members were encouraged to sign up

## 3. Proposed changes in the fines structure for short-term loans of items that accrue fines on a minute-by-minute basis: course reserves, equipment, etc.

Anne presented a plan by the Library to increase the maximum overdue fine that can accrue on such items. Currently the cap on such fines is \$35. There have been some who may well feel that it is worthwhile to check out an expensive reserve item or a piece of equipment and keep it long past the due time, sometimes for weeks, since the most it will cost is \$35. Last summer we implemented some changes that provides patrons with overdue reminders on such loans (reserves, laptops, equipment and room keys) within a couple of hours of the items becoming overdue. Also, any such item becomes “lost” with full fees and fines applied after only 3 days, instead of the 27 day period we use for regular circulation items. While this has helped, we still see some abuse. Therefore, the Library proposes to raise the minutely loan cap to \$150. This would be more or less equivalent to the item being lost for the 3 day period. The fine cap has not been raised since 2000.

Questions and comments (with responses prepared after the meetings in red) included:

- How long does it take to reach the maximum fine? With current maximum fine? With proposed maximum fine?

The current maximum fine for minutely loans is \$35.00. At 4 cents per minute, the maximum fine is reached after 14.6 hours. The fine does not accrue when the library is closed, so depending on at which library and at what time of day the item was borrowed, the maximum fine is generally reached about a day after the item was borrowed. Under the proposal, a borrower would reach the \$150 maximum after 62.5 hours, or between 3 and 4 days overdue.

- How much abuse of the current system is there? How many people intentionally keep items for long periods because of the low maximum fine?

The increase in the maximum would have no effect on borrowers who returned materials less than 14.6 hours overdue, because the fine rate is not changing, only the amount at which the fine stops accruing. Overall, about 19.5% % of all minutely loans are returned overdue. Of those overdue returns, about 6.5% are returned more than 14.6 hours overdue.

- Have you considered non-financial penalties, for example preventing additional borrowing if a person has not returned an overdue item?

Yes. Currently, borrowers are blocked when they have accrued \$300 in fines or have 1 overdue recalled item. We would like to see if the increase in the maximum fine increase diminishes the serious abuse before we consider blocking borrowing privileges.

- Could you initiate systems-based solutions, for example having automatic log-offs of laptops at the end of the loan period as a reminder to return/renew?

This is an interesting idea for laptops, but we'll have to see how much technical work this would involve, and what effort would be required for oversight and maintenance over the long term. For reserve books and non-laptop equipment, the solution would clearly have to be different.

- Could you let borrowers know at the time they borrow the items when they are due back and that fines accrue immediately?  
Borrowers are told the time the item is due back at checkout. We do not give a verbal warning about the fine policy at the time of checkout, although the information is available on our website and at some desks. We feel mentioning fines convey a negative message to the substantial majority of borrowers who return items on time, but is unlikely to provide an effective deterrence to those who consciously choose to keep an item out beyond when it is due back.
- Could you mark items, perhaps with stickers, showing the fine structure?  
Some libraries do have this information on reserve books and laptops; some do not. In general, the variety, physical shape and size of other types of equipment do not lend themselves to carrying a statement about fine policies.
- The Library should provide students with ample warnings about the change to the fine structure before instituting it and also make sure to let borrowers know about the change when they are checking out these materials once the change is instituted.  
Signage will be put at circulation desks, information will be posted to library websites and other promotional material can be created when the change is made. We will also provide ample warnings ahead of the change.

#### 4. Comments and concerns about the library

- Since there are no longer weekend hours at the Management Library, it would be helpful if the hours at other libraries were posted at the library entrance so students could see where else they might study. This would be especially helpful during midterm and final exam periods.
- There is often contention for high demand eBooks. Can multiple copies be made available?
- The Library's database sessions were terrific. All students should have access to them.
- The Ask a Librarian tool works well and is very helpful.

#### 5. Kornelia Tancheva took interested students on a tour of the new Olin 5<sup>th</sup> floor complex

Edward Weissman  
Assistant to the University Librarian