Library Review Report

Faculty Committee – December 2014

Introduction

A robust and dynamic library is vital to the academic life of the University. The library provides an environment for discovery, reflection, and expansion of knowledge. In addition, the library often serves as a physical core to campus. The academic community and its needs determine the library's utilization of space and allocation of resources.

The strength of any university library is gained through engagement with the academic community. The library should be designed and managed to take into consideration all users. Students are concerned with personal study space, interactive learning areas, strong information resources and technology, and operational hours. For faculty, the library is one of the most important institutions on campus. Faculty are especially concerned with collections, allocations, acquisitions, preservation of knowledge, and availability of key scholarly works in all media. The needs of humanities faculty can be distinct and the library is often the first place they begin their research.

While the library must welcome undergraduates using the collection, its primary role is to collect and preserve knowledge in the various forms important to faculty, and not to serve as social space for students. Many other spaces on campus exist for students to use for working, eating, and socializing. Moreover, the university can make computers and other equipment available to students in many places in addition to its principal library. No other building on campus houses large quantities of printed books, and none likely will. Obtaining greater prominence for the library in university life will not happen simply by ensuring that ever more student activities take place there: promoting the library must primarily include building the collection, meaning (among other things) remedying long-standing defects in its holdings of printed books.

Students are not well served, regardless of what comforts they have, if inadequate library resources deter the University from hiring the best faculty or inhibit faculty from doing its best research. It is important for the library to meet the needs of the entire University community.

Overview of Charge

Provost Holden Thorp established the ad hoc library review committee to comment on "The role of the faculty in decision-making regarding resource allocations for the support of faculty research, especially in the humanities." Overall, the goal was to

ensure that resources are being managed according to faculty needs.

Faculty from various disciplines have different needs and the Provost recognized that some, but not all, humanities faculty were concerned about recent library decisions and the effect of those decisions on their scholarship and teaching.

The Provost provided the committee some latitude in developing recommendations. This committee was asked to point out specific areas of concern and potential ways to increase, improve, and make more consistent communication between faculty and the library.

Committee Membership:
Rebecca Messbarger, Professor of Italian, History, and Women, Gender and Sexuality
   Studies (committee chair)
Jean Allman, J.H. Hexter Professor in the Humanities and Director, Center for the
   Humanities
Kenneth Botnick, Professor, School of Art
Seth Graebner, Associate Professor of French and International and Area Studies
Tristram R. Kidder, Edward S. and Tedi Macias Professor and Chair of the Department of
   Anthropology, and Professor of Environmental Studies
Timothy Moore, John & Penelope Biggs Distinguished Professor of Classics and Chair
Dolores Pesce, Avis Blewett Professor of Music
Wolfram Schmidgen, Professor of English
John Shareshian, Professor of Mathematics
Gerhild Williams, Barbara Schaps Thomas and David M. Thomas Professor in the
    Humanities, Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Findings & Recommendations

As an institution at the heart of the Washington University community, Olin Library has collections that are representative of this campus and its community. Olin needs to collect appropriate materials and remain on the cutting edge as it serves a variety of schools and disciplines. This includes dealing with issues like big data, visual and audio information, and computing. One of the core purposes of the library is preserving knowledge and facilitating the work of future researchers.

The Provost appointed the ad hoc library review committee to respond to concerns expressed by some humanities faculty about recent resource allocations and space decisions by the library. The concern was raised that Olin Library is serving faculty at Washington University unevenly as some strategies (purchasing of electronic books, space decisions, etc.) might have a negative effect on specific disciplines in the humanities.

The Provost has received reports of an inconsistent level of communication on the part of the Library's leaders with both the faculty and other library staff. Departments and individual faculty members on the committee have had very different experiences, both with subject librarians and with other library staff. However, the committee also recognized that some faculty and department chairs are more assertive in communicating needs to their subject librarians than others.

Discussing these challenges, it became clear to the committee that some of the concerns stemmed from issues of communication and transparency. Some faculty expected broader communications, consultation, and systematic engagement with the library leadership in advance of what they understood to be significant changes in library practices.

Therefore, the committee explored how other universities incorporate the needs and concerns of faculty into the research library's strategic planning and decision-making process (see appendix). The committee also considered data distinguishing humanities faculty from other users. How can the University ensure that the needs of all faculty are considered in strategic decisions of the library?

Washington University's Olin Library uses many tools to involve faculty and students in their planning process. For instance, every three years the library conducts a Service Quality Survey of faculty and students. In October 2012, library leadership and subject librarians conducted meetings with Department Chairs and departments to receive input. At the same time, the library held focus groups with students regarding services, space, and collections. Finally, several subject librarians participated as members of Strategic Direction planning teams. Subject librarians are expected to have frequent contact with the faculty and students they serve. While these are excellent initiatives, the committee agreed that it was important to enhance and expand communication between the library and faculty.

Specific committee concerns included:
- Acquisitions:
  - Relationship between Guaranteed Approval Plan and Purchase on Demand (PoD) strategy
  - E-preferred strategy implementation
  - Increase in bundled subscriptions
- De-accessioning:
  - Faculty users who regularly rely upon print-based materials felt that they were not involved in or informed about major de-accessioning projects.
  - Some faculty felt they were not consulted in a timely manner.
  - The Collection Management Guidelines and Procedures from 2013 are sound and should be implemented consistently (see attachment).
- Space Utilization:

- There appears at present to be no clear direction or management strategy for organizing space.
- The level of involvement of the internal Library Planning Committee in space decisions is not clear.
  - Strategic Plans:
    - Lack of systematic communication and thus lack of understanding about the library's short- and long-term strategic plans
  - Special Needs:
    - General concern that library practices do not consistently take into account special needs and research methods of disciplines.

With respect to de-accessioning and space utilization, the Committee offers the following rationale in support of the Librarian's request for more storage space. Concentration on holding only those materials presently in active use harms the long-term health and wealth of the library. The value of the library's collection is not judged solely in terms of present use of materials, but more broadly as it preserves knowledge and prepares to facilitate our future work and that of the researchers to come, whose priorities we cannot know. This broader vision of the Library's value also means that a collection development strategy that relies on purchase-on-demand by faculty will not lead to a library worthy of a research university.

There is no formal process at Washington University to garner faculty input on these concerns. Such faculty input should be seen not as a barrier to change, but as a vehicle for gaining support, feedback, and, ultimately, making the best strategic decision for the University.

Recommendations

The ad hoc library committee recommends that the Provost establish a standing faculty committee, called the Faculty Library Committee (hereinafter "committee"). The current Librarian's Advisory Council[1] should be dissolved and replaced with this new faculty committee.

The Committee will consist of thirteen faculty with the University Librarian as an *ex officio* member. The faculty will elect committee members with specific slots allocated by discipline or School, and the Provost shall appoint two additional faculty members. The chair of the committee shall be elected by the committee members. Committee members shall serve two-year terms but the initial election shall include several members with three-year terms to allowed for staggered membership. The Committee will report annually to the Provost and to relevant governing faculty bodies, e.g., the voting faculty of Arts and Sciences.

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[1] The Library Advisory Committee was appointed by then Provost Ed Macias. The committee, chaired by Professor Roddy Roediger, serves in an advisory capacity to the University Librarian. The original intent was to create a group of faculty who would help transition the new librarian into the University. The group has continued to meet but has no authority beyond consultation.

Committee Membership:
- 2 Humanities (elected)
- 2 Social Science (elected)
- 2 Natural Science and Mathematics (elected)
- 1 each from the Schools of Business, Law, Arts and Architecture, Engineering, and Social Work (elected)[2]
- 2 additional members appointed by Provost upon the recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences. At least one shall be from the Humanities.
- University Librarian, *ex officio*

Committee Charge:

The Faculty Library Committee will: 1) review planning proposals and budget documents provided by the library administration, particularly as they pertain to resource decisions and space allocation; 2) recommend changes to those proposals and documents based on needs of the faculty; 3) review the consultation process used by the library to ensure that schools, departments, programs, and centers are all equally engaged and consulted; and 4) collaborate broadly with the University Librarian and advocate to the University leadership for the library and its priorities.

The Committee shall meet at least three times throughout the academic year, with additional meetings called at the request of the University Librarian, the Chair of the Committee, or of faculty units. The Committee may meet without the Librarian in attendance, as it deems appropriate.   Consistent with the charge outlined above, the Committee is instructed to contribute to the strategic decisions of Olin Library by providing appropriate faculty input and guidance. The Committee's exercise of its charge will increase communication and transparency, ultimately making the Olin Library stronger and more consistent in meeting faculty and student needs.

Planning and Budget
- Committee reviews a detailed planning document from the Library at the start of every fall semester, containing the latest version of its strategic plan, as well as the list of major initiatives planned in the current academic year. These will include plans for acquisitions and collections, space allocation, de-accessioning, data curation, staffing, etc., but may not be limited to these. The document will also include the anticipated cost for each new major initiative, and the overall distribution of the library's budget (regardless of source of funds).
- If the Library administration proposes during the academic year a change to the budget/planning document submitted at the beginning of the academic year, it

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[2] The School of Medicine has its own library for faculty and its faculty rarely utilize Olin. While some of the other Schools included here also have their own library, the committee felt that their faculty would also use the resources at Olin.

will consult with the Committee and will not act upon such initiative until the Committee has provided feedback.

- Prior to the University Librarian's submission to the CFU of a budget document for the upcoming fiscal year, the Committee reviews the budget which includes a list of add-on requests. The Committee will provide the University Librarian with a prioritization of the add-on requests, in accordance with the feedback the Library has gathered from the faculty throughout the previous year and provided to the Committee.
- Committee reviews a year-end report that shows the degree to which the Library has carried out the major initiatives outlined in the planning and budget documents that were submitted to the Committee at the beginning of the academic year.

Communication and Feedback
- Committee will serve as a consultative body for the Library and faculty throughout the year. Specifically, the Committee will:
  o Advise the Library on user problems and discuss proposed solutions, as appropriate
  o Advise the Library on effective methods of keeping the faculty informed about library services and policies
  o Advise the Provost about library issues and needs
- Committee will receive the results of an annual survey sent by the Library to the heads of schools, departments, programs, and centers. That questionnaire shall cover issues such as responsiveness to faculty requests and preferences, level of support and communication by the subject librarians, access to materials, and other issues important to the faculty in that respective unit. The survey will inform not only the committee but also the library administration about areas of strength and areas for improvement.

  The survey shall consist of questions such as the following:
  1. Are sufficient resources allocated currently to your department for books, journals, and other materials necessary for research and teaching?
  2. Do faculty members in your area have sufficient and easy access to the items described in (1) above?
  3. Are important matters concerning library policy communicated to your faculty in a clear and timely manner?

  In cases where you answered "no," please provide specific feedback that will aid us in improving library services.

- Major library policy or resource allocation decisions shall be communicated regularly and in a timely manner by the Library leadership directly to the entire faculty (perhaps in a quarterly newsletter).

- Should the Committee have concerns about a Library decision that cannot be resolved through the Committee's consultation with the Librarian, it will report those concerns to the Provost and faculty in a timely fashion.
- Committee shall not oversee or govern personnel decisions made by the University Librarian. However, the University Librarian may want to consult with the Committee confidentially about the impact of a personnel decision. This would include informing the Committee how the change was intended to better serve the overall goals of the library.

It is vital for the faculty to take an active role in the direction of the library at a research-intensive university and for the University leadership to create a healthy environment for that dialogue.

Conclusion

The establishment of a standing Faculty Library Committee furthers the practice of faculty governance. Creating a structure and process to manage the relationship between faculty and the library constitutes an important step in solving the current challenges.

The Ad Hoc Library Review Committee would like to thank Provost Holden Thorp for providing the opportunity to contribute to the future of the library. The Committee also thanks University Librarian Jeffrey Trzeciak and his staff for providing key background information and content to inform the recommendations.

Appendix

Humanities Faculty Needs

Bonna Boetcher, interim director of Cornell University Libraries, in her discussion of the decision-making processes used at Cornell regarding collections and acquisitions, explained, "we consult extensively with humanities faculty because of their unique use of the library and materials. They read texts differently and overwhelmingly prefer print books." While faculty in the humanities make use of all available media for scholarly research and teaching, including digital collections e-journals, e-books, databases, etc., a number of recent surveys such as the *ITHAKA Finding of the US Faculty Survey 2012* have shown that humanities faculty view and use library resources differently from their peers in the social and natural sciences. Somewhat more than their peers in the sciences, they tend to see the library as a starting point for research, as a repository for resources, a teaching facilitator, a research supporter, and a support for undergraduate research and information literacy. In comparison to faculty in the sciences, they make more physical visits to the library, browse the stacks more often, use more traditional print-based materials and collections, and more traditional resources such as on-line catalogues and journal article databases. They make less use of electronic abstracting and index sources for their work than faculty in the natural and social sciences. Humanists often conduct research on older texts, including archival materials. Humanities faculty tend to publish monographs, work individually on their research, and publish more single rather than multi-author works. For these and other reasons, it is important that library policies and resource allocation support in substantive terms the distinct requirements of humanists for their research and teaching.

Peer University Information

Most universities, especially research-intensive universities, have a faculty committee that specifically advises and in some cases governs the library.

- The University of Chicago has "The Board of the Library" as part of its faculty governance structure. Brown University has a Library Advisory Board that meets six times a year.
- The University of Illinois has a Senate Committee on the Library that formally advises the University Librarian and Dean of Libraries. Issues brought to the attention of the committee include personnel changes, data management plans, budget issues and concerns, and strategic decisions involving purchasing. See: http://www.senate.illinois.edu/lb1301.pdf
- At UCLA an Academic Senate Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication includes faculty from various disciplines. Its principle role is to "articulate the views of UCLA faculty members concerning issues of acquisition, storage, and provision of scholarly materials." See: http://www.senate.ucla.edu/committees/library/

- UNC-Chapel Hill has an Administrative Board of the Library that advises the University librarian on the administration of the University library system, formulates, together with the librarian, the general policies governing the acquisition of, access to, and use of library collections and reviews the librarians' budget request. Faculty from Arts & Sciences and the various other Schools are represented on the committee, elected by the faculty. See: http://faccoun.unc.edu/faculty-code-and-policies/faculty-code/article-12/#12-1

Conversations with Peer Institutions included:
- Sarah Pritchard, Dean of Libraries and Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian, Northwestern University

- Bonna Boetcher, Director, John M. Olin and Uris Libraries and the Library Annex; Adjunct Professor of Music, Cornell University

- James Mouw, Associate University Librarian for Collection Services, The University of Chicago

- Leigh Estabrook, Dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, at Urbana-Champaign

- Kathleen Salomon, Assistant Director of the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California

Collection Management Guidelines and Procedures
December 2013

The Washington University Libraries' collections are built to meet the research and teaching needs of the campus community. Library materials have traditionally been acquired in physical formats, but increasingly are being acquired in digital formats. The Libraries now acquire approximately 95% of journals and 75% of books in electronic format. In addition to selecting material to be added to the collections, librarians must, as a part of their curatorial responsibilities, de-accession items from the collections. This must be done for several reasons, including budget constraints and space pressures.

What is de-accessioning?

De-accessioning is the identification of materials which are no longer necessary for a library's general collections. This includes identifying items that are rare or unique and should move into special collections. De-accessioning is part of the curatorial responsibility of the subject librarians in the same way that they are responsible for acquiring materials.

What is the national approach to de-accession?

- ➢ In 2011, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), which includes 126 research libraries in North America, collectively withdrew approximately 3,000,000 physical volumes from their collections. Notably, Harvard and Columbia withdrew the largest number of volumes.[1]
- ➢ There is a general trend towards access versus ownership. Libraries become members of partnerships that allow users to access materials in ways that were previously impossible.
- ➢ Libraries are moving towards shared print repositories.

What are Washington University Libraries doing with regard to collection management?

- ➢ There is a shift from print to electronic in most disciplines (with some notable exceptions, such as art and art history). The Libraries are at shelving capacity and need to make decisions about what to keep. Although space is a concern, it is not the principal driver in the decisions about which items are selected to be withdrawn.
- ➢ We do continue to collect new print materials and need to make space for those materials, particularly in Special Collections.[2]
- ➢ Washington University has partnerships that allow access to materials in new, efficient ways which previously were unavailable (Center for Research Libraries, HathiTrust, MOBIUS, SHARES, etc.). The Libraries also contribute unique content to these groups. Washington University Libraries is currently an archive builder for Western Regional Storage Trust (WEST).

Process of de-accessioning[3]:

- A list of titles that meet the criteria for de-accession will be shared with all subject librarians.
- After candidates for de-accessioning have been identified, subject librarians and other librarians, in consultation with faculty, may choose to retain titles on the list.
- The WUSTL Community will be offered items that have been identified for de-accession.[4] Items not taken will be offered to our used-book vendor Better World Books (a company that funds literacy projects in the United States and around the world) or other projects or vendors as identified by the bibliographers. Any remaining items will be recycled.

We recognize that the criteria for de-accessioning will be different among the disciplines due to the unique needs for each area. However, the general criteria below have been developed in consultation with Washington University faculty.

Criteria for de-accessioning may include any one or combination of these criteria:

- Journals and other materials for which we have perpetual electronic access (JSTOR, Project MUSE, direct purchase)[5]
- Government Documents for which we have electronic access or other access that is assured. (Washington University is a federal depository and adheres to strict guidelines pertaining to these items.)
- Items that can be readily obtained elsewhere. Duplicate copies of low use (circulation and in-house) items[6]
- Superseded editions/volumes (possible exceptions to be identified by subject librarians)
- Lesser-used reference works to which we have stable access through CRL
- Outdated professional directories and catalogs that are available in other ways
- Bibliographers may give additional consideration to material received as gifts, provided that the material itself continues to be of value to our community of users. For more information regarding gifts-in-kind (donated books) please see http://library.wustl.edu/alumnifriends/inkind.html.
- Physical condition (brittle, damaged, etc.) or format makes it unusable (e.g., some VHS tapes)

In addition to meeting one or more of the criteria above, the items identified for de-accession **must** meet the following:

- Low use items
- Readily available at other libraries with which we have a partnership, including libraries with which we have borrowing arrangements, such as MOBIUS, GWLA or SHARES.[7]

Items that will not be eligible for de-accessioning:

- Any original work printed before 1900 (not reprints) and rare or unique newer items—will be reviewed by the librarians[8]
- Items that are not held by many libraries

- Items authored by Washington University faculty members
- Seminal works in the field
- Gift items that we have agreed to hold in perpetuity, although this occurrence would be very rare. The Libraries' Gift Policy clearly states that the Libraries' will make decisions regarding retention, use and disposition of gifts.
- As materials in Special Collections require additional consideration for acquisition and disposal, this document is not meant to include those collections.

Addenda

[1] There are financial implications for print storage. The average cost to maintain one volume on the open shelf is $4.26 per year.
Source: Courant, Paul and Matthew Nielsen, "On the Cost of Keeping a Book", *The Idea of Order: Transforming Research Collections for 21st Century Scholarship*. CLIR Pub#147. June 2010; Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

[2] Since July 2012 and by July 2014, the Libraries have acquired or repurposed more than 3.4 million dollars for new materials.

[3] The Libraries will have a clear and open communication plan when items are being de-accessioned and will work with subject librarians who will facilitate the process.

[4] The Washington University Community—faculty, students, staff, departments, student union, dormitories, etc.—are welcome to take any de-accessioned items. The Libraries will not be responsible for distributing de-accessioned items beyond what is outlined in the guidelines.

[5] Digital and print formats are not always identical. The Libraries will acquire items solely in a digital format only when there is no loss of content.

[6] The Libraries does not solely use circulation statistics to determine low use items. Librarians are aware that standards of what constitutes "low use" vary widely between disciplines. Under no circumstances will low use in itself be used as grounds for de-accession.

[7] The Libraries already has and is developing more relationships to ensure the availability of library materials. The Libraries is a member of WEST, has borrowing arrangements with MOBIUS, GWLA, and SHARES, and is engaging in conversations regarding shared materials with the University of Illinois and Saint Louis University, specifically. The directors of ARL libraries are engaged in discussions about additional formal ways to safeguard copies of library materials. Generally speaking, the Libraries are comfortable with de-accessioning a book that 15 to 25 other libraries own, depending on how accessible we deem it should be. All large research libraries use a similar criterion, we rely on each other, so we are confident that copies will be kept and available.

[8] Experts in Special Collections originally recommended 1860 because items printed before then are truly rare and generally valuable. Date changed to 1880 to include Coolidge collection books (Jefferson). After 1860, printing technology changed significantly making mass production easier; consequently fewer books are rare. The Libraries prefer a fixed date for this review, and this date (1900) will continue to be reviewed.