

Stony Brook University Senate Library Services Committee
Minutes
September 10, 2009

Present: (in alphabetical order) Hongshik Ahn, Bushra Butt, Floris Cash, Bill Godfrey, Fiona Grady, Julitta Jo, Steve Koch, Lindsey Levitan, Judy Lochhead, Wolfgang Quitschke, Robert Shrock (Chair), F. Jason Torre, Lin-shu Wang

Special Guests: Provost Eric Kaler and Andrew White (Director, HSC Library)

Absent: Jay Bock (HSC), Mathew Aiello-Lammens (graduate student), Ashley Reji (undergraduate)

Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Overview of External Library Review by Provost Eric Kaler
3. Report on library activities, submitted in written form by Chris Filstrup, Dean & Director of University Libraries

The meeting started at 10 AM in the Senate Committee Meeting Room, Rm. 126, Psychology Building B.

1. Introductions

Welcome Back:

The meeting was opened by Committee Chair, Prof. Bob Shrock. He welcomed back all the past members and extended his appreciation and welcome to the new committee members. A special welcome was extended to Dr. Eric Kaler, Provost and Special Guest. After the general welcome, all members introduced themselves, stating their names and departments.

Committee Charge and Meeting Procedures

Prof. Shrock reviewed the committee charge and responsibilities. The official charge is that the committee “shall advise on all aspects of libraries and advise the appropriate administrators on the operation of the campus bookstores.” He explained that the committee had previously requested that their charge be augmented, following the suggestion of Dean Filstrup, to include advocacy for the library. The Senate President at that time, Prof. Bernard Lane, had responded that he would keep the official charge as it had been, with no change, but would allow the committee to augment its charge informally. In accordance with this expanded charge, the committee had submitted requests for increased funding for the library during the past two years. The decision to maintain the official committee charge was maintained by the new Senate President, Prof. Michael Schwartz, who continued to emphasize, as Prof. Bernard Lane had before, the oversight aspect of the committee.

Prof. Shrock also mentioned that in the late spring and again during the summer, the Senate Executive Council and President Schwartz had stated that this committee, like other Senate committees, should (a) normally meet in the location officially designated for such meetings, namely Rm. 126 of the Psychology B Building and (b) often meet “in camera”, i.e., privately, without the presence of the head of the unit that the committee oversees. Part of the reason for holding meetings in the Library Director's Conference Room was the excellent projection equipment there, and the Executive Council stated that it expected that such projection equipment would soon be installed in Rm. 126. Regarding item (b), the Executive Council felt that the committee's oversight responsibilities meant that it was appropriate, in the interest of candid discussions, to meet often in the official Senate committee meeting room. The Executive Council did state that it would also be appropriate for the committee to meet sometimes with the leadership of the

Melville Library present, and that this Council expected to issue a more official set of guidelines concerning this issue for all Senate oversight committees at a later date.

Collection Development Situation:

Next, Prof. Shrock reviewed some of the issues that the committee had been dealing with during the 2008-2009 academic year. He outlined the problems caused by the increasing need for more funds to address all aspects of the collection development budget and noted that, in particular, the committee had been concerned with the need for additional resources to purchase research materials still only available in the traditional analog (paper) format. He emphasized this issue by referring to a memo sent by Helene Volat, Full Librarian, on behalf of some of the Library Selectors, in which the Librarians were concerned that they would not be able to adequately provide the support needed to facilitate proper instruction across the all disciplines.

Overview of External Library Review by Provost Eric Kaler:

The next item on the agenda was the address to the committee by Provost Eric Kaler. The Provost stated that he had maintained funding for the library (“held the library as harmless as possible” in his words) since coming to Stony Brook, and that he had also been as generous as possible in such funding as the current financial situation within the University and SUNY system could allow, but that the committee could not expect any increase in funding for the library. Instead, he was now focusing his energies on funding sensible and logical solutions to make better use of the limited funds available for the library. Two ways in which he felt the problems could partially be addressed were in the areas of (i) better management of resources, including elimination of duplicate services, and (ii) identifying and meeting Stony Brook University’s unique research needs with the possible elimination of extraneous resources. He invited the committee to be part of this effort in the future. He went on to explain that this was a major reason for his bringing in the independent, external consultants to review the SBU Melville Library. The charge to the external review committee was officially stated as being the following:

- 1. Evaluation of the organization and management of the library.*
- 2. Benchmarking of resources and their allocation, particularly in regards to print vs. electronic resources.*
- 3. Commenting on the relationship between Melville and the HSC library.*

The members of the external review committee are

*Susan Brynteson (Chair)
Vice Provost and May Morris Director of Libraries
University of Delaware Library*

*Anne Kenney
Carl A. Kroch University Librarian
Cornell University Library*

*Brinley Franklin
Vice Provost, University Libraries
University of Connecticut Libraries*

*James Neal
Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian
Columbia University*

This external review committee will arrive Sept. 27 and be at the university on Mon. Sept. 28 and Tue. Sept. 29. Provost Kaler said that he realized that Mon. Sept. 28 is a holiday (Yom Kippur) but this was the only time when the external review committee could come, given the general time constraints for the review. Our committee is scheduled to meet with the external review committee on Monday. He further explained the details of the meeting, reviewing the above charge and explaining that some of the details were still being worked out with the assistance of Chris Filstrup and others in the library. The report would be due three weeks from the reviewer's departure, and content from it would be made available to the committee. The Provost went on to explain that there would also be an oral, exit summary report given to him personally on Tuesday before the group's departure, but that only some of that would be made available to our committee. He closed by sharing his experience-based opinion that scholarly publishing was changing and that as the university press system was changing with it. In particular, university presses are less likely to publish faculty members' monographs in the conventional manner, as books, and hence universities will need to reassess tenure requirements such as publication of books.

The Provost then took questions. We list these below, with summaries of the answers.

Q1: When will the reviewers' schedule be set and will our committee get substantial time to meet the reviewers? The answer was that the schedule was still being finalized, but our committee should get adequate time to meet with the reviewers.

Q2: Will the reviewers visit the Health Science Library? The answer to this was that it was an interesting idea but the group had some time constraints and it was unlikely.

Q3: The question of resource sharing with BNL, as outlined in Dean Filstrup's report, was raised. Provost Kaler responded that the concept of resource sharing with the BNL was his idea, and came from his belief that a significant cost saving could be obtained for the two institutions, SBU and BNL, by pooling resources. He went on to explain that the details were still being worked out and there were some complications being encountered.

It was then pointed out that, with regard to the evolution of scholarly publishing, there is still a substantial amount of material that is only available in paper format and that in some disciplines, the paper format is the sole package for this needed information, such as musical scores. Provost Kaler agreed with this statement and stated his feeling that our committee would be in a good position to assist in the assessment of collection development needs for the campus. This will be a point to be addressed further after the external review.

Another committee member pointed out our university library services such as ILL (interlibrary loan) do cost money even when dealing with other SUNY libraries, and asked how such obstacles would be dealt with. Provost Kaler responded that when he is faced with problems, he prioritizes, and then makes his decision, and it would be up to library leadership to do the same in all areas under them.

The discussion continued, touching further upon such areas as the current "in-sourcing" model being used in the library, where the technical aspects of other libraries are completed by our SBU Library. Additionally, the group talked about a possibly more effective collective bargaining method whereby New York State might join with other state universities to obtain better prices in negotiating with publishers for the purchase of scholarly journals and other content. The response was that this is difficult, but it is an area to explore in the future, and will require legal advice as to what is possible.

At approximately 10:30AM, Provost Kaler thanked the group and departed.

The discussion about electronic resources service providers continued with a comment by Andrew White about private universities that have terminated their dealings with some larger publishers. Cornell University is one of these; see <http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/resolution2.htm>

Library Dean & Director's Report

The following report was sent to committee chair, Bob Shrock, by Chris Filstrup, and reads as follows (the committee discussion comments on each point are highlighted in bold):

This is an update on library activities over the summer.

1. We brought up a new version of the online cataloging system, the first in the nation to do this.

Library representatives from Melville Library explained when asked that this point referred to the Library migrating to version 20 of the online system, the first in the nation to do so. HSL members pointed out that they were still on a version 18 and would not be moving forward at this time as the system did not offer significant changes for their users. The discussion proceeded with an explanation of the 'hosted' vs. 'direct' catalog model. It was also explained that SUNY manages catalogs for many of the college campuses and is still working on the larger catalog migrations and updates, deciding to upgrade only to even number versions; the Melville Library is using an older version as well to deal with its in sourcing work.

2. The SUNY negotiating team of which I (Chris Filstrup) am the chair met several times with Elsevier. We are close to an agreement. The key components are: 1) a five year inflation sequence of 2-4-5-5-5%; Elsevier's initial offer was the same as the current license -- 5% per year for five years; each percentage point is worth about \$70K to the SUNY system. 2) SUNY Central is contributing \$930K/year to the license; this should be sufficient to keep all 59 campuses in the new license. How this subvention is distributed among the individual campuses and will it reduce our significant increase (c. \$440K/yr) is the next negotiation.

The committee reviewed this point with the assistance of HSL advisory team members who reviewed the past licensing costs under the previous license, and asked for further information on the Cornell decision (see above link). It was pointed out that it was the SUNY center Provosts who previously had said that the centers could not walk away from the table when the ceiling price hit in spite of the consensus by other campuses on the strategy.

3. As part of an overall strategy to move technical services such as cataloging from the smaller, two-year campuses to the Center libraries, the library has signed a contract with Fulton Montgomery County Community College to catalog their materials for them. This work will be done on a server which hosts FMCCC's catalog. Binghamton and Buffalo have similar arrangements with smaller SUNY libraries.

Several committee members discussed the extra work that this new initiative might be adding to the existing backlog of work that catalogers already had within Melville Library. Discussion on this point ensued with committee members voicing increased concern over the lack of funding and the possible personnel issues involved in this decision.

4. Technology Learning Teaching (TLT) invested about \$100K in high tech collaborative furniture and equipment at the north end of the second floor

of the Science and Engineering Library. It's a pilot to assist group learning.

5. Janet Clarke is leading a multi-university effort to design a library for the proposed SBU campus in Korea.

The question was posed as to why such an endeavor was being undertaken and if this would affect the work flow and resources to the SBU Libraries as a whole. No answer was available but it was pointed out that this is part of a larger multi-university initiative and that the planning and funding were coming from various involved partners. A final plan would be forthcoming.

6. The new library at Southampton, though lacking some furniture and equipment, opened on schedule. As soon as we make some hires, it will be open almost as many hours as the main library. We received a gift of \$100K for collections there, and we expect another \$200-300K to accept and catalog a large library that used to belong to the poet H.D. (Hilda Doolittle).

7. The BNL library consolidation is on hold until BNL restarts the initiative. The recent influx of federal funding seems to have tempered their interest. BNL scientists will be added to SBU personnel rolls on a person-by-person basis, not en masse. The numbers will be few enough that they will not affect our electronic content licenses.

See Provost's comments above.

The committee affirmed that it should see any documentation that was given to the external reviewers, and that all members would do their best to participate in the planned session with the reviewers. It was also further explained that the planning was being done by a number of parties, all of whom were being allowed to make suggestions, making the process both open and fair. An action item is then to obtain copies of this documentation. (This was done subsequently.) Also, subsequent to the committee meeting, the time of our meeting with the external review committee was set; it is 12:45 PM to 2 PM on Sept. 28, in the Library Director's Conference Room, W-1503.

The committee meeting adjourned at approximately 11:20AM. These meeting minutes were taken by Jason Torre, with minor editing by the Chair, Bob Shrock.