

Minutes of the University Senate Library Committee Meeting on 10/14//2010

Members Present: (in alphabetical order) Hongshik Ahn, Bushra Butt, Bill Godfrey, Julitta Jo, Steve Koch, Lindsey Levitan, Gavin Mann (new undergraduate student representative), Bob Shrock (Chairperson), Jason Torre

Members Absent: Jay Bock, Floris Cash (on sabbatical), Fiona Grady, Judy Lochhead, Lin-Shu Wang, Helen Jolly (graduate student member)

The meeting began by approving the minutes from the Sept. 16, 2010 meeting.

Jason Torre kindly responded to a request by the chairman to present a brief report on the status of the library, and Bushra Butt gave additional related information. Concerning new appointments filling vacancies, Aimee de Chambeau has been appointed as the new Science/Engineering Librarian, replacing Godlind Johnson, who had retired. Janet Clarke has been appointed to the position of Associate Director for Research and Instructional Services. Darren Chase, who was both Southampton librarian and webmaster while he was at Stony Brook Southampton, has now been assigned to the full duties of webmaster and associated responsibilities. There have been six retirements of library staff. Dan Kinney is now in charge of cataloguing. Concern was voiced by several of the library staff about the status of the search for a new Dean and Director of the Library. They stated that it is not clear what the status of this is, and this is one issue that is affecting morale in the library. Another issue pertains to the fact that library staff members are being assigned increased responsibilities, sometimes extending across several areas of library functions. Bushra Butt noted that the groups responsible for writing new policies and procedures for the library are making good progress on this task. Bill Godfrey raised again the question of what the status is of the new faculty advisory committee appointed by Andrew White and chaired by Prof. Peter Manning. Both library staff and other committee members present at our meeting affirmed that the present situation, in which for about two years the library has not been able to purchase new books except those needed for reserve access for courses, is unacceptable for a library of a major research university such as Stony Brook University.

The discussion then proceeded to the subject of possible cuts in journal subscriptions due to budget restrictions. Dean White had stated in his report to our September 16 meeting that in spite of the fact that «the President and Provost have each committed \$500 K additional to the Library's non-personnel state funds»... «Current analysis of the budget and recurring costs indicates that title cancellations will still be necessary». Shortly after that meeting, Dean White sent a memo to the heads of departments asking them to discuss with their departmental faculty and, from this discussion, name ten journals that were of greatest importance to their departments, with the understanding that the rest were subject to review and possible cuts. The format of this memo was different from previous requests during the past several years that departments prioritize journals in such a manner as to cut a specific dollar amount, typically \$50 K, which the departments had done. In response to this memo, a letter was sent to Provost Kaler expressing deep concern with this procedure. This letter was written and signed by the heads of the

Physics/Astronomy, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Geosciences Departments and by the Dean of the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. The full contents of this letter have not been made public. However, general discussion in the departments indicated that although the science, math, and engineering departments realized that some redistribution in funds to the humanities was understandable, the department heads raised an objection to the formula that was used in assessing journal costs, namely the fact that it did not take into account the grant money raised by these science, math, and engineering departments. They also emphasized the necessity of journal subscriptions to maintain the research that produced this grant money. We understand that this matter is currently under further discussion and will monitor it as it develops.

In closing, our committee expresses our own concern about this situation with journals and about the fact that it has not been possible for about two years to purchase new books for the library, except those directly needed for reserve access in courses. As requested by Jason Torre and library staff, we also express our hope that the search for the new Dean and Director will proceed in a timely manner, since the current situation leads to significant uncertainties among the library staff.

These notes were taken by the committee chairman, Prof. Shrock and the notes on the library report were checked by Jason Torre.