

University Library Committee
Minutes
October 22, 1997

PRESENT:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine
Lance Matheson, Business
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Raymond Plaut, Engineering
Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni, Art and Architecture
Tara Berescik, SGA
Guest: Don Kenney, Library

ABSENT:

Thomas Gatewood, Education
Richard Helm, Forestry & Wildlife

S. Donohue, chair, opened the meeting with a round of introductions for new members. He followed with a summary of the committee's activities of the previous year: 1) Studied and made recommendation to modify circulation policy requiring physical return of books at 6 months; 2) Reviewed library budget in relation to library serials cancellation, drafting a letter to the university administration expressing great concern the effect that serials reduction would have on the library; 3) Reviewed the fines policy and with feedback from faculty in colleges made a recommendation that the library fine all borrowers who fail to respond to a recall request for the return of materials. He added that Dean Hitchingham had proceeded with the purchase and installation of bookdrop boxes on the campus based on discussions by the committee to find ways to facilitate return of books and other materials to the library.

E. Hitchingham commented on some of the preliminary observations resulting from the change in the circulation policy. Renewals have been cut in half as one could expect. If these materials were also all needed, one would expect to see circulation increase as patrons would bring the books back and recharge them. Circulation has not gone up correspondingly. She would like to see further statistics through February, 1998, and have the committee revisit the circulation policy at that time.

E. Hitchingham briefed the committee on the status of the serials cancellation. The process took place with good participation of the university community and resulted in \$665,000 worth of serials targeted for cutting, effective January 1998.

The fines policy on recalls had gone through the University Council, with the unanimously approved resolution distributed in a memorandum by Dr. Torgersen in May. E. Hitchingham noted that during the summer the library determined how to track this activity, with implementation of the policy starting in October, 1997. There is very little data at this point to evaluate the results. This will be brought forth at a future meeting.

E. Hitchingham distributed a set of handouts related to the newly formed Library Materials Advisory Committee. She noted that this committee was formed by Erv Blythe, VP for Information Systems, to address the concerns raised by various committees, including the ULC, about the library budget. The committee is widely represented across campus and will address three overall issues: 1) To make a six year recommendation for some level of funding that's appropriate for the libraries in the university context over the next six years; 2) To make recommendations regarding the allocations

for library resources for traditional and digital materials, to look at our extended campus needs; and 3) To review the process for cancelling serials.

The committee will need to complete its work by December or January in order to provide the budget status necessary for determining if another round of serials cancellations should be considered.

(handouts) Virginia Tech's library funding over the past ten years was examined in comparison with our peer institutions. It was noted that other than Colorado State, all the institutions that were funded less than Virginia Tech in 85/86 had moved ahead of Virginia Tech by 95/96. E. Hitchingham projected that current figures would probably put us at the bottom of funding among our peers. She added that she didn't know of another library that had no increase for a three year period, and which actually has a half million dollars less than it had four years ago.

There were questions and discussion about how university budgetary priorities are established. Funding for the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA), the zero sum environment, and the role of Virginia Tech's library as a major lender in the state were seen as confounding issues. Committee members will review the rest of the handout for continued discussion at the next meeting.

D. Mayo raised a question as to the procedure that will be used to review the circulation policy, insuring that input is heard. S. Baehr requested that the committee consider setting aside some time during the meetings to present comments received from the colleges. S. Donohue will bring these questions forth on the next agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting will be November 12, at 3:00 p.m. in the boardroom.

University Library Committee
Minutes
November 12, 1997

PRESENT:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Raymond Plaut, Engineering
Humberto-Camilloni, Art and Architecture
Tara Berescik, SGA
Milko Maykowskyj, Staff Senate

ABSENT:

Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine
Lance Matheson, Business
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Thomas Gatewood, Education
Richard Helm, forestry & Wildlife

S. Donohue called the meeting to begin at 3:00 p.m. The minutes from the 10/22/97 meeting were approved as submitted. Future minutes will be approved electronically, with no response implying approval.

Governance structure

E. Hitchingham distributed handouts outlining the governance structure of the University Library Committee as it reports to three commissions: Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies, Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and (less formally) the Commission on Research. She explained that the commissions are the resolution-raising bodies that report to the University Council which ultimately reports to the President and the Board of Trustees. The library committee charge was reviewed, and it was noted that the ULC is the only committee that reports to two commissions. S. Baehr suggested that the committee might want to consider including a representative from the library faculty association on the ULC.

E. Hitchingham noted that library faculty members are representatives on the commissions.

Circulation (Renewal) policy

A question was raised at the 10/22/97 meeting as to whether the ULC would have input into review of the circulation policy that was instituted last February, 1997, requiring physical return of books at 180 days. E. Hitchingham reviewed the history and intent of the policy as an encouragement to have more resources accessible and browsable to other members of the university community. She noted that anecdotally, both positive and negative responses have been received. S. Baehr explained how the policy hinders research methods in the humanities where 70-100 books are often checked out over long periods of time. He had distributed letters from faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences expressing similar complaints. G. Graham asked what kind of process was planned for evaluating the effect of the new policy. E. Hitchingham will be looking at changes in the circulation patterns as well as subjective data including anecdotal remarks from faculty. A review is planned at the end of the policy's first year, February 1998.

E. Hitchingham distributed a copy of a response she had written to a faculty member who had expressed dissatisfaction with the renewal policy. One of the suggestions in the letter addressed the difficulty of bringing back large numbers of books. Books can be returned to any of the library branches - Geology, Art & Architecture and Veterinary Medicine. Parking at

the Veterinary Medicine library may be easier than at Newman, and assistance bringing in the books may be arranged prior to coming (contact Vicki Kok, head of that library). S. Donohue indicated that further discussion about the renewal policy would be planned as February approaches.

Comments from Colleges

R. Plaut addressed a problem that he (and others) have had with the copiers in the library. In the past, there were at least two copiers that had variable reduction capacity. The current copiers can only reduce to 65 or 70%, which makes the print too small for comfortable reading. He added that it would be helpful if the copy service could make color copies, even if it meant a substantial charge. Some of the graphic data in publications are color coded, which makes color copy necessary for interpretation. Many of these publications are also not circulated. E. Hitchingham will look into these issues, but noted that the copy service in the library is an auxiliary, budgeted with its own cost recovery system, apart from the library resources budget.

B. Fox expressed a concern about electronic resources and the serials review process. He notes that while the electronic resources are wonderful, many of them do not have full text of articles, which means you still need to have the journal sitting in the library or available through ILL. E. Hitchingham indicated that the Library Materials Advisory Committee will be looking at this issue as well as the fact that in many cases electronic versions are not cheaper than paper copies. B. Fox also expressed concern that the next round of serial cuts would affect materials that faculty said (in the last round of cuts) that they really needed. E. Hitchingham commented that a different process for review may be considered, taking into consideration both the current holdings and what may be really wanted. The committee is still working on these issues. Another serials review will be upcoming, however, unless there is more money.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next meeting of the ULC will be Wednesday, December 17, 3:00 p.m. in the library boardroom.

University Library Committee
Minutes
December 15, 1997

PRESENT:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine
Lance Matheson, Business
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Milko Maykowskyj, Staff Senate
Raymond Plaut, Engineering

ABSENT:

Tara Berescik, SGA
Thomas Gatewood, Education
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Richard Helm, Forestry & Wildlife
Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni, Art and Architecture

1. Update on Computer Assisted Searches

A demonstration of resources available through the library web page was given to ULC members by Nicole Auer, coordinator of bibliographic instruction. Menus were shown which offer various services and databases providing search options for new users and experienced users. It was pointed out that many of the search features are the same across services so that there is flexibility when switching between databases. The college librarians have created guides by subject which link to library resources and internet resources. It was also noted that there are about 1100 journals that provide full text online. N. Auer added that the library web team is working on a service whereby students can seek by subject a listing of journals available online. The library web page also has a link to reference resources which include style manuals (APA, MLA) and encyclopedias such as Britannica. E. Hitchingham noted the importance of having off-campus students obtain an active and valid PID for remote access to the library's web page and services.

2. Comments from College Representatives

S. Baehr made reference to a memo he had distributed noting comments of dissatisfaction from his colleagues about the circulation policy allowing one phone renewal before physical return of materials. He relayed a question regarding the handling of interlibrary loan requests for items already owned by the library. E. Hitchingham noted that ILL's policy is to respond to the patron immediately by e-mail in such circumstances about that status. She added that about 12 % of ILL requests are for materials already owned by the library and encouraged everyone to check the VTLS catalog before submitting requests. Special circumstances can be indicated on the comments part of the form.

D. Mayo relayed responses from faculty who felt inconvenienced by the renewal policy, with specific reference to the library's practice of blocking further check-outs when there are overdue books. E. Hitchingham indicated that the VTLS system cannot accommodate exceptions, but that faculty members who anticipate a problem with a missing book among many being returned can call Debbie Averhart, head of circulation, to work out a solution. It was also noted that after obtaining a library PIN number, anyone can view on computer a list of the books they have checked out along with due dates. A copy of this procedure will be distributed at the next ULC meeting.

B. Fox, GSA representative, relayed complaints forwarded to him regarding the copiers in the library. Most of these complaints referred either to maintenance problems (paper jams, out of order) or poor quality of copies. D. Kenney noted that photocopy in the library is an auxiliary with its own maintenance contract. The library photocopy staff have a circuit on a regular schedule when they walk around to check for paper jams or paper supply, but they can't do maintenance otherwise. E. Hitchingham indicated that some spot checking could be done to assess the magnitude of the problem and seek possible solutions.

ULC members were asked to send E. Hitchingham their spring schedules so that the next meeting could be planned. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

University Library Committee
February 11, 1998
Minutes

PRESENT:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni, Art and Architecture
Lance Matheson, Business
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Milko Maykowskyj, Staff Senate
Raymond Plaut, Engineering

ABSENT:

Tara Berescik, SGA
Thomas Gatewood, Education
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine

GUESTS:

Debbie Averhart, Library
Mark Robertson, Library

1. Renewal Policy

S. Donohue brought the meeting to order and introduced the first agenda item, review of the renewal (circulation) policy as it pertained to faculty and graduate students. He noted that it has been one year since the new policy was instituted, and that E. Hitchingham would present some statistics reflecting circulation activity during that time period.

E. Hitchingham distributed several graphs and briefly reviewed that the old policy was a 90 day loan period with 4 possible renewals (or effectively 470 days before physical return necessary) and the new policy was a 90 day loan period with one possible renewal (or effectively 180 days before physical return).

One graph compared the number of renewals during the July-January of 96/97 (reflecting old policy) and the number of renewals during the July-January of 97/98 (reflecting the new policy in effect). Predictably there was a drop in renewals with the new policy in effect (by about almost 40%). The other graph compared the two time frames in terms of circulation rates. Circulation rates for faculty in 97/98 indicated a slight increase over those in 96/97 with a slight decrease in graduate student rates. E. Hitchingham noted that a lack of rise in new checkouts by faculty might indicate that items returned were not wanted enough to recharge them out again, by either a great number of faculty or graduate students. Such items might previously under the old policy been held out over the 470 days due to the inertia of multiple renewals. Undergraduate circulation had increased by about 18%. One ULC member commented that the increase in circulation by undergraduates may be related to the decrease in renewals.

During discussion several ULC members indicated that these figures were not persuasive to them in terms of the benefits or liabilities of the new policy, and that they would like to see more input, especially from faculty. S. Baehr noted that in response to a recent question he posed to faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences regarding the new circulation policy, the majority of responding humanities, social science, and pure science faculty seem to be in agreement that the new policy is too restrictive.

D. Averhart gave a demonstration of the library PIN, whereby one can get a listing of books personally checked out and their due dates. Once

connected to VTLS, either from home, office or one of the machines in the library, the use of one's social security number and PIN (personal identification number obtained at Circulation) bring up the list.

L. Matheson commented on the past process involved in the original decision to change the renewal policy. Committee members went back to their colleges, polled faculty and brought back the responses. The vast majority indicated that there was good cause to change the policy and the committee made its recommendations from that. D. Mayo and S. Baehr commented that they had not been contacted by their representative from the College of Arts and Sciences during the original polling process and heard about the policy after it had been enacted. D. Mayo noted that the Faculty Senate has been opposed to the policy.

E. Hitchingham distributed statistics gathered from the libraries of Virginia Tech's "peer" institutions showing the number of days before physical return of books is necessary. She noted that the change in the renewal policy started as a resource issue, to make resources more accessible to other people. She also pointed out that Virginia Tech has fewer books than many of the peer institutions with more liberal loan periods.

Following discussion, it was proposed that a new question be posed to faculty to determine the desirability of a middle position between the old and new policy. S. Donohue will work with E. Hitchingham to draft the question. This will be distributed to ULC members for comment before proceeding with the college polls. The process for polling will be determined after the question is formulated.

2. Copiers

M. Robertson, Manager of the Auxiliary Services in the library, briefed ULC members on his attempts to improve the service and quality of the copiers in the library. This summer phones were installed next to the copiers so users could call his office directly for assistance with a problem. Most of the problems can be cleared with in a few minutes and the phones have helped to keep the up-time of the machines to around 97%. However, this fall Mark noticed a real decline in the quality of copies from all the copiers. He has been in communication with the OCE representatives (the manufacturers) and has been promised improved maintenance and quality within 45 days of their letter of January 23, 1998.

3. Comments

H. Rodriguez-Camilloni expressed concern about the Art and Architecture library budget for book purchases. He noted that the library had depleted its budget as of November 1997 for the whole fiscal year. E. Hitchingham related this to the fact that no new money has been allotted the University Libraries for four years. She noted that books will continue to come in on the approval plan, but the more flexible dollars were spent and encumbered quicker. She added that Virginia Tech is the only library that now has operating funding that is 8% less than it was four years ago.

S. Donohue adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 25, 1998, 4:00 p.m. in the library boardroom.

University Library Committee
Wednesday, March 25, 1998
Minutes

Present:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine
Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni, Art and Architecture
Lance Matheson, Business
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Milko Maykowskyj, Staff Senate
Raymond Plaut, Engineering
Mechelle Haga for T. Berescik, SGA

ABSENT:

Thomas Gatewood, Education

Discussion of library renewal policy and questionnaire

S. Donohue noted that ULC members had returned their votes to him on their recommendations for survey content as suggested at the last meeting. The survey questionnaire will consist of a basic statement about the intent of the university committee, a stating of the old renewal policy and the current one, followed by options to consider and choose from: a) keep current policy, b) extend current policy by an additional 90-day renewal by phone, or c) extend current policy by two additional 90-day renewals by phone. S. Donohue noted that a number of members had wanted to make sure that the persons filling out the survey know that the current policy allows for one 90-day renewal for faculty and graduate students before the item needs to be physically returned to the library.

R. Plaut noted that there should be some indication in the stating of the options that a book can be re-checked out upon its physical return to the library, enabling the user to continue to have the book. There was discussion about the need to include a consistent statement of background information and an area for additional comments. Also discussed was the possibility of asking for impact of current policy on research and teaching.

There was discussion about which groups of patrons would receive the survey. It was decided that ULC members who are representatives of their colleges will poll their respective faculty and B. Fox will put it out on the GSA listserv (for graduate students). M. Maykowskyj will create a web-page, pointing the staff senators to the URL and letting them alert their constituency to use the site to participate in the survey. Undergraduates will not be polled. The committee decided to assume that undergraduates would want the shortest policy possible for most availability of books.

ULC members decided to compile comments from the survey, categorize them and bring those to the next meeting for possible discussion. L. Matheson noted that during the examination of the survey results the committee will need to be aware of how their various constituents use the library. For example, faculty in arts and sciences are more likely to be using many books over a long period of time, whereas faculty in business are not. S. Donohue noted that the results of the survey will not be used as an end-line vote; open discussion will lead to a recommendation to be given to the Dean of Libraries.

D. Mayo reported on discussions about the renewal policy held at the recent Faculty Senate. A vote had been taken between the option of keeping the

current policy or extending the period before physical return of materials to one year. There were two votes in favor of current policy and the rest in favor of extending the period. D. Mayo noted that the occurrence of book weeding and recycling was brought up by some members of the senate and seen as a confounding issue in light of the stated intention of the renewal policy to make more books available. E. Hitchingham commented that the issues were of a different nature. Weeding is an ongoing function of the library to remove materials and duplicates (often to storage) that haven't been circulated for a long time while making room for new acquisitions. The renewal policy was to bring back materials that might be wanted by students or other faculty. While recall is noted as a solution, there was a counter argument that recall places the burden upon the patron to initiate the process. The patron is also not finding what they might potentially want on the shelves.

S. Donohue noted that during this meeting several committee members had mentioned concerns about the blocking aspect of the circulation policy. This may be an issue to be discussed in the next academic year.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.; the next meeting will be Wednesday, April 22 at 4:00 p.m.

University Library Committee
Wednesday, April 22, 1998
Minutes

Present:

Stephen Donohue, Agriculture & Life Sciences, Chair
Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Stephen Baehr, Arts and Sciences
Bert Fox, GSA
George Graham, Teaching and Learning
Richard Helm, Forestry and Wildlife
Karen Inzana, Veterinary Medicine
Humberto Rodriguez-Camilloni, Art and Architecture
Deborah Mayo, Faculty Senate
Milko Maykowskyj, Staff Senate
Raymond Plaut, Engineering

ABSENT:

Thomas Gatewood, Education
Lance Matheson, Business

Guests:

Paul Metz, Library
Donald Kenney, Library

1. Serial cancellation process

E. Hitchingham noted that faculty have been asked to review a list of materials for possible cancellation before the end of May. She explained that this timetable is needed because we do not know what the budget will be next year and the subscription centers will need to be notified by September if the cancellations prove necessary. There is concurrently a recommendation by the Library Serials Committee for adding more than a million dollars to the library base budget to support serials, equipment and a digital library initiative. E. Hitchingham noted that many faculty members have expressed concern about this latest round of cancellations and have asked what they can do. She indicated that communications to administration would be helpful, especially if specific impacts on research or teaching are noted.

Paul Metz, head of collection development and principal bibliographer, was present to answer questions about the cancellation process. He noted that two major factors are behind the continued dilemma: serials inflation running 10 1/2% a year along with an essentially flat budget. S. Baehr commented on his observation that this latest round of nominees for cancellation included first rate, major journals. P. Metz agreed that these were very serious potential cuts. D. Mayo asked if the recent purchases of large databases had contributed to the need for this latest cancellation. P. Metz explained that the purchase of Web of Science involved a one-time cost of \$100,000 and a net recurring cost of \$20,000 after Current Contents IS are cancelled, (it subsumes the features of Current Contents IS). Most of our other electronic databases at this point are paid for by VIVA.

S. Baehr suggested that the University Library Committee, as representatives of faculty, write a letter to President Torgersen and to Provost Meszaros requesting that they strongly consider the necessity of increasing the library budget. The committee agreed on this motion, and S. Donohue offered to help S. Baehr develop the letter.

2. Library Book Renewal Survey

S. Donohue distributed a table showing the results of faculty voting from seven colleges. Results from the library faculty, Staff Association, Graduate Student Association and College of Architecture were shared

orally. Of the persons who voted from each college or group, choice A had the majority of votes. Choice A was to keep the new (current) policy, a 90 day loan with one 90-day renewal by phone before physically taking books to a library for return or renewal. The vote count in Arts and Sciences was 48 for A, 24 for B and 56 for C, indicating that the majority in that college wished for some extension of the policy. S. Donohue summarized the overall vote count that roughly 75% of the people like the current policy but 25% want something longer. (See Table appended to minutes)

Committee members proceeded to share the general nature of the comments that accompanied the survey votes. Most comments in all groups or colleges were in support of option A. Some of the comments from Arts and Sciences in favor of extended renewal were shared and discussed. S. Baehr made the observation that in the Arts and Sciences, the number of professors who commented in favor of extending the renewal periods were greater (25) than those commenting in favor of A (5), a phenomenon possibly related to amount of research responsibility.

B. Fox commented that from the perspective of the graduate students who favor the current policy, it is difficult to get materials back in time when you have to recall them. If an item is not in the library, a student can't look at it or check it out. If it takes two weeks to get a book back through recall and you have two weeks to get a paper done, there's not much point in recall.

ULC members took a vote on how they would make their recommendation to the Dean on the renewal policy. Seven members (one as absentee ballot) voted to keep the policy the same (A), four voted to extend it (B).

A second motion was proposed to vote on choosing option B as a compromise between those who want to keep the policy and those who want extension. Five members voted in favor of selecting B, five members were opposed. Following discussion, a third vote was proposed to select a final recommendation. The final vote was 7 members for A (keeping current policy) and 4 for B (extending to two 90-day renewals by phone). E. Hitchingham indicated that she would maintain the current renewal policy for the next five year period. She thanked the committee for their input and for their cooperative efforts in soliciting information from the university community. S. Donohue thanked the committee for their participation this past year, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Table
Library Book Renewal Survey
April 22, 1998

College	A	B	C
Engineering	37 (78%)	6 (13%)	4 (9%)
Arts & Sci.	48 (38%)	24 (19%)	56 (43%)
Agric.	43 (78%)	7 (13%)	5 (9%)
Human Res. & Ed.	32 (76%)	8 (19%)	2 (5%)
For. & Wildlife	13 (93%)	1 (7%)	0
Vet. Med.	35 (74%)	8 (17%)	4 (9%)
Business	23 (72%)	6 (19%)	3 (9%)
Arch.	11 (55%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)
Staff	29 (91%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)
Library	5 (46%)	3 (27%)	3 (27%)
Grad. Students	64 (60%)	27 (25%)	16 (15%)