

University Library Committee
Minutes
October 26, 2000

Present:

Ansar Ahmed, Veterinary Medicine, Chair

Eileen Hitchingham, Library

Paul Colley, Staff Senate

Richard Helm, Natural Resources

Deborah Milly, Arts and Sciences

Mark Schneider, Architecture and Urban Studies

Anne Zajac, Faculty Senate

Absent: Douglas Patterson, Business, Raymond Plaut, Engineering, Diane Gillespie, Human Resources and Education, Jay Stipes, Agriculture and Life Sciences, Robert Perry, GSA

A new agenda item was added to address the reactions to the editorial that appeared in the Roanoke Times, 10/23/00, about deselection and recycling of materials from the University Libraries' collection. E. Hitchingham noted that Paul Metz, Director of Collection Management, responded and wrote a counter editorial which explained the misleading and ill-researched conclusions in the October 23 column. Criteria for withdrawn books include such considerations as the existence of duplicate copies, physical condition, circulation record and holdings at other libraries. For every volume withdrawn, two are placed in our storage building. E. Hitchingham noted that the library is actually at the end of a methodical five-year deselection process which helped relieve crammed shelves and the prospect of spending more money to build storage. The remote storage building which opened in 1995, costing over 2 million dollars, is already more than two-thirds full.

M. Schneider noted that there are two dimensions to this issue: 1) preservation and 2) the public perception about how the discards are handled. E. Hitchingham noted that efforts are made and have been successful to find homes for books, though usually at the expense of the library to provide shipping costs.

Anne Zajac asked about the possibility of periodically circulating to faculty a list of books to be discarded, to allow purchase without a booksale. E. Hitchingham said that she would pass the suggestion on to Paul Metz, but that this process would still be labor intensive and was not clear whether it could be done based on surplussing practices. Also, given that the weeding project is nearing its end, there will be fewer discards. D. Milly expressed concern that materials in narrow areas of research with very sporadic circulation will be discarded before materials closer to the measure of mass consumption. She also suggested membership in the Center for Research Libraries to assure access to very specialized materials. E. Hitchingham noted that there is human intervention in the determination of discards and that the college librarians attempt to look out for the faculty interests in their colleges.

The next agenda item addressed the process of informing the university community about rising costs of scholarly communications. E. Hitchingham distributed a draft of a letter that would be part of the faculty/graduate student mailing of the brochure, "Create Change." Following discussion, ULC members agreed to be listed on the final letter and to send suggested changes to the dean by the following week. Since a number of the University Distinguished Professors and the Alumni Distinguished Professors indicated at Dr. Meszaros' luncheon that they would be willing to be listed on a letter, a note of invitation will be sent out as well to the UDP's and ADP's. E. Hitchingham also distributed some recent news articles giving accounts of initiatives in academic publishing which support the Tempe Principles.

The next ULC meeting will be Thursday, November 16 at 4:00 p.m.. Anne Zajac agreed to stand in as chair for Ansar Ahmed.