

University Library Committee
Minutes
April 26, 2001

Present:

Eileen Hitchingham, Library
Ansar Ahmed, Veterinary Medicine, Chair
Fred Baumgartner (for Deborah Milly, Arts and Sciences)
Raymond Plaut, Engineering
Mark Schneider, Architecture and Urban Studies

Absent: Paul Colley, Staff Senate, Diane Gillespie, Human Resources and Education; Richard Helm, Natural Resources, Douglas Patterson, Business; Jay Stipes, Agriculture and Life Sciences, Anne Zajac, Faculty Senate, Robert Perry, GSA

Update on Scholarly Communications

Dean Hitchingham briefed members about the presentations being made to the university community in follow up to the last fall's ULC mailing on trends in scholarly communications. Gail McMillan, Paul Metz and Tim Luke (with his Center for Discourse materials) presented, "New Technology Driven Dynamics in Scientific and Scholarly Communications," to the University Council, the Commission on Research, the Faculty Senate, the Committee on Faculty Affairs, the Committee on Graduate Studies, and the Committee on Undergraduate Studies and Policies. These presentations focused on both the sources of the scholarly communication problems and an upcoming serials cancellation if the library doesn't have additional funding. The Dean considered this to be a good beginning dialogue stage; these issues may be something the University Library Committee will wish to continue to follow.

There was discussion about the factors that may portend another serials cancellation. A lead time of 18 months is necessary to allow for the appropriate communications and decisions needed to put cancellations into effect. It is not next year's budget that is at risk; but in order to avert cancellations taking effect in January 2003, we will need to know of additional funding at the end of this June. Dean Hitchingham is indicating a need for an additional one million dollars.

E. Hitchingham reported on an initiative from the circulation department to provide baskets for patron use in the Newman building to carry materials around. The baskets can also be checked out over night to transport books to cars. The baskets are currently available off the elevators on the third floor; if use continues, they may be placed outside the elevators at each floor.

An announcement was made that the library received an award from Solinet, the Southeastern Regional Library Network, for our staff training and development programs. Brenda Hendricks, coordinator for staff development, was invited to Atlanta for the award in the beginning of May. This recognition is especially significant given the level of innovation and success achieved with fairly limited resources.

E. Hitchingham distributed copies of a mailing that will go out to the university faculty in early May. Through charts comparing database use among Virginia doctoral institutions, it is evident that Virginia Tech shows lower use in general. The memo was to encourage faculty, as they plan their courses and instructional segments, to make sure that students are using the best kinds of resources that are available to them. These graphs may also indicate that the library needs to better publicize the resources. With aspirations toward “top thirty”, maybe we’ll be moving toward higher use .