

VCU Libraries Advisory Committee, January 25, 2019
Main Conference Room
Tompkins-McCaw Library
2:00–3:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attending

Jean Bailey, Meredith Baines (chair), Cheng Ly, Udhanth Mallasani, Tom Nelson, Amy Pakyz, Michele Pancoast, Valerie Robnolt, Shelly Smith, Christy Tyndall, Chernoh Wurie

Absent with notice

Matt Bogenschutz, Corey Davis, Nastassja Lewinski, Christina Lindholm

Absent

Lelia Brinegar, Les Harrison, Jayaraman Vijayakumar

Staff: Laura Gariepy, Jimmy Ghaphery, Tammy Sugarman, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Business

Review and approval of agenda

With the addition of an announcement in the Business portion of the meeting and the re-ordering of the reports, the agenda was approved.

Review and approval of minutes from November 2018

It was noted that Dr. Pakyz's name was misspelled in the minutes from November 2018 (this has been corrected in both the electronic record and the web page). With that exception, the minutes were approved.

Announcement re relocation of TML (John Ulmschneider)

The relocation of TML due to construction on the MCV campus has been suspended. The VCU Health Board decided in December to move forward with constructing a children's inpatient medical facility on the site that was originally slated for TML's temporary relocation (the former Children's Pavilion on East Marshall Street). Tompkins McCaw Library will eventually relocate, but this will not happen until 2021 or later. In the meantime, VCU Libraries will invest in necessary upgrades and improvements to TML.

Inclement weather policy for VCU Libraries (Laura Gariepy)

VCU Libraries is revisiting current practices for how/if the libraries stay open during university inclement weather closures. Practice over the last several years has been for both Cabell and TML to stay open slightly longer than the university when it announces a closure to allow for an orderly closing, and open approximately 30 minutes before classes resume. The Dean of Libraries has retained discretion to deviate from that plan as appropriate. Library administration

is focusing considerations right now on the feasibility of keeping Cabell Library open for some length of time during inclement weather, while avoiding risks to staff safety. Current considerations include opening for a limited number of hours and offering hotels and/or transportation for a limited number of library employees. Garipey sought input from VLAC members on this matter. Some suggestions and observations from meeting attendees included:

- General acknowledgement that it would be helpful for students to have access to study space and computers during inclement weather closures.
- Safety of the employees is critical; acknowledgement that most students do have other options for study space, even if it's not as ideal as library spaces during inclement weather.
- Suggested that the library or other campus units could support the use of online meeting rooms online such as Zoom for groups who might need to convene.

VCU Libraries administration will consider VLAC members' input as we move forward in decision making.

Reports and Discussion

How collections are shaped and focused: new notable collections (Tammy Sugarman)

The aim of the VCU Libraries is to develop exemplary collections that support VCU's academic programs, research agenda, healthcare and outreach efforts, and the overall direction of the future of the university in its local and global presence. The goal is also to insure that the collections mirror the diversity, complexity and international scope of the university and present a variety of viewpoints and balanced coverage of issues. Each program at the university has a library collection policy which outlines the guidelines for the collections in that discipline. The collections are based on the level of the highest degree granted (PhD) by the program as well as particular areas of focus. The policies also outline what languages are collected, geographic areas covered, types of materials, and formats. These policies are regularly reviewed to insure they are current with the programs at the university, and are available on the library website.

Librarians with expertise in the area in which they are collecting select the majority of materials to add to the library collection. These selectors have a PhD or other appropriate advanced degree in a subject discipline. The librarians maintain a working liaison relationship with university faculty in the selection and management of resources. They consult regularly with individual faculty to solicit their recommendations for additions to the collections and to learn of their teaching and research interests. Purchase requests in support of teaching and research are welcome and receive high priority.

The library collections are regularly evaluated by means such as use and user studies, collection comparisons, circulation studies, and citation analyses. As part of maintenance of the collection, materials are identified to be moved among VCU libraries locations, withdrawn, or preserved. Criteria such as curricular or program additions or changes; existing or emerging areas of research; physical condition; long-term research value; complementarity to established collection emphases; uniqueness; and duplication, guide librarians in making these decisions.

Two handouts were provided: notable new electronic collections FY18-19, and a pie chart to illustrate the percentage of the FY18 collections budget spent on various formats of materials.

Journal cost disclosure website: review and feedback (John Ulmschneider)

Ulmschneider presented information on rising costs of large journal subscription packages, increased by publishers' market consolidation. VCU Libraries, along with many other universities, seek to educate faculty about this cost crisis and potential responses from libraries to publishers. Ulmschneider noted challenges of deeply understanding how the university community uses and values particular journals beyond what can be gleaned from quantitative use data, and acknowledged the importance of access to articles in supporting faculty research. He called upon VLAC members to help educate faculty throughout the university about unsustainable journal subscription pricing, and to provide feedback and suggestions for how we might address the issue.

Faculty perspective on limitations/successes of current strategic plan framework (Ulmschneider)

This item was tabled due to time constraints and will be addressed at a future meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.