

University of Florida Future of the Library (FOL) Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 29, 2006

Present: Will Harrison, Chair; John Cech; David Denslow; Stephanie Haas; Tess Kulstad Gonzalez; Carol Murphy; Robin Poynor; Betty Smocovitis; Michele Tennant; Eric Triplett; Robert Zieger; Janie Fouke; and Amy Mashburn via telephone.

Next meeting: September 7, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. in 239 Tigert Hall

I. Charge to the committee by the Provost

Provost Janie Fouke attended the first portion of the committee meeting and gave the committee charge.

- Dr. Fouke stated that it is a coincidence that both directors of the Libraries and Health Science Center Libraries are retiring in the same timeframe, and this gives the university an opportunity to integrate its approach to libraries.
- She asked the committee to look at ways to help prevent under-resourcing of the libraries as well as budget allocation models – are funds distributed well while protecting the infrastructure. She also asked for the committee to contemplate the current capital campaign which is largely dean-driven to gain resources for the libraries.
- Ultimately, Dr. Fouke would like to have a decade long plan for the library
- She asked the committee to bring in consultants in from other institutions that have gone through similar library issues.
- She also asked that the committee contact colleges and departments and bring their ideas and responses back to the committee for possible inclusion in the report.
- By the end of the Fall semester, Dr. Fouke would like to have an outline of what information science should be to join the ranks of other top 10 institutions.
- Dr. Fouke did state that she did not have a clear idea of the work product she is expecting from the committee, but she plans on using the report from this committee to assist with the director of the library search.

The committee then had an opportunity to ask the Provost questions:

- What is the timeline for bring candidates in for the director position? Dr. Fouke replied that the search committee has not met, but she does not anticipate having candidates come to campus before the spring semester.
- Is there a budget formula for the library? Dr. Fouke replied that there is no formula to her knowledge. She stated that infrastructure is difficult to protect and that there are not budget appropriations specifically for the libraries. She also commented that the capital campaign does not have any item for the library so perhaps the committee could develop an option for the capital campaign and then there could be matching funds or possibly a Legislative Budget Request (LBR) developed.

II. Discussion

Chairman Will Harrison then gave his ideas of the committee's goals and a few findings from his summer research about library systems.

- Everyone on the committee is interested in libraries and this committee is an opportunity to do something important for the university community.

- There is not just one “the future” but various futures and focus, what should be the focus for UF’s library?
- University reputations depend on their library, not just the number of volumes. What makes a top 10 or better library?
- Hybrid approach – not just non-book materials, but a blend of physical and virtual resources. E-journals most important resource for some disciplines, not true of other areas.
- Internet has become the library for students, so if Google Scholar is available, one might ask why is there a need for a library?
- Library should be the trustworthy, authoritative reference source, not just URLs.
- Ultimately provide a report to the Provost, but engage the greater community, discuss with colleagues and departments to get everyone engaged.

Dr. Harrison then listed a few items he thinks are the committee’s responsibilities:

- Explore and expose critical FOL issues
- Educate themselves on library futures – everyone has a stake in the libraries
- Involve someone on capital campaign to speak for libraries
- Look hard at important issues – not only advocate, but possibly challenge administration, and raise tough issues
- Gather non-library affirmation of library’s importance
- Is it possible to develop university-wide opinion set?
- University discussion of role of library – not just Faculty Senate, but at college and department levels too
- Compare UF to peers – where is UF currently and where does it want to be?
 - What are some of the special opportunities at UF that others do not have? And what do those opportunities afford UF?
- Library director search – provide valuable information to candidates
 - Is new person going to be hired with Director or Dean title, perhaps Dean should be considered to show the level of importance UF places on its library
- Report issues, decide which issues to address, and give specific recommendations in report

III. Roundtable

Dr. Harrison then asked the committee to give their thoughts on the library.

- Dr. Zieger thanked Dr. Harrison for the useful URLs on the website; they helped him think of issues he had not considered.
- Dr. Murphy inquired if there were new library developments in the Chronicle at comparable institutions and if best practices existed.
- Dr. Poyner mentioned the concern about digital access only. Many art illustrations are not published or appear only as a red “x”. His discipline needs images and visualization with text so art historians have concerns with images being archived where the image and corresponding text are separated.
- Dr. Triplett stated that he had served on three library committees while at the University of Wisconsin and there are 2 problems:
 - Elsevier holds libraries hostage, so the committee should work on economizing and partnering to lower costs.
 - For archiving, where does the institution get space and accessibility?
- Dr. Cech mentioned the aspect of cultural perspective. The library is the intellectual center of the university and the physical space should encourage

spending time at the library. He suggested a sculpture in the Plaza of the Americas to signify the destination point. He suggested meeting with the students to find out why they do not go to the library, is it only a parking issue or something more? In addition to the social aspect, the library should serve as physical space for seminars and talks.

- Dr. Smocovitis commented that the library serves a very heterogeneous group and what is important is very different for everyone. She suggested a map of the library to discover the secrets and unknown areas of the library. The library in terms of an archive or preserving the past is no longer a key aspect since many archived items are moved off-site or are not accessible. One cannot walk the aisles and see what is available. There is also the consideration of the library as the archive for UF's unique history as an institution.
- Prof. Mashburn discussed how the Law library is a combination of extremes.
 - The library is completely central to mission – it is the first thing prospective students look at when deciding which law school to attend. In Law, virtually all material is electronic through a comprehensive database which can be accessed through the computer and one never has to visit the library.
 - Perhaps the committee could define the national trend.
 - What should faculty encourage students to do? Wander the library or just electronic resources?
- Dr. Triplett suggested spending resources on making the library completely digital, but Dr. Smocovitis thought that would cause people to stay in their rooms and not interact so she suggested spending money on both digital and book-based models. Dr. Triplett said there is zero net gain in spending funds on a physical place where no one goes versus access to everyone any time.
- Dr. Poynor mentioned the problem with all digital is that it does not work for his discipline.
- Ms. Haas suggested that the imaging problem could be a database issue. She also mentioned that there are a lot of e-resources that not many people know about, so the library may need to work on promoting those resources. She then discussed a couple of concerns, with digital resources:
 - Commercial licensing
 - Creating own collections such as special collections, maps, imagery through UF holdings.
- In Business, Dr. Denslow mentioned the relative cost between digital storage versus paper storage and that it is not clear which of the various library functions is most important:
 - Provide sense of community for university
 - Digital allows collaboration with other universities, but not with faculty at home institution, is that a loss?
 - Perhaps UF is underrepresented because of the strong silo model, OSU renovated library for \$105M, which is a tremendous investment.
- Dr. Harrison commented that the social aspect of the library is different than the study hall idea, and is there a correlation that as the use of the library for social activities increases, does the use of the student union decrease?
- Ms. Kulstad Gonzalez gave her student perspective that she uses the Latin American Studies collection extensively and if it became digital, how would that work?
- Ms. Haas also mentioned copyright issues
 - If the document is printed before 1924, it can be made available digitally.

- Other countries have different copyright laws so those laws have to be interpreted.
- If something is available digitally, does the paper copy have to be retained?
 - There is still some questions as how making documents digital affect archiving
 - FCLA could provide archive, if safe
- Ms. Kulstad Gonzalez also mentioned the universities wireless internet access is unreliable, the hours at the library are not always accessible and printing is expensive, these are all concerns with having an all-digital library.
- Dr. Tennant mentioned that the assigned papers were useful, but very collection centered. The libraries have great resources that users are not aware of. It takes people to teach about resources and provide relevant services, but budget discussions usually revolve around collections rather than librarian staffing (for example, the HSC Library has not received any new faculty lines since 1988 despite the growth of its client base). What services are useful to clients and how to provide the services are issues to consider.
- Dr. Tennant addressed a second issue which involves the relationship of the HSC Library with Smathers. The current situation:
 - The HSCL and Smathers have separate budgets
 - HSCL reports to the Senior VP for Health Affairs (through an Assistant VP), not the Director of University Libraries (Smathers).
 - HSCL and Smathers are integrated for Tenure & Promotion
 - HSCL and Smathers sabbatical processes/decisions are separate
 - HSCL and Smathers collections are both represented in the UF catalog
 - HSCL and Smathers sometimes work closely together in collection development decisions (for example, to avoid duplication) and sometimes not (potential journal cancellations)

It will be difficult to hire a new director of libraries without resolving the potential integration between HSC and Smathers library systems.

IV. Conclusions

1. Have Ken Frazier from Wisconsin come visit UF as consultant.
2. Take Library West Tour
3. Have consultant from HSC Library come talk with committee

Next meeting was discussed, with a decision to meet Thursday, September 7, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. in 239 Tigert Hall. The agenda for the next meeting will be issues the committee needs to address. Committee should send the chair or Cheryl suggestions for 2-3 topics for discussion.

Dr. Zieger asked that the committee actively pursue concerns discussions at department meetings, college meetings, or faculty senate meetings.

Dr. Murphy asked about the role of the library as film library and how it interacts with film library in Smathers and other libraries.

Dr. Triplett pointed out that there is no one from Engineering or Medicine on the committee and IFAS is underrepresented also.