

Library Council

Minutes

Thursday, October 26, 2023

1 pm – 3 pm

L3-314 – Hybrid

Present: Scott Gillies, Charlotte Innerd, Michael Steeleworthy, Fiona Inglis, Tina Liu, Matt Rohweder, Anne Linkletter (secretary), Yanli Li, Ky Stewart, Gordon Bertrand, Heidi Northwood, Sean Doherty, Jennifer Dufton, Irene Tencinger, Greg Sennema, Siu Hong Yu, Pauline Dewan, Peter Genzinger, Shirley Chen, Matt Tales, Murray Tong, CJ Nyssen, Amanda Oliver, Matt Thomas, Helene LeBlanc, Dillon Moore, Mona Elayyan, Sarah Brophy, Bruce Arai, Joanne Oud, Judith Fletcher, Asma Co

Regrets: Megan Spenler, Sarah Brophy, Melanie Ross, Debbie Chaves, Michelle Goodridge, Meredith Fischer, Mark Weiler

1. Welcome & land acknowledgement

2. Approval of the agenda

Li/Innerd

Carried

3. Approve of the minutes of

Dufton/Dougherty

Carried

4. No business arising

5. Dr. Heidi Northwood

Heidi thanked folks for hosting her visit. They will capture comments/questions and to ensure your input is recorded. Committed to checking in with everyone and to provide a report. Want to discuss where pressure points exist across the institution. We need to focus on what is important and stop things that don't make sense. She needs input and support from everyone who is doing the work.

Strategic Academic Plan (SAP) passed Senate this week. Her goals are to hear from you and support you through Scott.

What are the pressure points at the Library? Think through opportunities and the challenges we are facing as an institution and in the sector. How can we collectively make things better together?

Scott has communicated all the pain points across the Library's portfolio - budget, staffing, collections, and archives. This information helps me to better understand the library operations. Here to take questions. Happy to talk about Strategic Academic Plan or other things.

Senators that represent the library – thought SAP was great. Can you clarify what your plans are for the library? Where do we fit?

The title of the plan is Transformative Education, Real Impact. Thinking of future directions. Differentiating us from many, not everyone. Looked at all strategic plans across the institution. A core statement of who we are and what we do is there but not fully articulated. Development of the mission statement for SAP: who we are is to inspire purpose for students allowing them to gain skills and confidence to tackle problems.

Why move from primarily undergrad to comprehensive? Need the level of study to address problems globally: Research – core mission – makes us distinctive. Who is our ideal student? Curious and engaged student, including non-traditional students (not always about marks). Recruitment and admissions – identify markers that indicate success for the students who may not have the grades. Think about how, together, we can have programs and supports, admission processes that we are admitting curious, engaged students along with applicants with high marks. With More perspectives and voices, you have the capacity to create greater impact

For the library: what library resources and services are needed to support new programming? Modes of teaching, program delivery – how the library can support this? Other areas:

- advancing transformative education
- proactively supporting student success
- Purposefully decolonizing curriculum
- supporting growth of comprehensive university
- fostering undergrad passion for research
- ensuring Library services equally across all campuses

Scott noted that the convocation – wonderful experience. Chancellor focused on AI and information literacy. The ecosystem of how we consume information. How do we teach students how to access information and use it ethically? We want people to know what we already do. Get better at telling our story. Educate students on the use of information.

Heidi – this is exciting. AVPA and I have talked about working groups around generative AI. Scott is on the steering committee. Other members will be on subcommittees, e.g. . Meredith Fischer. Things will change dramatically – whether you consider the ethics of technology towards AI or where information technologies are changing our lives. Societal impacts of using generative AI.

Question on library acquisitions – more discussions are needed with vendors around how they are supporting our sustainability goals.

Follow-up question – Is a research-based institution the same as a comprehensive one?
Heidi - 3 categories – primarily undergrad – comprehensive – and research-intensive. Best of both worlds: teaching coupled with grad studies but not research-intensive. Often, delineation comes from the amount of research dollars.

Grad student rep asked about support for grad students to access library services is important.

Heidi – SAP – goals and the objectives. Underneath that, we have been collecting sub-objectives. Alignment of all plans as working toward the overall objectives of the SAP. The library's plan is about how to align with the SAP to get us where we need to go.

Another question – Is there one thing the library should do more of to support SAP?

Heidi: Need to better tell the Library's story. What the library does. The library knows best what its core work and value is and that's the story the library needs to tell.

Another question – We have not yet figured out the best way to get our story out to a broad audience. How do we manage with cuts? We have been waiting for library space. Library is not a money maker. Milton – challenged to provide service. Don't want library to be overlooked

Heidi – waiting on blue ribbon panel results. Our mission is an academic mission. Decisions should be driven by academics. The primary focus for her is what we can do with a small investment that can generate revenue. International high school – international recruitment that aligns with our values – this kind of initiative has potential for revenue with not as much investment.

Another question – concerns that centralized services have – we need to be mindful that these services do not become so generalized that the value of the services is devalued.

Heidi – the current plan was a democratically formed strategic research plan. Wasn't the kind of plan that says, "We will do 3 things" - more to ensure inclusion. Since this plan, Charity, Jonathon, and I have discussed how we highlight the impact of research. The effect of research on others. VPR /VPA portfolios intersect. She's unsure if Jonathon will move the plan to the inspired research real impact – the tagline of plans is meant to show integration.

6. Scott Gillies – University Librarian Update

Thank you for your support in my new role. Listening Tour taking place with all staff very interesting discussions. Want to continue open door policy. Discussions o feed well into library strategic planning.

Budget update – Very challenging to manage the current budget control process. Temporary hiring freeze. Sincere thanks to everyone as you have worked very hard over the last 5 months.

Been successful in advocating for our positions – LibExec helping to make business case. Building support from VPA for the library. Important that the library is seen as an effective and important place to invest money and resources.

Building updates – space review. Projects can grow substantially in scope, e.g., signs. Small list of obvious updates to start, including signage updates. What we will be working on will use donation funding.

Laurier Brantford – meeting with Ulrike and development – planning for library. Costing on project from architects was very high and challenging in current environment. Restart conversations around Brantford library. Grad studies expanding to Brantford – a lot of support at the grad faculty council for the library in Brantford.

Need to tell our story well. We are doing great things in Brantford but need a library in Brantford. The plan around Brantford will have to include a lot of partnerships and fundraising. Create a diverse and welcoming inclusive space.

Mural Project Installation occurred on Sept 28th with guests including the artist,– Michael Cywink. Fantastic piece of art. Michael was very engaging and connected with the community.

Generative AI – It's a topic that captures our attention. Lots of aspects to it. Scott is on the steering committee. Will have library representation on committees. Library has unique contribution and perspective that needs to be at the table. Steering committee is rolling out – copyright, academic freedom, attribution. Very complex.

Scott has joined the OCUL committee to discuss AI – directors getting together to discuss. What are the areas that libraries need to engage with and develop services. An example from Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) is focused on AI project focused on Canadian digital heritage. Software company is called Transcribe Us. They will be working with Canadiana focused on indigenous-themed content recognizing and transcribing handwritten historical documents to readable/searchable OCR text. This AI-enabled software is an interesting way the digital heritage community can come together and to support critical Indigenous focused work.

Podcasting programming launch. Contracted CTF Avery Kloss Moore – podcaster in residence. Some campus and public programming.
Podcasting in Waterloo – WLU Press creating partnerships and grants. Scholarly podcasting.
Making space for students to use the space.

7. Library Strategic Plan

Plan needs to be completed this year. Laurier strategy has the same timeline. Will be engaging in a consultative processes and engagement, but somewhat different from the previous planning process (Transform Laurier Library “TLL” processes). Current planning work starts with a recognition that a lot of work has already been done through previous TLL and will be 5 years in duration. To date, we have identified 3-4 themes with related strategic enablers. Needs to be focused. The Library will develop operational plans on the basis of the strategic plan.

Looking to resurrect library student advisory council – multi-campus undergrad and grad – have focused input

Themes – create themes that are meaningful, that both staff in all areas within the Library can see where their work is reflected. Phrased in ways that are meaningful for our community.

Strategic enablers – framework and ways we can support efforts to achieve the plan
EDI, Accessibility and Indigeneity – not foregrounded in TLL which will need to be addressed in a new plan. Will also review and revise the Library mission statement

Questions?

What about staff capacity – aggressive timeline.

Scott – need to streamline the process. Make the process manageable – have completed a lot of foundational work already. Need to have something in front of people they can respond to. Want to have our plan situate within the Laurier Strategy. Recognition that we’ve done amazing things with the funding we have. We need to build more effective ways to tell our story.

Another question on communications – started the What You Need to Know – Library should consider a communication every 2-3 weeks.

Scott – internal communications are important and we also need to ensure that we are on the university communication plan as well.

8. Other business:

None

Next meeting January 23, 2024 10 am – noon.

Meeting adjourned by 2:41pm

Minutes prepared by Anne Linkletter