

Progress Report to the Library

Joint Administrative and Faculty Assembly Committee on Library Reorganization
Town Meeting Presentation

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 5, 2008, Room 1A, Library East

Presented by James Cusick, co-chair, on behalf of the committee

Thank you all for coming. This is a progress report on the work the committee has been engaged in since our first meeting on February 19th.

Names of the committee members:

Stephanie Haas, Support Services, co-chair
James Cusick, Collections, co-chair
Carl Van Ness, Collections
Blake Landor, Collections
Jana Ronan, Public Services
Patrick Reakes, Public Services
Jimmie Lundgren, Technical Services
Priscilla Williams, Technical Services
Adrian Zeck, Collections
Jim Stevens, Public Services
Amy Polk, Support Services
Raimonda Margjoni, Technical Services

Brian Keith, ex officio

To date we have met seven times.

First I would like to read the charge:

To solicit and collect proposals and comments from faculty, staff, and administration; to analyze and synthesize organizational functions and structure; and, to make recommendations on reorganization to the Dean and the Chair of the Library Faculty Assembly.

Our methodology has been as follows:

To familiarize ourselves with organizational charts individual members of the committee looked at a wide range of charts. As a group, we decided to focus on the five institutions that were represented in the Future of the Libraries Report as well as a few others, like University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and University of Maryland. We felt that this provided a range of options from appropriate models at other institutions.

[U of Arizona; Ohio State; Michigan State; U of Minnesota; U of Wisconsin]
With the help of Tom Minton we also set up a web site to post our minutes and our working documents.

In addition, to fulfill our charge, we asked for input and comments from you our colleagues and in many cases solicited input in order to broaden our perspective on issues. We have received many frank and thoughtful opinions, often entailing a great investment of work on your part, and we thank everyone who has sent us input.

Here are the issues we have discussed, including motions and votes that we have taken:

We began by asking staff to send us input on what they felt was working well under our current organization and what could be improved and we reviewed and discussed the responses.

We then moved on to a consideration of the organizational chart proposed by the dean and an alternative one proposed by Stephanie Haas and Betsy Simpson.

*We accepted at an early point the practicality of having an SUS shared facility report directly to the dean. Likewise we accepted the proposed structure of grants, public information, and development reporting to the dean through an associate dean.

*Early discussion also centered on the rationale for a deputy dean as proposed in the chart. Input from Dean Russell indicated that she anticipated being away from the library as much as 40% of the time to do fund-raising and that her commitments to various State University System organizations would require additional time away.

Given this, the committee discussed the need for a deputy or intermediary dean as provided for in the dean's proposed chart and **passed a motion (by a vote of 10 to 2)** to retain this position as one that was necessary.

The next two points of focus were the proposed division for IT and Support Services and concerns about Access Services.

*With respect to the proposed division for IT and Support, the committee solicited and received input from eight people to be added to input from committee members. There was concern that there were too many units in this division reporting to a single dean and that HR and Business Services should report directly to the dean. We received opinions in favor of keeping Business Services, IT/Systems, and Facilities within a common division. However, the majority of opinion on and off the committee was that HR and Business Services should report to the top, a model that is also common at the colleges at UF.

By unanimous vote the committee passed a motion to move their reporting line for HR and Business Services to the dean. Also by unanimous vote, the committee passed a motion that the other units in the proposed IT/Support division worked closely enough together or else shared sufficient functions so that they made sense as a division. But in debating this issue committee members noted a need to “revisit the question of how to maintain public services at a high level across all library activity” and to decide if “this is best achieved through a public services division or in other ways, such as a teams approach.”

*Jana Ronan and Jim Stevens, assisted by Matthew Loving, conducted an assessment of the services currently provided by the Access Services Unit. They were asked to highlight any services that did not seem to be accounted for in plans to reorganize. I will summarize their report but it should be read by anyone interested in this issue. The functions served by the current Access Services department fall into 3 categories: service to the library system as a whole, Library West-specific functions and services provided to all circulating units. The whole library system services, for example ILL and E-Reserves, were deemed most appropriately grouped in the reporting structure for the services division: Information Technologies. The committee agreed that the Library West-specific functions, for example Library West circulation, should be associated with that branch. Concerns about the implementation of these changes, and of how various other access services will be provided, are great enough that administrators need to address them.

In the midst of these discussions Dean Russell met in session with the committee to provide more input and to clarify points raised by both the committee and attending members of faculty and staff. The minutes to this meeting are online.

By the end of February, committee members were beginning to reach some consensus on reorganization. However, the single biggest question, organization of branches and collections was still left unexplored.

Through feedback and discussion with the branch librarians, it became clear that the branches have suffered a lack of voice in the library system in the past. In general—and there was some variance in opinion here—the branches were in favor of reporting to the Sr. Associate Dean through a rotating chair ---OR--- reporting directly to an associate dean as autonomous units.

Since the sentiments of the branches were clear-cut, committee members moved on to questions about overall organization for the branches and collections. A good deal of this discussion focused on the future of Library West. This included initial discussion about the Collection Management Unit and also included a strong show of feeling that the current Collection Management Support Unit operates efficiently and should be retained as a functional unit in reorganization.

After lengthy discussion, members passed a motion that Library West should become a branch (11-0 with one abstention). Even with this vote there was remaining concern over how such a change would affect Collection Management, the Collection Management Support Unit, and other traditional components of West.

Committee co-chair James Cusick provided an update on the committee's proceedings at this point to Dean Russell and John Ingram. Co-chairs Cusick and Haas also listened to a discussion among Area and Subject Specialists pertaining to collection management.

This brings us to the most recent work of the committee completed only yesterday afternoon. Members revisited the issue of the significance of collection management to an ARL university library and its lack of visibility in the reporting structures proposed for reorganization. **By vote, the committee unanimously** passed a motion that "A commitment to collection management needs to be made by representing it in the organizational structure."

Further, in view of the many concerns we have received about coordination of library functions, currently overseen by units, but possibly changed in reorganization, the committee also **unanimously passed a motion that** "We have heard from many people that coordination of functions is critical, that we recognize this, and that once there is consensus on an organizational structure, there needs to be a defined means of coordination."

Finally, the committee is prepared to offer a draft—emphasis on draft—version of an alternate organizational chart that retains but also changes components of the one offered by the dean. We would like at this point to be able to offer you a thorough rationale for this organizational chart—but the fact of the matter is we are still trying to finish writing one up. We will be glad to answer questions.

Present the Chart (posted on the Joint Committee Web Site)

http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/committees/reorganization/orgchart_proposed_3_4_2008.pdf

As noted, we have retained the position of intermediary (Sr. Associate) dean; we have HR and Business Services reporting directly to the dean of libraries; we have the branches and the documents department reporting to an associate dean; but we have separated out Special Collections & Area Studies to report to the Sr. Associate Dean. This appears to us to keep like units together; to provide a reporting structure acceptable to the branches; and that has two associate deans and one unit reporting to the Sr. Associate Dean.

This is a draft proposal and the committee does not feel that it is perfect. But we do feel it addresses many expressed concerns. It should be noted that the

committee still feels this plan or any plan needs to account for coordinated collection management; and that the rationale for reorganizing the library has to make provision for maintaining good public and access services.

This is where the committee currently stands. We appreciate your input and encourage additional comments, questions, and opinions.