
Senate Committee on Libraries Minutes

Wednesday, March 30, 2010
1:30pm – 3:00pm
Osler Library, 3rd floor, McIntyre Building

Present: Prof. Nathalie Cooke, (Chair), Dr. Colleen Cook; Mr. Joshua Abaki (SSMU); Prof. Helge Dedek; Prof. Reghan Hill (Schulich Library); Ms. Sara Holder; Prof. Suzanne Morton; Prof. Kenneth Ragan (Science, Physics);, Ms. Joyce Whiting (Humanities and Social Sciences Library);

Regrets: Prof. Joan Bartlett (Education, SIS); Prof. Andrea Bernasconi (Life Sciences); Prof. Emily Carson; Prof. Martin Chénier (Macdonald Campus); Ms. Natalie Waters ; Mr. Simon Liu; Mr. Richardo Bello; Mr. Alexander Deguisse; Ms. Joyce Mak

Guests: Mr. Christopher Lyons and Ms. Pamela Miller (Osler Library)

1. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved by Kenneth Ragan, seconded by Helge Dudek.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of January 21, 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by Sara Holder and seconded by Joyce Whiting.

3. *The McGill Library 2011 with an Eye toward the Future* Presenter: C. Colleen Cook

Using Powerpoint, Dr. Cook presented information comparing North American research libraries (ARL) in terms of such criteria as costs spent on books, staff, and other materials. When asked how money spent and books bought corresponds with client satisfaction, she then moved to the part of her presentation about research that demonstrates a close correlation between costs and satisfaction. Called the LibQual survey, this survey had had 1.6 million responses. She also showed “Word Clouds” of the words in the written responses to the survey broken down by groups of users: undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. The Word Clouds are a way to present the words that are most important to the different groups visually with the words that appear more often in responses presented in a larger font and brighter color.

The most frequently used word in the LibQual survey responses from McGill undergraduates was “space.” For Faculty, the word was “stuff.” Graduate students were somewhere in-between the two as space and stuff were both seen as important.

In the discussion following the presentation, the Committee discussed the scattering of libraries across the McGill campus and its effect; managing libraries in multiple locations means that sometimes multiple copies of books are needed and it is viewed by librarians as a disadvantage. How big would a centralized library be? Dr. Cook estimated that it would be double the size of McLennan Library.

4. Discussion of community feedback on Libraries

In this discussion, Joshua Abaki pointed out that undergraduates are frustrated when they have to leave a location in the SSHL because it is a reserved space for graduate students. The committee discussed that it is generally recognized that more space is needed in the libraries; Dr. Cook announced that the computer system is being upgraded so that authorized McGill users will no longer need to use VPN which will make it easier for everyone to use library resources remotely. Suzanne Morton pointed out that colleagues who have been at McGill for a number of years appreciate the progress that has been made in upgrading the libraries while new colleagues, coming from institutions with larger and more well-funded libraries, are frustrated by our library. Helge Dudek pointed out that Law students have the same concerns as other students.

Nathalie Cooke encouraged members of the Committee to send any further comments to Gwendolyn Owens.

5. Other Business/ Discussion

Nathalie Cooke thanked the Osler Librarians for their hospitality. She also encouraged SCL members to come to the Farewell Reception at the Faculty Club for librarians who are leaving either for retirement or other positions on April 15 from 5 to 7 PM.

The next meeting of the SCL is scheduled for Friday, May 20, but it is not required by the terms of this Committee as we are only required to meet twice a semester. The meeting will only be held if there is pressing business.

Kenneth Regan moved that the meeting be adjourned; seconded by Joshua Abaki.

2010-2011 Senate Committee on Libraries Future Meeting Date (TBC)

Friday, May 20

1:30pm-3:00pm