

Academic Services Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2011

Committee Members Present: Doug Britton, Amy D’Unger, Marlit Hayslett, Peter Hesketh, Caitlin Manley, Helena Mitchell, David White (Executive Committee Liaison)

Committee Members Absent: Nancey Green Leigh, Margaret Loper,

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM by chair Helena Mitchell.

Dr. Catherine Murray-Rust, Dean of the Library, was the invited speaker. All members introduced themselves and Helena shared the duties of the Academic Services Committee. Dr. Murray-Rust provided copies of the library’s budget presentation and shared the reporting structure with the committee. The library reports to the Provost, like the colleges however, unlike the college, the majority of the funding for the library is not for the faculty and staff who work there. A little less than ½ of the library budget goes to people, while the rest goes to supporting the collections. The situation of the library at Georgia Tech, and academic libraries nationwide, is complex and quickly changing. Turmoil in the publishing industry, politics, and the shifting nature of teaching and research all impact the functioning and funding of the library.

The Georgia Tech library participates in a large statewide organization called GALILEO that is being greatly affected by Board of Regent budget cuts at the state level (e.g., a recent \$800,000 cut). Tech’s library is strategizing to minimize the amount of damage done by the 13.6% cut to its budget, such as halting the purchase of monographs, which costs approximately \$45,000 per year. Serial prices are also increasing, which places a further strain on the library budget.

The library has been conducting a longitudinal survey of library use (LIBQUAL) and has discovered a high degree of resource use among both faculty and students. There is a large amount of electronic usage, but also physical use (particularly among the graduate students). The facilities have approximately 1.1 million visits per year—very high by academic library standards—and approximately 20 million online visits.

Dr. Murray-Rust stated that the Tech library is ranked low in the Association of Research Libraries and is greatly underfunded relative to peer institutions. For example, MIT’s library receives two times the money that Georgia Tech’s library does, despite having half the number of students. In addition, the increasing amount of sponsored research dollars being brought into the Institute is not being shared with the library via overhead costs. The addition of new degree programs and research areas strain resources, resulting in faculty members not receiving the research support that they need. The Provost has assisted by providing one-time funds for 2011 to purchase monographs and the colleges matched the money, but Dr. Murray-Rust stated that she is unsure about 2012. The library will again make a pitch for funding for the

continuation of serial subscriptions, particularly in light of the continuing requests for new serials being made by faculty (\$1 million in requests last year). A major concern is that, if Georgia Tech is unable to provide access to particular journals, faculty members will start sharing passwords with faculty at other universities in order to access their databases. A recent incident like this just occurred with a faculty member at Tech using the password of an Emory colleague. The Dean pointed out that interlibrary loan and RAPID, which includes almost every major research university, can be used for these purposes, often providing the requests documents within 24 hours. Of 5,300 recent requests via ILL reviewed by the library, 5,100 of the items were delivered within 17 hours. RAPID began at Colorado State University after a major flood destroyed parts of campus. CSU wrote the code and western universities provided the interlibrary loan access, while eastern universities joining the consortium have added depth in the social sciences and humanities.

In addition to cuts in financial resources, the library is also experiencing a turnover in staff. Two of the three associate deans have left, the head of library systems has retired, and the CULC is adding uncertainty to staffing. Dr. Murray-Rust stated that they are filling positions as they can, but it's a very time consuming and labor-intensive process to fill the vacancies. Helena mentioned that the Academic Services Committee also has a vacant position for a library staff member as a result of Tyler Walter's departure for a new position at Virginia Tech.

Committee members then contributed their input on the situation of the library. Peter pointed out the importance of monograph purchases so that faculty and students are able to borrow books as opposed to purchasing them. Dr. Murray-Rust stated that faculty and students looking for books in the social sciences and humanities currently have to borrow a lot of books from other universities, but that the availability of those books isn't a good reason for Tech not to support its own faculty needs in those areas. She also stated that Tech lends out a lot of older monographs via RAPID, while it borrows more new items through GIL. The library maintains a lot of depth in the sciences and engineering, particularly with these older hard copy texts. Conversely, more than 95% of the journal holdings are electronic. The eBook collection is also growing, except in areas such as architecture where the market is slower to convert to the new technology. Popular fiction is also reaching a tipping point towards the majority being provided electronically.

Among librarians, the increase in electronic provision of resources does raise concerns about the "death of the scholarly monograph." With only 140 major research libraries in the United States and Canada, the market is extremely small, yet it raises the question of how the publication of a book can be required for some faculty members to get tenure, despite the difficulty in finding a publisher for these books. Dr. Murray-Rust stated that she believes the increasing specialization or narrowness of research areas contributes to this problem. While the library can see this happening, it needs to be addressed at the level of the faculty and provost because of the link to tenure requirements. Doug asked that, with the many different formats for eBooks, how is it possible for an academic library to keep up? The Dean responded that Springer is the best provider of

eBooks on scholarly and scientific subjects and avoids formats that are specific to Nook, Kindle, iPad, etc. EBooks from Springer are basically PDFs, so they do not require a reader. She also added that Cell Press is an excellent source of scholarly ePublications with a good staff of editors, authors, graphic designers, etc. who can embed video and audio, include real-time citation counts, and assist young scholars in building their “brand.” Dr. Murray-Rust also hypothesized that the Dell Zoom and iPad (or tablets, more generically) will overtake Nook, Kindle, and laptops as the preferred methods for accessing digital media. Helena asked if the shift to tablets would have an impact on the library and, if so, if the ASC could be of assistance in mediating that impact. The Dean reported that the library is going to experiment with lending out Kindles to patrons, a practice in which well-funded public libraries already engage. Patrons will be able to load three titles onto the Kindle and then return it when they are done. People will be able to essentially rent books rather than buy them, and it will allow more people to be exposed to eReader technology. In addition, this will also fit with the library’s goal of providing students with access to more fiction and recreational literature. When the Clough building comes online and provides more space, the library will also seek to expand its film collection.

Doug then asked about the trend towards open-source academic journals and how they might impact the campus. At the most basic level, the library wants to encourage faculty to retain rights to their work so it can be shared via SMARTech and other venues. The library currently supports a few open access journals, but the Dean suggested that these would not compete with mainstream publishers anytime soon. The business model of scholarly societies will have to change as, currently, the wide array of services provided to members are subsidized with money from journal subscriptions, which raises the question of why libraries should have to pay such high subscription costs so that professional society members can have more amenities. Dr. Murray-Rust also indicated that, because of the relative newness of open-source journals, they are still risky venues for untenured faculty members, as journal quality is always a concern. She went on to state that she believed it is incorrect to view the rise of open-source journals as resulting in the death of peer-reviewed scholarship. Rather, it’s just a different form of peer review. The landscape is changing rapidly and will probably result in the continuation of some traditional publication forms, in addition to open-source and hybrid, subscription-based models. The challenge will be in getting the faculty to see the quality of work being published in the open-source market and the fact that it can increase readership tremendously by providing availability for free to anyone around the world. Helena inquired if the library has any seed money to help authors get published, including in these new venues. The Dean responded that she is currently talking to Provost Bras about this and how the money should be managed.

The discussion then turned to access to resources outside of the Georgia Tech library. Doug asked if any of the library user surveys had asked faculty about access to outside resources. Dr. Murray-Rust said that they assume membership in professional societies does equal access to outside resource that go beyond what the library can provide, but that they do not ask specific questions about this. One concern that the library has is about the use of school or college funds to buy things (e.g., monographs,

serial subscriptions) that the library could get for a lower price and make more widely available. For example, the School of Economics and the College of Management each want a Bloomberg terminal, but if they partnered with the library they might be able to get them at a discount and possibly get a third terminal for the library for much less. Peter also pointed out that students use outside sources to access things, including Google Scholar to find papers. The Dean stated that the library is trying to make access to materials easier and will focus less on spending money on Voyager (the library's system) and more on better discovery systems. Members of the committee concurred that what faculty take for granted in searching for sources is not always obvious to students, who often have a hard time finding resources for their papers and projects. Peter stated that he tries to remedy this problem by having his students take the class on conducting research that is taught by the library. Doug questioned if—with the increasing pressure to do everything online—Tech should be moving towards having a large online library. Publishers are obviously not in favor of this and Dr. Murray-Rust stated that the Institute is in talks with other universities (e.g., Emory) about sharing access to physical collections. As a public institution, Georgia Tech has to be mindful of resources that other state institutions have (or don't have). Doug asked if there was any pressure coming from the Board of Regents, and the Dean stated that there has been some pressure, but that some deals have actually been falling apart rather than coming together. Tech has joined other institutions in Yale's Neural group, but the politics continue to be very fluid and Tech's goal remains doing the best for the faculty, staff, and students at Georgia Tech while not alienating any other state institutions.

Amy then turned the conversation to Georgia Tech's lack of membership in ICPSR (the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research) housed at the University of Michigan. Almost every Research I university in the country is a member, as well as many Georgia colleges and universities and all of Georgia Tech's peer institutes. It can provide a wealth of data—literally thousands of data sets—for research in policy, sociology, international relations, etc. and would benefit many faculty on campus. The cost of membership is \$15,000. Peter stated that seemed like a lot of money, but Dr. Murray-Rust pointed out that membership in the Web of Science is currently \$90,000 and being raised to \$120,000. So, while it is certainly not free, it is a drop in the bucket relative to other things for which the library must pay. The Dean indicated that she would speak to Nancy Simons about the financial feasibility of a membership in ICPSR.

Helena then turned the discussion to how the Academic Services Committee might collaborate with the library to assure that faculty and students get access to the resources they need. The Dean requested that we assist the library in identifying the changing needs of the faculty and keep the conversation going with the Provost so that it remains clear that faculty need resources more than they need services. Dr. Murray-Rust stated that the faculty are able to make a stronger case than the library can make on its own behalf. In addition, the Dean requested that ASC advocate for renovation of Price-Gilbert and Crosland, which are badly in need of repair. These renovations would be particularly useful to students, who are more likely to use the physical facilities than the faculty are, especially graduate students who rely on the library for office space.

Helena concurred that the physical space is very important for students and that the library could also provide a space for more programming that is not tied specifically to classes. The library should really be viewed as the center of campus, physically and intellectually. The addition of the Clough Building will add more staff to the library, but primarily in areas like safety and custodial services. Three current staff members in the areas of shipping, maintenance, security, etc. will be promoted to be in charge of the CULC, and assistants will be hired for them. There will be a concierge desk for students, with staff able to handle questions on both the library and academic issues like advising. Bruce Henson and Dana Hartley will be providing the training for these staff members. It was originally intended to be a separate facility from the library, but Provost Bras questioned the lack of a relationship between the CULC and the library and changed that.

The meeting was adjourned by chair Helena Mitchell at 10:33 AM.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy D'Unger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Amy D'Unger
Secretary, Academic Services Committee