Biology and Life Sciences Implementation Team

BACKGROUND:

In Fall 2009, a planning team composed of faculty in the life sciences, Library faculty and staff was convened to “identify opportunities for enhanced collaboration in the design and delivery of Library services to support research, teaching, and learning in the biological and life sciences” This planning team considered longitudinal data that indicates “downward trends in the use of the physical library and its print collections,” undertook a comprehensive user survey that identified needs and opportunities to develop specific new services, and identified “opportunities for collaboration between the Library, the School of Integrative Biology (IB), and the School of Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) for the cooperative development and use of the physical space currently occupied by the Biology Library.” Based on these findings, the planning team recommended that the Library establish “an Implementation Team…with the charge of repurposing the physical space currently occupied by the Biology Library” and explore opportunities to further develop specialized library services to support research, teaching and learning in the biological and life sciences. The full report of the Team is available on the NSM Website.

The Implementation Team now being charged is asked to move forward with these recommendations from the planning team, including the closure of the Biology Library as currently constituted, on an accelerated timeline.

CHARGE:

This team is expected to build upon the work of the planning team. The Team will:

1. Collaborate with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the Schools of Life Sciences (MCB/IB), and others in the biological and life sciences to identify possible uses for the current Biology Library space that can inform the Provost Office’s disposition of any spaces to be vacated by the Library. This process should identify needs that may be best met by academic units (e.g., provision of study space, provision of access to public computing) as well as explore collaborative approaches to meeting emergent service needs that can become the centerpiece of a Library presence in Burrill Hall in the future, e.g., needs related to data curation, bioinformatics, etc.

2. Develop a service profile that:
   - Draws on the findings of the survey conducted by the planning team, as well as conversations with relevant campus communities, to further define existing and emerging needs of students and scholars in the life sciences
   - Identifies opportunities for the development of new initiatives and for the expansion of services currently offered
   - Considers how services that might be more effectively provided at a larger service point, such as access to print reserves, may be provided in nearby Library units
Situates the proposed services for the biological sciences as a core component in a broader array of Library service programs supporting scholarly work the sciences, both with the Life Science Division and through broader service programs such as the Scholarly Commons.

3. Collaborate with the NSM coordinator to develop timelines and schedules for implementation, including:
   - specific steps needed to vacate the current Biology Library space (except that portion that may be related to a continued Library presence serving needs such as those noted above)
   - a rapid assessment of the collection to inform the development of criteria to determine the location of materials
   - a timeline and phased plan for transferring collections from Burrill to other locations
   - a plan for making and communicating the transition to the new services profile to campus and library constituents

4. Recommend a plan for assessing the effectiveness of the new configuration of collections and services

5. Submit a report with its recommendations to the University Librarian by May 15, 2010.

Submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration: 2010
Approved by the Executive Committee: 2010