

International and Area Studies Implementation Team

Minutes – October 6, 2009

Present: O' Brien (Chair), Barnes, Jiang , Koenker, Orta, Rudasill, Song, Sroka, Sullivan, Teper, Wei

Absent: Escobar, Oyler, Randolph (virtual)

Minutes for the meeting will be sent out for review prior to posting on the web. We will go in alphabetical order for minute-takers, excluding classroom faculty. Rudasill volunteered to take the minutes for the first meeting.

1. Introductions

Members of the group who were in attendance introduced themselves. (Note that John Randolph will be serving as a virtual member since he is not currently on campus.)

2. Review of Charge

O'Brien indicated that the primary charge to this group is implementation of the recommendations from both the International and Area Studies Planning Group and the Library Budget Group.

A complete description of the charge is available at
http://www.library.illinois.edu/nsm/intstudies/IAS_charge.html

3. Review of documentation already available on Web page

More information, including the recommendations of the International and Area Studies Planning Group, is available via links at this site. This includes additional information regarding concerns from the previous committee regarding services and budget group recommendations. The physical spaces in question for the location of the new unit include the current English Library and the current Asian Library spaces on the third floor of the Main Library building.

A question regarding the names of collections was raised. The planning group's suggestion had been that the individual collections falling under the International and Area Studies rubric would include the phrase "Collections and Services" as in African Studies Library Collections and Services. In other words there would be a unifying name for the unit with designations of specific areas of study, but a lot depends on the final disposition of the unit.

It was noted that there was a feeling that users would like little nodes that reproduce the old libraries. It was indicated that it would be good to focus on that part of the previous report that dealt with collections. Individual appendices and additions to the original planning report were pointed out to members. A question regarding space for visiting scholars was also raised.

4. Discussion of priority tasks

The first issue indicated under the charge (related to developing a service profile) was deemed as very important as were new initiatives and staffing. Hours were deemed as an especially important issue.

Further discussion revolved around decision-making. Our recommendations will go to JoAnn Jacoby and Paula Kaufman for comment and then be forwarded to the Executive Committee for further discussion. We reviewed the decision making flowchart that is up on the site. Recommendations regarding staffing, various resources, and services, as well as existing plans, can be considered. A copy of the decision-making flowchart is available on the New Service Models web site.

The first item of the charge was noted as being particularly important due to many new campus initiatives. In addition, staffing and collaboration were given high priority.

The question of expanded hours was also raised. The response was that this should be discussed and given serious consideration. It was noted that statistics show that users actually come in later and stay later than the hours most of the units now provide. It is possible that extended hours might be an aspect of the new unit (e.g., keeping what is now the Asian Library side open and closing the current English side when necessary).

Some of the Team's recommendations may affect plans that have been presented as expected outcomes. The Library administration is open to anything that will save time and money. At this time the process is like a puzzle with one missing piece. It is also possible to make recommendations for staffing. The Latin American and Caribbean Studies program is especially interested in this aspect. Whatever we suggest must be made crystal clear.

There will be no change in the funding for collection resources. We are looking at saving some operational costs through consolidation. Recommendations on allocation for the material collections should not part of the general discussion at this point. The library collections funds are currently stable since reductions are taken from operating costs. We are hoping this will not change in the future, but like many other things it depends on the budget for the University. Operating costs have been reduced by attrition.

5. Discussion of next steps

Communication of decisions and discussions are very important for the departments related to this new service model. In the past we have had open meetings, departmental meetings, and focus groups to bring in important feedback on the decisions we are making. Discussions with departments are seen as particularly helpful. Feedback mechanisms are also expected to result from the formation of several working groups.

Three working groups were formed. The groups and their membership include:

Collections/Space Working Group:

Anna Maria Escobar

Diane Koenker

Marek Sroka (Convener)

Tom Teper

Karen Wei

Services Working Group:

Shuyong Jiang

Andrew Orta

Lynne Rudasill (Convener)

Yoo-Seong Song

Helen Sullivan

(Elizabeth Oyler and Ken Cuno have since been added to this group.)

Staffing Working Group:

Terri Barnes

Helen Sullivan

Nancy O'Brien (Convener)

Marek Sroka

Karen Wei

6. Discussion of information needed

Are there other metrics we would find helpful? We have statistics for gate counts, directional and reference counts, and a chart that was developed during the last user survey that indicates the relationships between various libraries based on user feedback available to us.

The question was asked regarding how a new space would compare to what libraries have now and how will units be affected by the new spaces? The Slavic and East European Library is probably comparable in size to the new location. Africana and Latin American and Caribbean Studies would be the least affected as far as space is concerned.

Moving technical services out and creating more room for users will make a definite difference. Relocation of most of the back room operations have happened with Slavic already and as a result they discovered about 40-50% of the space was taken up for technical processing which is no longer done in the unit. We need to keep that in mind when comparing areas. There will hopefully be a net gain for services and users as far as space is concerned.

In addition, we need to have a sense of what is "business as usual" that goes beyond the public space. What are the various operations currently ranging across the units? Implied in this is a commitment to overall support that includes many aspects of the library that are not seen, but are important not only to everyday functioning of the unit, but to the delivery of services as well.

7. Discussion of future meeting dates and times

We will probably meet every 2 weeks and have planned the next large group meeting for Tuesday, October 27 at 3:30 p.m. in 428 Main Library. Working groups are asked to convene their meetings as well.

8. Adjournment