NSM LLTA Team Meeting –October 21, 2009

Present: John Wagstaff (Chair), Miles Efron (for John Unsworth), Carl Niekerk, Kathleen Kluegel, Caroline Szylowicz, Robert Cagle, Bruce Swann, Curtis Perry, Charles Wright, Dara Goldman, JoAnn Jacoby (Administration Liaison)

Caroline Szylowicz agreed to take the minutes for this meeting.

1. Team Composition

Dara Goldman (Department of Spanish, Italian, Portuguese) is replacing L. Kaganovsky on the team.

Miles Efron (GSLIS) is replacing John Unsworth (GSLIS), who may still attend some meetings as his schedule allows.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the October 14 meeting were approved with a minor revision.

3. Presentation/Discussion of the Kilton/Kluegel Plan

Several versions of the 2005 Kilton/Kluegel Plan have been circulating. Kathleen Kluegel based her presentation on the document titled “Our Shared Vision...”

In their original document, K. Kluegel and T. Kilton tried to find a way to improve services and library support to the humanities and developed a vision for the 21st century in which they identified roadblocks and opportunities. At the time, it was envisioned that the second floor of the Library should house public services, while technical and administrative services would move to the fourth floor. The plan suggested moving to room 220 (the cataloging department was willing to move elsewhere) to form a humanities library, with room 200 (Reference room). At that time, the Slavic & Eastern European Library was not considered, as there were no plans to move it at that time. The Reference department had already moved its service point to the Info Desk, and the Stacks Reference collection was already being planned. The Government Documents unit could have been moved to one of the Social Sciences libraries (ESSL or BEL), at a time when more government documents were being made available online.

At this time, CAM (Content Access Management = cataloging and metadata) is still in room 220. JoAnn Jacoby noted that other locations for cataloging and metadata services are still being explored, (Library basement, Oak Street facility, renting space ) but none of these are going to happen soon enough to affect this Team’s planning. K. Kluegel asked why the 4th floor is not an option anymore. J. Jacoby explained that IT and Digital Services and Development have moved to the 4th Floor.

J. Jacoby: space in room 200 freed by shift of materials to the Stacks Reference Collection and reference materials for the LIS library are already being housed there. It will remain a reference space for Social Sciences and Humanities, with more current reference collections and more user space.

K. Kluegel: turning room 200 into a general purpose space is a tragedy. Info Desk colleagues do not know the print reference collection in depth anymore.
C. Wright: we seem to be in a situation where some prime space has been removed from consideration apart from this team’s process. Is room 200 even on the table?

J. Jacoby: room 200 is a common library space, not reserved for those departments/disciplines around the table.

K. Kluegel: the Gov. Docs. Area of room 200 could revert to its original purpose as a journals room which would adequately house EGX and MDX journals.

J. Jacoby: the team can certainly make a claim to part of room 200, as LIS did.

R. Cagle: there seem to be two sets of rules. The English Library has to move out of room 321 because some other group wants it (Area and International Studies team), but we cannot claim room 200.

J. Jacoby: the building has to serve many different constituencies. We can certainly consider room 225 (Slavic) with contiguous portions of room 200 for journals.

C. Wright: what is most important is browsable space (whether departmental library or Main Stacks) versus non-browsable (Oak Street repository).

J. Jacoby suggested we look at affordances provided by a move, taking into account adjacent collections and services, instead of focusing only on square footage.

K. Kluegel remarked that while departmental library or Main Stacks is only a small difference for faculty members, the English Library serves an important teaching function and offers a mediated use of the collection for students. It helps undergraduate students grasp the structure of the collection in a way that is impossible to replicate in the Main Stacks. Students tend to use the English Library in the evening, although wage budgets needed to keep units open have been severely reduced, in favor of multi-use spaces (Grainger, Undergraduate Library).

J. Jacoby suggested that combining the wage budgets of the two units might help with opening hours.

. He agrees with K. Kluegel about the need for a well-articulated collection, and a process where large amounts of unused items can be moved to remote storage to free up space for needed materials.

J. Jacoby mentioned the upcoming serials deduplication process may free over 2 miles of shelf space.

C. Niekerk observed that some things like the PMLA publication in MDX could be moved to free space for more interesting items since it is available online.

K. Kluegel noted that the digital version of PMLA is not as complete as the print version and C. Szylowicz noted that recurring interruptions in the transfer process have prevented departmental units from tailoring their collections to users’ needs.

C. Niekerk felt that a literature and languages space should have an intellectual purpose and shouldn’t turn into another general use space. M. Efron agreed that it should be more than a
physical space, and wants the group to explore whether a move to the second floor would generate more use.

J. Wagstaff gave the example of the Music Library, which has always served the Dance Department, although the Dance Department patrons never felt “at home” in a space that only carried the name “Music”. Asked whether we are trying to preserve symbolic identities or something else.

C. Szylowicz noted that the LIS library, in spite of its decision to “go virtual” still claims some spaces as part of its identity.

K. Kluegel observed that the fact that patrons want to maintain a sense of space is not a flaw or a thing of the past. It is one of their characteristics, which we need to respect and accommodate.

M. Efron observed that other constituencies might come under the LLTA umbrella (I3, I-Chass).

K. Kluegel: “Textual Analysis” is a weird component in the charge and name of this team. It elevates a methodology to the same level as the disciplines, as if the Mathematics Library were renamed “Mathematics and Algebra”.

J. Wagstaff reminded the group that textual analysis doesn’t have to be part of the final recommendation or part of the future unit’s name. Suggested we discuss I3, I-Chass and textual analysis at a future meeting.

C. Wright: in keeping with the agenda of the day which is space, requested that a schematic of spaces that could be considered be generated. He finds it difficult to elaborate a plan without some space parameters.

J. Jacoby reiterated that the scope of services and programs should drive our discussions, instead of spaces.

D. Goldman noted that we had to deal both with conceptual aspects and physical resources.

C. Niekerk detects a lot of anxiety, tied to issues of space, identity, prominence. These need to be made clear in the final report.

J. Wagstaff is willing to include a physical plan in the report but also wants to make sure that we make a good argument that the final plan will generate more usage by faculty and students. Reaffirmed that EGX and MDX have as much right to good accommodation as other library units.

C. Wright noted that usage shouldn’t just be measured as the presence of individuals in the space but should also take into account what the users are doing. They could just be using the space to do homework and not use any of the available resources. A similar point can be made with electronic resources.

K. Kluegel agreed and noted that room 200 is always full of people who do not use the collections and that it is not an effective use of that space, as opposed to the English Library space, which is used in connection with its collections. She also noted that collections are essentials but that they require staff and that staff need space.
K. Kluegel addressed J. Jacoby’s repeated mentions of Cinema Studies as a potential constituency and emphasized that Cinema Studies is an integral part of the disciplines served by EGX and MDX.

J. Wagstaff has asked R. Cagle to discuss Cinema Studies in more details at a future meeting since R. Cagle had to leave the meeting early.

4. User Survey

J. Wagstaff asked a small group (Jacoby, Efron, Szylowicz) to revise the survey that will be sent out in late October or early November. Wants to make sure we are asking the right questions.

Topics for discussion at future meetings: Textual Analysis, Cinema Studies, Kluegel/Kilton Plan.

J. Jacoby inquired about the existence of annual reports or similar documents that would provide information about the departments to be served, because our final report will be read by people who will need to understand the scope of our constituencies.

C. Perry said no and went on to describe the English Department as a very large unit that covers everything that is construed as literature, which is pretty much anything that is written, and not just Belles-Lettres anymore. English includes literature, Cinema Studies, many specialties driven by the job market, as well as Writing Studies and Creative Writing.

C. Wright noted that most humanists work alone, which makes it hard to fit the disciplines in larger collaborative models. C. Perry added that the recruitment of junior faculty targets those specialties that are not yet represented in the department.