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

1. Minutes of the November 18 were approved with minor corrections and will be posted on the Team page.

2. Review of survey results:

The survey instrument, draft results and links to visualizations of the open-ended responses on Many Eyes have been posted to the Team page <http://www.library.illinois.edu/nsm/lit/index.html>.

JoAnn requested any additional edits or corrections to the results be sent to her by Thursday so we can finalize the draft results. She also suggested that we should share the results with those who responded. The Team members who sent invitations to respond to the survey agreed to send a link to the survey results to their contacts. (Subsequent to the meeting, Jacoby suggested that this link be sent out with the open meeting announcement, when the date and time for that are finalized).

John proposed that we briefly review the survey and identify results that can inform our recommendations. Responses to question 7 suggest that people visit the Library in person to browse, do research and consult with staff, as well as check out and return materials. Question 10 asked about the importance of various information resources—ones that many found very important to their work are books, journals, the Library catalog(s) and online resources. What is preferred mode of access for these (question 11)? – for journals it is online, for the most part.

80% of respondents say the available of digitized texts and tools for working with these corpora will impact their research (question 13) and the open ended responses are predominately positive. Robert was concerned that the phrasing of the question was neutral – the word “impact” could be positive or negative. Miles suggested that we should explore the responses to see what the concerns and opportunities are (and JoAnn pointed to the Many Eyes visualization as a means for further exploration). Charlie noted the impact that digital texts have had on research and teaching does not involve Library space, but rather involves work done on laptops and office computers. Caroline suggested that it is relevant, nonetheless with regard to how we configure collections (e.g. access to Google books). JoAnn noted that the way people engage with the digitized texts, which may well serve a different function than the print artifact, will almost certainly have impact on Library services. We need to think about how the library provides support for this new way of engaging with texts – it requires infrastructure and investment to provide access to these texts and tools. The infrastructure may be largely invisible (as is the case with the work the Library does to purchase and provide access to journals online) but is no less important. Carl suggested that the response points to a need to look at developing websites, providing online gateways to relevant materials in these areas--this should be part of the Team’s recommendations. John noted that users may not be aware of Library intervention (or potential intervention) in how they are searching or
doing research when they make use of electronic resources. Caroline agreed, saying that the Library’s role is to bring users, tools and librarians together, both onsite and online.

Kathleen noted that there are some interactions that require the print, especially when teaching new scholars how to navigate through primary and secondary sources and understand the structure of the literature. Dara suggested some key questions-- What do we need to preserve as we need to move forward? What things are not being used? Are there any gaps? Carl noted another key principle we should include in our recommendations: Electronic resources complement the print collection – they are not in competition. They do different things that come together to support research.

Charlie suggested that we cite the responses to Question 4 in our report – it makes a powerful case for space on 2nd floor –three of four libraries used most regularly by the respondents are on the 2nd floor. Dara suggested that having a Library focused on literatures and languages in a highly visible location with longer hours will be a boon to providing humanities education to undergrads. It will be a good basis for training in critical thinking, and a place where undergrads can get a foundational training in the full range of research practices.

John asked what we should make of question 18, which asked whether bringing the collections and services currently provided by English and Modern Languages together would make research easier or more difficult. Charlie suggested that for him it’s hard to imagine how it would make it more difficult UNLESS, of course, collections or staff were shrunk, or subject expertise lost. Perhaps those who thought it might be more difficult if were likely anxious that these features of the current library service would change. JoAnn agreed, noting that a few respondents thought a merger would make things easier, an almost equal number more difficult, and the vast majority weren’t sure. Looking at the comments accompanying the answer to this question, it would appear that those who were undecided seem to feel the ideas has merit, IF it is done right.

Kathleen noted that many of the comments and concerns centered on the importance of subject expertise, and concerns with gaps in coverage, e.g. German. There is a fear that the merger of space will mean reduction of subject specialists. We need to speak to this in the report, and specify that subject specialists have a training and background in the areas for which they have assigned responsibilities. John asked whether we need to specify in the report that we need a German and Scandinavian subject specialist and communicate with the department about the appointment? Consensus was yes. We also need an assigned linguistics subject specialist. Caroline noted that these can be decoupled, i.e. the person doing German does not also have to do linguistics -- either of these could be combined with another specialty.

Question 5 shows that very few people respondents actually come to the library on a regular basis. Charlie noted that during most of the academic year most faculty don’t have time to come in, but do their onsite research in short intensive bursts of in person visits, often between semesters.

3. Kolb Proust:

Caroline summarized the brief report on the Kolb Proust that she had distributed via email prior to the meeting (appended). The archive has a physical and virtual component. Caroline sees no reason to move the physical collection from the 4th floor and bring it into (or into closer proximity to) the new unit. Are there any advantages to moving to the 2nd floor? No obvious ones – and there
would be complications in moving Kolb-Proust to the 2nd floor since it needs a locked door and expert mediation. Advantages to collocating with other special collections? Being close to RBML is the better location for Kolb Proust, if adjacent space were to become available (e.g. 328/345 suite). However, Caroline has concerns about merging it into RBML because it is a distinct collection with microfilm, circulating collections, etc.

4. Communication with broader community:

JoAnn will send the final version of the survey results to those who were originally contacted in respect of completing it. (Subsequent to the meeting she recommended the results be sent along with the notice about the to-be-scheduled meeting).

She also suggested that we should distribute a draft report to the core user communities, and consider having an open meeting to discuss the recommendations. Doug and Curtis agreed this was important. We agreed to get a draft out next week, then have public meeting during our normal meeting time slot on Wednesday December 16, 10:15-11:30. Carl suggested using the Lucy Ellis Room in FLB, Robert checked to see if it was available but it is booked. John will follow up and try to get ACES Heritage or Room 66.

We know there will be some people who might have attended but who won’t be on campus because of finals or some other reason. To give people time to comment as fully as possible, the Team decided to extend the deadline for comments to December 20. The call for comments will include an option for anonymous feedback via the NSM form at http://www.library.illinois.edu/nsm/tellus.html.

We need to close the loop to show people that we will incorporate any input, but that does not mean that every comment will be incorporated verbatim. Not all advice will be useful and some will be contradictory. We will revise our recommendations base on input and speak to whatever substantive issues are raised.

5. Space:

Kathleen does not want to move the wall in Room 200, thinks it would negatively affect the aesthetic of room 200. Cagle agreed, noting that money would be better spent elsewhere, e.g. on offices. Doug respectfully disagreed, citing the need to have a contiguous unit for management of collection and security. Caroline’s only concern about moving the wall is that poaches some of the reference space. John wondered if the trend toward online journals would make this area redundant? No, there will continue to be many journals, especially in Modern Languages, that will continue to be available only in print, not online. If we create an attractive space, with more titles in one place, more people will browse. Charlie noted that when he brought a small group of English faculty over to view the potential space, there was a lot of excitement about the potential for the journals browsing area, with some comfortable user space (mix of work tables and comfortable chairs).
Where will the primary entrance be? Kathleen suggested Room 200. Doug noted that is all the more reason to have the wall moved, so we don’t have separate entrances. Dara agreed, noting the importance of creating a clearly defined space.

John asked if we wanted to discuss other uses for the Slavic conference room. JoAnn noted that that space is currently available by generally library use, and expressed concern about making this space unavailable to others, given the need to have meeting and instruction space.

Kathleen suggested recasting the first page of the report to talk about the positive reasons we want to move in this direction – why not generate some excitement? Kathleen agreed to redraft the introduction and background, JoAnn suggested using the following quote form the charge as part of the intro, i.e.: The Team was charged to develop an “understanding of the existing and emerging information needs of students and scholars engaged in the study of languages, linguistics and literatures; and then to make recommendations on how to best support these areas of study in the current environment.”

Caroline suggested we decide on a name for the unit, and proposed “Literatures and Languages Library.” There was consensus that this was a good name, but someone wondered if anyone in English would be upset? Curtis and Charlie think the name is fine, but noted that some will undoubtedly be concerned. There was brief discussion of whether Literatures should be singular and plural and everyone agreed that it should definitely be plural.

The Team will meet December 9, 10:15-11:30 in 4080 FLB to finalize the report and recommendations.
Appendix

The ABC of the KPA for the NSM LL(ex-TA) team...

For the past fifteen years, the Kolb-Proust Archive for Research has offered a unique collection composed of the books, periodicals, facsimiles and detailed research notes gathered by Philip Kolb during his lifelong scholarly work on the correspondence, life and works of Marcel Proust (1871-1922)\(^1\). This research collection is inseparable from the Proust holdings of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, which are known in their own right as one of the finest institutional Proust collections outside of France.

Much work has been accomplished since the inception of the Kolb-Proust Archive. By committing to retain Kolb’s « Proustian laboratory » as a distinct physical collection after his death, while embracing new technologies as a mean to turn the scholar’s wealth of personal data and knowledge into a publicly accessible, living scholarly collection, the Library was able to build on Philip Kolb’s almost legendary reputation in the world of Proustian and turn-of-the-century French studies. The Kolb-Proust Archive has secured its own name recognition in the broad Proustian community, where it is treated as an equal partner by such entities as the Institut des Textes et Mansucrits Modernes (ITEM), a branch of the CNRS, and the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF). This recognition is evidenced by numerous citations in prominent scholarly works such as the Index to the published correspondence, a revised anthology of Proust letters which establishes the guiding principles for a new, digital edition of the correspondence, major biographies by French and American authors, exhibition catalogs, the new edition of the complete manuscript notebooks of the BNF by the ITEM-led team, as well as countless other works which draw on the resources of the Kolb-Proust Archive and the RBM Library. Our Library was also a major lender for the BNF’s landmark 1999-2000 exhibition on Marcel Proust and the Arts. The Proust colloquium scheduled for April 2010 comes ten years after the Proust 2000 Symposium which drew to our campus some of the leading Proust scholars from around the world. Upcoming 100th anniversaries\(^2\) are likely to generate additional interest in Proustian studies, if that is even possible.

The Kolb-Proust Archive was established as a part of the Modern Languages and Linguistics Library for historical reasons. It was Philip Kolb’s “home library”, and Tom Kilton, one of its founding members (with Doug Kibbee and Emile Talbot, among others), was Head of that unit at the time. The diversity and rarity of the materials in the Kolb-Proust Archive for Research, however, make it a Special Collection, with needs that differ from those of the “regular” collections found in the English and the MLL Library. It

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\(^1\) Food for the number-crunchers: about 2,000 volumes, most of which have Special Collection status (15 bookcases), 40 Parisian newspapers on microfilm (5 microfilm cabinets), 40,000 index cards and 500 folders containing Kolb’s lifelong research record.

requires mediated access only by a knowledgeable librarian (me). As such, it requires a closed room, separate from the general collections.

A case can be made for the Kolb-Proust Archive (and its Kolb-Proust Librarian) to become part of the Special Collections Division, as a hybrid special collection situated between the University Archives and the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Until such an administrative and physical transfer can be made, the Kolb-Proust Archive for Research should stay in its current location, two floors above room 225, within reasonable proximity of the proposed home of the future Languages and Literature Library, so that the Kolb-Proust Librarian and French Subject Specialist can divide her time and presence between the two locations.

Caroline Szylowicz