

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
ACADEMIC SENATE

COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY

To: Dr. Joel Kuszai, Secretary, Steering Committee, Academic Senate

From: Liz Di Giorgio, Chairperson

Date: June 28, 2013

Subject: Annual Report of the Committee on the Library for 2012/2013

Committee Members: Dr. Maurizio Santoro (Liaison from Committee on Committees), Professor Danny Mangra (Steering Committee Designee), Professor Jeanne Galvin (President’s Designee), Professor Diane Carey (Member), Dr. Joanne Chang (Secretary), Ms. Marian Juste (Student Member), and Professor Liz Di Giorgio (Chairperson).

Dates Committee Met: The Library Committee met six times in the course of the academic year, at the following dates and times: September 12, at 12:40 p.m., and at 12:00 p.m. on November 21, December 12, March 6, April 10 and May 8.

Narrative Summary of Committee Work

The Library Committee began the year by systematically addressing our Committee’s charges, pausing to address particular requests and inquiries as they arose.

One such inquiry arose early in the semester at a CETL workshop on “Making Cultural Connections: Diversity and Global Learning Across the Curriculum.” A workshop attendee inquired as to whether the Library offers sufficient publications to support diversity and global learning. At a subsequent Library Committee meeting, Director Galvin reported that the Library offers *Ethnic News Watch*, which is an interdisciplinary, full text database of newspapers, magazines and journals that support diversity and global learning.

In response to a request from the Steering Committee that we explore the possibility of providing a bookshelf dedicated to academic freedom, the Library Committee invited Professor Tai and other interested faculty to meet with us and to tour the archives room with Professor Constance Williams. The archives room is meticulously maintained and filled with documentary books and publications from QCC, CUNY and SUNY dating back to the 1920’s. As the tour made clear, the archives room does not have space to accommodate a physical shelf dedicated to academic freedom. It is clear that the archives room will soon run out of space for its own records. As an alternative, Director Galvin

had proposed the addition of a LibGuide to the Library website that would allow access to digitized material, links to digitized materials regarding academic freedom, and a guide to material that is available in non-digital form. The Librarian for Emerging Technologies, Professor Jean Amaral, immediately began construction of the LibGuide. It is currently part of the Library website, and contains an email link for faculty to submit suggestions or additional material and resources. An important advantage to having the LibGuide is that the material will be available remotely and at all times, whereas a physical shelf would be accessible only during the Library's hours of operation.

Our tour of the Library with Professor Tai concluded with a discussion of the general shortage of space within the Library. The shortage of quiet study space was noted, as well as the general loss of Library space over recent years. The ground floor, for example, is currently used by the Academic Computing Center, the Writing Center, and the Student Learning Center. The second floor also houses CETL, which shares space with the Library whenever it is feasible, as the need arises. Although the access to databases and books is adequate, and much information can be accessed remotely, there is still a great need for more physical space for both students and faculty. Professor Joanne Chang has recommended that our Committee explore other areas or "quiet zones" on campus that could be adapted for study spaces. The central roof area in the Humanities Building was discussed, as it is currently unused, however its proximity to the surrounding classrooms presents a noise risk that could adversely impact the surrounding classes. Director Galvin noted that the Library's balcony space on the 2nd floor could possibly be enclosed, making it available as a year-round study space. She also noted that some of the downstairs cafeteria space might be a good venue for additional study space.

In the course of the semester, both the Steering Committee and the Student Activities Committee requested that the Library Committee consider ways to offer extended hours for our students. Professor Galvin has increased hours of operation, and the Library is now open on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. during the fall and spring semesters. Professors Galvin and Di Giorgio met with the Student Activities Committee on April 24, 2013 in order to find ways to further extend Library hours and to gather opinions as to what students need in terms of space, computers, copy machines, etc. Professor Galvin brought a sample survey for the Student Activities Committee to review, as they are interested in conducting an on-campus survey to assess the needs of students in terms of library use. Professor Ted Rosen, a member of the Student Activities Committee, will explore alternative funding sources to extend the Library's hours on a trial basis as an experiment to discover what the actual usage of the Library is during those extended hours.

In response to requests from the Steering Committee and the Student Activities Committee, Director Galvin has offered the possibility of opening the library at 7:30 a.m. on weekdays so that it would be ready for students to come in at 8 a.m., starting in fall 2013, on a trial basis. The possibility of partially opening the Library's second floor and front desk has also been discussed. This will require gating off areas and limiting the services available. The fact that many students use the Library to access textbooks for their courses (a service requiring personnel) complicates the decision, as including this

greatly needed service would diminish the cost-effectiveness of partially opening the Library as a study space. It was noted that the Academic Computing Center opens at 8:30 a.m. and close at 8:45 p.m. Another option to extend access to study space might be for the Academic Computing Center to stay open after the Library closes.

In response to our Committee's charges, we reviewed the security of the Library's holdings, and the adequacy of its resources, and found them to be satisfactory.

In keeping with our charge to review experimental course LIB101, the Library Committee reports that this course hasn't been offered for a long time. Director Galvin noted that offering courses that are free electives and not part of a degree program is problematic in terms of enrollment. A new 3-credit Library course was proposed for the Pathways "Individual and Society" bucket. Although the Curriculum Committee and the Academic Senate approved the course, the Pathways Review Committee turned it down.

With regard to the charge to report on information technologies/digitizing the collection, Director Galvin notes that there is much material that could be digitized, but that grants to fund such undertakings are scarce.

Regarding our Committee's charge to assess the security of funds for acquisition of books and digital subscriptions, Director Galvin explained the resources available, beginning with the budget requests made every spring. Resources generally come from the tax-levy fund. Resources for the databases come from the Tech Fee. In addition, the College Book Store contributes funds annually (\$15,000 this year) to purchase textbooks. This year, the Central Office also provided funding for the purchase of books.

Some confusion arose as to the charge to "Request, from the Office of Academic Affairs, as assessment of the Library." In an effort to clarify this charge, Director Galvin noted the various ways that the Library already performs assessment in the form of annual reports to the College, OLS (CUNY's Office of Library Services), ACRL (the Association of College and Research Libraries) and the US Census. Her reports are extensive and thorough, including information regarding gate counts, total hours of operation, number of staff in various categories (faculty, support, work study and tech fee), number of classes, reference transactions, circulation of regular loan material, textbooks on reserve, laptops and other devices, expenditures for various types of library materials, staff salaries and services offered. A good outcome of this discussion was the acknowledgement of the primary problem for the Library, which is the lack of adequate physical space. Director Galvin noted that in the middle of the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays at least 80 students can be found sitting on the floor due to the lack of adequate seating. The Library is also lacking in space to accommodate faculty.

Another important outcome of the discussion is the raised awareness that students are often confused about the services that are available or appropriate to expect. Director Galvin noted that she is amazed at how many students are not aware that the student computer center is downstairs. Because most of the Library's computers are restricted to

allow access only to Library resources, there is often a line of students waiting for the few computers in the Library that do allow internet access.

Professor Galvin also noted the inadequacy of Library surveys, as students often do not know what services can be appropriately expected from the Library. While they should expect a librarian to teach them how to find call numbers and access databases, they ought not expect the Librarian to provide them with call numbers or print out articles for them.

One of the responsibilities that greatly occupied the Library Committee was the charge to report on Library access for people with disabilities. The Library Committee reports that we have two computer workstations for students with disabilities. At our invitation, Ben-Ami Freier, Director of Services for Students with Disabilities and Carlos M. Herrera, Assistant Director, visited the Library and met with our Committee to relay their findings and recommendations. As a result, the following matters were brought to our attention:

1. There is a newer version of the Kurzweil 3000 (a reading and writing system) that Directors Freier and Galvin will have installed in the Library. Director Freier also noted that the Library has a ZoomText screen enlarger that ought to have a scanner attached.
2. Director Freier noted that the Library has some CCTV's and that these are important because they allow students to have text enlarged directly without having to first scan the material. Director Freier notes that the Library probably has older boxy ones, and that we might want to replace them with thinner LCD panels, if the Library has the budget for this. Director Galvin will follow up.
3. Electric tables are suggested for the computer stations so that disabled students will be able to adjust them for themselves, instead of waiting for a technician to manually crank them up or down to accommodate wheelchairs of various sizes. Director Freier also recommended that we check that the doors to the Library are automated and functioning, as well.

Another positive outcome of this meeting is that Director Freier inquired as to whether his office would be allowed to borrow Library material for an hour to scan or convert to Braille. Professor Galvin agreed that this would be fine, but that a procedure needs to be put in place.

While the Library Committee did check that there was access to the Library for disabled students, we were unanimous in thinking that it should be improved. While students could enter the Library through a ramp leading to the first floor, we were concerned about the doors on the second floor. While there is an automated door on the second floor for disabled students exiting the elevator hallway, there ought to be automated doors for the second set of doors that they need to open in order to enter the Library. Building and Grounds was immediately alerted, and they were quick to respond, notifying Director

Galvin that they will install the necessary hardware. As of the date of this report, Buildings and Grounds stated that they are currently working on this.

A concern also arose when two Library Committee members, on two separate occasions, saw disabled students waiting for faculty to arrive with the elevator key so that they could access the Library elevator. In one case, the student stated that he was avoiding going to Health Services to pick up a key because of its location at the back of the campus. This concern led to a meeting between Isabel Hocevar, Director of Health Services, and myself, as Chair of the Library Committee. Director Hocevar described the process required for students to obtain an elevator key (which involves a doctor's letter and a \$25 deposit that is refunded when a student returns the key). Director Hocevar explained that these processing factors (including privacy issues) make it difficult to have keys available at other locations. Director Hocevar explained that, in most cases, disabled students visit her office at least once before beginning their first semester, to make whatever arrangements are needed regarding their healthcare needs. The elevator keys are generally taken care of then, along with other needed arrangements. In response to my concern about a student with a temporary disability due to an injury or surgery, Director Hocevar assured me that, should a student be unable to get to Health Services due to their injury or surgery, Health Services and the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities would arrange to bring an elevator key to a student in need, as they always have done in the past when such a need arose.

Regarding the charge to report on Library support sessions for faculty across curricula, the Committee reports that the Library continues to offer discipline-tailored Information Literacy classes for our students. In terms of faculty support, Professor Jean Amaral has been designated as the liaison for faculty engaged in high-impact practices. In this capacity, she has addressed CETL workshops and has constructed a webpage for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL). The webpage contains information regarding High-Impact Practices Scholarship, Service-Learning, Education Databases, Community College Pedagogical Journals, CETL Resources, and SoTL by Discipline.

The Library Committee reviewed our Committee Guide, and recommended a small number of changes, such as removing reference to a report made to the Academic Senate on May 10, 2005 and a corresponding task force report. We were unable to find the report made on May 10, 2005, even with the diligent efforts of Professor Constance Williams. Our Committee also recommended removal of the reference to course LIB101, which is no longer offered. Professor Williams did find a document dated April 2006, entitled "Realizing the Possibilities: Long Range Plan for Queensborough Community College." The Library Committee (whose members will remain the same next year) will begin the 2013/14 academic year with a review of the section of this document that relates to the creation of The Learning Center. It is an important record of the history and reasoning behind the changes made to the Library in creating the Learning Center. While we plan to review the document dated April 2006, the Library Committee has decided to remain focused on the current state and needs of the Library.

New Recommendations

The Library Committee recommends continued attention to the Library's hours of operation, digitizing information regarding academic freedom, and addressing the ever-present problem of the need for more physical space.

In the next academic year, the Library Committee would also like to consider areas where additional signage might help to inform students about the existence of the Academic Computing Center (and its computers with internet access), the Student Learning Center, and the Writing Center, as well as signage that indicates the hours of operation of all the centers housed within the Library building. Perhaps additional signage about services provided by the Library should be considered.

Our charges to comment, where relevant, on Queensborough's ability "to meet the Middle States Standard of excellence 3: The human, financial, technical, physical facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible" and to "report on the long term planning for library and library services in the Master Plan" lead us back to the need for more physical space. The Library Committee recommends that the new Committee continue to press forward in the effort to ensure that the problem of physical space is addressed in terms of both short-term solutions and long-range planning. The committee recommends continued support and assistance to Director Galvin in investigating the feasibility of converting the second floor balcony space into a study area.

The fact that the current three members of the Library Committee will all continue to serve on the Library Committee in the next academic year is particularly important in terms of our commitment to meeting the needs of the disabled members of the College community. Committee member Dr. Joanne Chang recommended that each member of our Committee follow the paths that disabled students must take to ensure that the Library is truly accessible. In doing so, and upon meeting and conversing with a disabled individual using the wheelchair ramp, a number of issues were brought to light. While the individual was appreciative of the efforts to make the campus accessible, this person also noted that:

- The stall in the second floor bathroom for wheelchair access was unusable because the wheelchair was unable to make the tight turn needed to enter.
- While the wheelchair ramp was appreciated, the handrails are too far apart to be grasped on both sides. Grasping the rails on both sides is necessary to slow down the wheelchair because the angle of the ramp is a bit too high.

The Library Committee intends to devote continued attention to the issue of accessibility for the disabled throughout the next academic year, and to ensure that the updates discussed in terms of adaptive software and hardware have been carried out. The practice

of consulting the disabled members of our community should be encouraged whenever the accessibility of our campus is evaluated and whenever changes are made that affect these valued and respected members of our community.

New Committee Members

As previously noted in this report, the members of the 2012/13 Library Committee will continue to serve on the Library Committee in the 2013/14 academic year. Professor Joann Chang was reelected as Secretary and Elizabeth Di Giorgio was reelected as Chairperson.

Acknowledgements

The Library Committee would like to thank Professor Tai for always making herself available when guidance and assistance was sought throughout the year. The Committee also thanks Professor Constance Williams for her frequent and prompt assistance throughout the year. We thank Director of Services for Students with Disabilities Ben-Ami Freier and Assistant Director Carlos Herrera for reviewing the Library's adaptive equipment and software. In addition, the Committee thanks Director of Health Services Isabel Hocesvar for explaining the process by which students obtain access to the elevators. We also extend our thanks to the individual who shared thoughts and experiences that will help us to improve Library access for our students with disabilities.

As Chair of the Library Committee, I would like to add a note of thanks to Director Jeanne Galvin for her dedication and resourcefulness in responding to the needs of the students and faculty of Queensborough Community College. I would also like to thank my fellow Committee members for their dedication in carrying out the responsibilities of the Library Committee. It was a pleasure to work with each and every member of our Committee.

Submitted by,

Liz Di Giorgio,
Chair of the Library Committee

