

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 14, 2014

Subject: Annual Report of the Committee on the Library for 2013/14

Committee Members: Dr. Jeffrey Jankowski (Liaison, Committee on Committees), Dr. Helmut Loeffler (Steering Committee Designee), Professor Jeanne Galvin (President's Designee), Professor Diane Carey (Member), Dr. Joanne Chang (Secretary), 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: October 23, December 4, and February 26th at 12:30 p.m., March 24th at 4:20 p.m., April 30th at 12:00 p.m., and on May 14th at 12:30 p.m.

Narrative Summary of Committee Work

In the course of the 2013/2014 academic year, the Library Committee reviewed its charges and focused its attention on several important matters.

Library Hours of Operation: Improvements have been made in the Library's hours of operation in response to requests for extended hours. The Library used to be open from 8:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday. Thanks to Chief Librarian Jeanne Galvin's efforts, the Library is now open by 7:30 a.m. from Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters. In addition, Friday hours have been extended to accommodate students until 5:45 p.m. before they head to their 6:00 classes. In a further expansion of hours of operation, the Library has added Sunday hours from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. during fall and spring semesters.

Access for Disabled Students: As a result of the Library Committee's work of the previous academic year, the Office of Buildings and Grounds installed automatic door openers for the second set of doors (the "Starbucks doors") in time for the start of the fall 2013 semester. Director of the Office of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction, Paul Tellers, also reviewed wheelchair access to other entrances to the Library, confirming that a wheelchair user can enter the building at the southeast corner of the

main quad and have access to the elevator and all floors. He also examined the two ramps at the north side of the building that allow access to the first floor, verifying that one of them had the correct slope and handrails on both sides. He further noted that the wooden ramp does not meet the ADA Guidelines, but that it provides some access.

Accessibility of the Library Restrooms: In keeping with our Committee's charge and desire to ensure that the Library is fully accessible to the disabled members of the QCC community, the Library Committee contacted the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues; the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities; the Buildings and Grounds Department; and Paul Tellers to make them aware of access problems in the Library restrooms.

Director Tellers examined the restrooms and shared his findings with this Committee. He noted that the men's rooms on the second and third floors do not meet established guidelines in terms of adequate space for a wheelchair to be rotated. Similar issues exist in the women's restrooms on the second floor and third floor of the Library Building. Director Tellers notes that there are no grab bars in any of the restrooms that he has visited. He will be drawing up plans this summer that will address these issues, but noted that at least one fixture would be lost in each renovated restroom unless he is able to find additional adjacent space. Funding and scheduling of these changes must also be arranged once the plans are ready. The Library Committee considers this to be a top priority.

Physical Space: While it is not yet clear if the current construction project on campus will, upon completion, help to alleviate overcrowding in the Library, several steps are currently being considered to make the Library easier to use. Director Galvin noted that the front desk area of the Library will be consolidated with the reserved reference and laptop sections to ensure a better flow and access to Library services. The bookshelves on the main floor of the Library will be moved toward the center, while the study carrels will be moved closer to the windows, allowing for better lighting and a more pleasant study experience within the currently available space. The Library Committee walked through the Library, noting spaces between the radiators and pilasters along the windows on both floors that would simply need a shelf-like work surface and chair to make this currently existing space available for students to study comfortably. It must be noted that during our walk-through, students were often found sitting on the floor in these gap spaces, and it seems that it would be a minor project to add a shelf-like desk and chair to bridge this gap. The balcony on the second floor might also be considered as a possible means of expanding study space. It is currently an open balcony, and it might be reasonably affordable to convert it to an enclosed study space.

Aesthetic Improvements to the Library: In the course of the past academic year, Professors Susan Sciammarella and Sheila Beck formed an ad hoc committee to explore ways to refresh and renew the artwork found throughout the Library. Many of the current posters and prints feature celebrities and athletes who would be unrecognizable to most students using the Library today. These posters and prints have become yellowed and faded, and no longer serve their function. Their frames have deteriorated as well.

Professors Sciammarella and Beck created and administered a student survey regarding the current artwork. The survey results confirm that students prefer brighter, vibrant and more visible artwork. Discussions among the ad hoc committee members and the Library Committee members led to the agreement to select posters that are from various periods of history and from diverse cultures. It was also agreed that the Library would obtain, as the key image of our project, a poster of a painting by contemporary artist Kehinde Wiley that is based on the painting of Jacques-Louis David depicting *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*. It was decided that this contemporary work and the historic work would be hung in proximity to each other to serve as a comparison that would more fully inform the painting by Kehinde Wiley.

Professor Bob Rogers has kindly offered his services in helping to judge the Library's annual Student Photography Competition, and the Library Committee has located a prominent place to the left of the Library main doors in which to display the first, second, and third place winning photographs. In addition, Professor Rogers has offered to reprint student work from the 2014 Annual Student Exhibition at no cost to the Library, so that it will only have to cover the cost of framing. The Library Committee selected 6 works from the student exhibition as being appropriate for a Library setting. If the Library's budget is approved, the Committee will begin to obtain reasonably priced frames for these purposes. Liz Di Giorgio will frame the posters and prints, relying on the advice of new Committee member Lisa Scandalianto. It is hoped that some affordable frames and posters will be obtained this year, and that the task of updating and refreshing the artwork in the Library will become a regular feature of the work of this Committee.

Bringing Nature into the Library: In addition to the placement of artwork and posters, the Library Committee had intended to explore the possibility of having a monitor installed in the Library that would feature important Library information and nature photography, especially photos taken at Oakland Lake and throughout our campus. Nature imagery could contribute greatly to creating a quiet, contemplative atmosphere for study. Professor Eugene Harris has expressed his support for this idea, but this plan has been put on hold due to the complications in meeting with Bruce Naples this academic year.

New Recommendations

It is recommended, first and foremost, that the 2014-2015 Library Committee members continue to carry out the important work of making the Library restrooms on all floors completely accessible for disabled students. It is also suggested that the Committee confirm whether the wooden ramp is acceptable in light of the fact that the ramp immediately next to it does meet all guidelines.

It is also recommended that the Committee members continue to explore with Paul Tellers the possibility of creating additional desk space between the radiators and pilaster on the main and second floors of the Library. It is estimated that an additional 20 study areas could be easily created should this plan be deemed feasible. It is further suggested that the Committee members inquire as to the possibility of enclosing the open balcony

space to create additional study space for students. It is recommended that these issues be discussed with Paul Tellers as soon as the restroom issues have been resolved.

It is also recommended that the Library Committee continue to review the Library's print and electronic resources, collections and website, and that it continuously review the needs of the Library with regard to physical space. While the current construction may eventually alleviate crowding in the Library, the issue of physical space should be reviewed continuously, especially with regard to fluctuations in enrollment and long-range planning for the College.

It is recommended that the Library Committee complete the project of framing the posters and student artwork already selected for hanging in the Library, and that it continue to select, as far as the budget and wall space will allow, additional posters in order to create a pleasant and stimulating environment for students. It is suggested that student artwork always be considered for inclusion, as this will create an environment that is meaningful and affirming for our students.

It is also recommended that the Library Committee continue to explore the acquisition of an additional monitor in the Library to communicate important Library information, and to also display nature imagery that will create an atmosphere conducive to reading, reflection and study.

New Committee Members

The 2013/2014 Library Committee welcomes our new members, Dr. Helmut Loeffler, Dr. Sujun Wei, and Ms. Lisa Scandaliato. We welcome Dr. Loeffler and Professor Diane Carey, who were unanimously elected as our new Chair and Secretary, respectively, for the 2014/2015 academic year at our meeting on May 14th.

Acknowledgements

The Library Committee wishes to thank Director Jeanne Galvin for her invaluable expertise and advice, as well as her resourcefulness and dedication in responding to the needs of the students and faculty of Queensborough Community College. We also wish to thank Professors Susan Sciammarella and Sheila Beck for initiating the project to refurbish the Library's artwork, and for their assistance in the selection of work. We thank Professor Bob Rogers for his generosity in offering prints of artwork from the 2014 Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition for display in the Library, and for helping to judge the Library's Annual Photography Contest. We thank Professors Sandra Marcus and Jean Amaral for their roles in conducting the Library's Annual Photography Competition. The Library Committee also wishes to thank Professor Philip Pecorino, Professor Emily Tai, and Professor Jeffrey Jankowski for their availability, support and guidance throughout the year. We thank Professor Constance Williams for keeping records of our activities, and David Moretti for posting all of our Committee's minutes, agenda and reports. As Chair of the 2013-2014 Library Committee, I thank Professor Joanne Chang for her excellent work as Secretary for our Committee and Professor Diane Carey for her ideas

and enthusiasm throughout the year. It was a privilege and pleasure to work with each and every member of the 2013-2014 Library Committee.