

**University Library Committee Minutes**  
**April 13, 2016, 3:15 pm**

Present: Thomas Burr, S.J. Chang, Chris Hamaker, Marie Labonville, Dallas Long, Carlyn Morenus, Jay Percell, Dane Ward, Clint Warren, Chelsea Fray

Absent: Magdalena Casper-Shipp, Cindy Kerber, Kelly Murphy, Molly Quinn

Guest: Becky Franz, Library Facilities Project Director

Meeting was called to order at 3:17pm.

Burr framed the meeting by explaining recent concerns passed to him by Academic Senate representatives regarding the library's plan to review and withdraw monographs from IRMA, the first floor of the library that was closed to the public in 2007 or 2008 and which currently houses approximately 300,000 infrequently used titles. A proposal is planned to go before the Board of Trustees in May that, if approved, will allow the University to use Certificate of Participation (COP) funds to rehabilitate the Milner Plaza by stopping the water infiltration and rehabbing the affected parts of the first floor. In order to be prepared for the project, the library needs to relocate collections from the first floor to another location for the duration of the construction. In order to control costs related to temporary storage, the librarians are evaluating the collections and withdrawing specific titles.

Burr suggested the committee go on a tour of IRMA in order to understand the scope of the issue. Ryan Peters, IRMA project manager, guided the committee members on a tour. He explained the history of IRMA and its storage collections, the water damage, and the steps the library staff have taken over the years to mitigate the damage. Ward and Franz explained the anticipated rehabilitation project will prevent future water infiltration and allow the interior to be repaired.

After returning to the conference room, Becky Franz introduced herself as the director for facilities projects at Milner Library. Although Becky is a member of the Facilities Planning and Construction staff, she works exclusively on library projects and "lives" at Milner Library. Franz provided a project timeline for the anticipated plaza rehabilitation. Construction on the exterior of the building would commence in January, and work on the interior would commence in April. By March 1, the collections must be relocated in order for facilities staff to prepare the interior for construction. Franz said facilities had estimated the cost of storage the books in a way that provides access to the books would be 10 times higher than if the books are simply in boxes and not accessible during temporary storage. Burr asked if the project could be done in phases, more slowly over time. Franz said yes, if different funding sources were available. Currently, the funds are from bonds. All contracts must be closed out on December 31, 2018 so that Purchasing can close out all costs by June 30, 2018.

Burr explained the purpose and composition of the Academic Senate, reading from their mission statement that they are advisory to the University President. Burr asked if committee members had reviewed the information from Susan Kalter, the chair of the Academic Senate, which he had forwarded the previous day. Some had, and some had not yet had the opportunity.

Burr asked Ward to explain the history of collections management and the relocations of collections that had taken place at Milner over time. Ward explained the library has relocated materials many times. The largest relocations took place in 2007/2008, when Dean Emerita Cheryl Elzy condensed the library

from subject-based floors and multiple service points into the library's current service model. At that time, IRMA opened as a closed stacks storage space. Former Dean Wastawy relocated approximately 30,000 books from the third floor in 2010 in order to create increased seating for students. This relocation took place in a short period of time – mere weeks – and during the summer when no notification of or input from faculty occurred. Ward explained that reviewing and withdrawing collections is a normal aspect of librarianship, but this normal work is often delayed when other library responsibilities are more pressing. Consequently, this project may seem shocking to some because we now have so much to do when this should have taken place in past years as part of normal work.

Burr asked whether the trustees and the president had toured the library's first floor. Ward said President Dietz has definitely seen the space, as well as several of the trustees.

Burr opened a discussion with committee members. He asked what they think after reading Susan's documents, touring IRMA, and listening to the details of the proposed project. Hamaker said the books on upper floors need to be culled or moved and maybe the librarians can consider whether some aspects of the open stacks collections could be moved back into IRMA since some items are available online. Hamaker said some journals that are not available online are in IRMA, and it makes more sense to him to have these upstairs. Long said that some IRMA titles do get moved to the open stacks collections, either upon request by faculty members or because their usage indicates they should be more accessible.

Labonville asked for a clarification of what deaccessioning means. She asked whether unwanted books could be sold or given away. Ward explained that the library sells some books to Better World Books, a company that resells books to undeveloped countries. Long explained that Better World Books is interested in only a small number of our books. Hamaker asked whether books could be transferred to departments. Kahl replied that the option is technically possible but the library would still be required to track the books' disposition, which is not very feasible.

Labonville asked whether it is necessary to empty the first floor completely. Kahl replied that, practically-speaking, some parts of the collection are under parts of the building with little to no water infiltration and are parts that won't be greatly affected by the rehabilitation project. These parts of the collection can remain where they are. Long said the majority of the collection on the first floor is under parts of the building that will be affected by the rehabilitation project and will have to be moved.

Labonville asked if parts of the collection can be stored with the departments temporarily. Morenus thought few departments likely have extra space to accommodate boxes of books. Percell asked if the parts of collections most relevant to departments be given permanently to departments. Long said this would impede interdisciplinary research.

Percell noted that Milner operates differently from other colleges and asked whether Milner adheres to the practice of shared governance the same way other colleges do or whether Milner has different needs, different decisions and thus needs to practice shared governance in its own way.

Morenus said Milner should not be considered an archive – that mission is more appropriate for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which is a research institution. It is not realistic for Milner to own a copy of every book. Interlibrary borrowing is an efficient and effective alternative.

A member noted that the concern that the “Annex” collection – the approximately 30,000 titles moved to IRMA from Floor 3 in 2010 by Dean Wastawy – should not be merged with the larger IRMA collection is a valid point. Percell asked why the library staff intend to merge the Annex collection. Kahl explained that interfiling the Annex books with the larger IRMA collection will keep the Annex titles safer from water infiltration, as their current location is under one of the worse parts of the plaza for leaks. Morenus said the perception seems to be that Annex titles will be discarded once they are part of the larger IRMA collection.

Another concern is that books are not being used often because they are in closed stacks, preventing tactile discovery (i.e. shelf-browsing, leading to serendipitous discovery of useful titles.) One of Susan’s documents suggests the librarians should help faculty integrate the use of books into teaching and learning more deliberately. Several members disagreed this endeavor should be a focus of librarians’ activities.

Labonville asked whether Milner has guidelines currently for weeding or deaccessioning materials from its collections. Ward replied that subject librarians use quantitative data, such as circulation numbers, and qualitative data, such as their expertise in the curricula of their subject areas, to make decisions. Ward noted that many subject librarians are conservative in their decision-making about titles to deaccession. Kahl said that approximately 38% of IRMA titles had never been checked out by patrons and 16% had been checked out only once, even those titles resided in open stacks, judging by the circulation data retained by the library’s tracking systems. Labonville asked whether the library staff collects data on usage that did not lead to check-out’s, and Kahl answered that the library staff have only had processes to capture that data since 2008 or so.

Chang said he had not yet had the opportunity to review the documents Burr had forwarded to members the previous evening, and he asked Burr what he hoped to get out of the meeting. Burr asked whether he could speak and act on behalf of the committee in the coming weeks. He asked whether he could keep them informed via email as the circumstances evolve, and whether they could keep him apprised of their perspectives and questions via e-mail. Members answered affirmatively.

Hamaker stated the first floor needs to be repaired. Percell suggested the library present several cost proposals for storing the books vs storing only those titles the library wants to retain. Percell said the facilities project and the culling of the collection are separate issues and should be examined separately. Warren said the issues are joined because of faculty members’ perceptions that storing books in boxes will put those books closer to being eventually discarded.

Labonville asked whether the library’s catalog will denote that IRMA books are inaccessible, should the books be boxed up? Long said they have a way to edit the records and change the books’ status to “Unavailable” or to another phrase that indicates Milner owns the books but that the books aren’t available for use.

Burr asked to hold a May meeting, but several members aren’t available immediately following the end of classes. A tentative meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>(?) in Milner 311G.

Meeting adjourned at 5pm.