Student Library Advisory Committee

Meeting of: March 10, 2004

Present: Kathy Ball (Thode), Vivian Lewis (Chair), Sean Luyk (UG Music), Barbara McDonald (Mills), Ines Perkovic (Innis), Erin Robinson (MSU), Jackson Wiegman (UG Engineering)

1. Minutes of the November 13, 2003 meeting
Copies distributed prior to the meeting.

2. Library Budget
Kathy Ball reported that the budget situation for the current fiscal year (ending April 30) was reasonably good, due in large part to the strength of the Canadian dollar. The Library originally projected a deficit of about $400,000, but is now anticipating a balanced budget for the current year. Despite this, a cumulated deficit of approximately $230,000 exists from about two years ago.

The University Librarian hopes to propose a budget for 2004/2005 that will allow the Library to maintain its acquisitions and licensing programmes, and further increase monograph purchases by about 2,000 titles.

3. New Electronic Products
Ines Perkovic distributed copies of a list of new electronic resources purchased since the November 13 meeting. Special mention was given to the three new journal suites (Blackwell Publishing, Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press) and the two new JSTOR sets (Ecology & Botany and General Science). Important new titles are announced on the “News & Events” section of the library home page and on the Library list serv. [To subscribe to the library listserv, go to: <http://library.mcmaster.ca/forms/spacesurvey.htm>]

4. MyAccess
Kathy Ball reported that the Library was implementing MyAccess, a new proxy service, in response to problems users face with the current CIS proxy service [forgotten passwords, inability to configure browsers from home, etc.]. MyAccess is currently in use by a number of Health Sciences users and MacIntosh users who previously were unable to make use of remote access to library resources. The Library hopes to make MyAccess available to the general student/faculty population in September.

5. Wireless Access in the Libraries
The Library and CIS have agreed to jointly fund wireless access in public spaces in Thode, Mills and Innis Libraries [as an adjunct to CIS’ campus-wide “wireless canopy” project]. Work is now complete in Thode (basement, 2nd floor and 3rd floor). Areas in Mills and Innis will be completed later this summer.
Members were asked to examine the “wireless” floor plans for Mills, Innis and Thode [passed around during the meeting] and let us know if we’ve missed any key areas.

For more information about wireless connectivity on campus, see:
http://www.mcmaster.ca/cis/network/macconnect

6. **RACER**
The Library is implementing a new electronic interlibrary lending system called RACER. Once users self-register for the service, their contact information is automatically populated into request forms. An e-mail notification is sent once material is ready for pick-up. The staff side of the system is being implemented today (March 10). The public side of the system will be implemented later in the Spring. To self-register for the service, go to: http://eir.library.utoronto.ca/ocul/registration_mcmaster.cfm>

7. **Public Space Utilization Study**
The Library is conducting a review of the use of public space in Mills, Innis and Thode Libraries. The final report, due July 2004, will attempt to find a reasonable balance between collection, study, technology and service space. Special focus will be given to finding the right mix of individual and collaborative study space for the increasing number of students using the library. Copies of the committee mandate were distributed via e-mail prior to the meeting.

The group was asked to comment on a draft version of the user survey to be conducted the last week of March [and posted to the web site]. Recommendations were made to include a question on frequency of library use and to add soft seating as an option for the furniture preferences. [NOTE: Survey now available at: http://library.mcmaster.ca/forms/spacesurvey.htm

The group was asked to participate in student focus groups to be held the week of March 23.

8. **Proposal for a Knowledge Commons in Mills Library**
The Library is working on a proposal for an integrated learning facility on the 2nd and 3rd floors of Mills Library. The new “Commons” would provide one-stop access to electronic resources, technology, assistance, instruction and study space. The preliminary features 200 wired stations (with e-mail, internet and productivity software), capacity for 120 simultaneous wireless connections, soft seating for 80 students and up to six group study rooms. [Preliminary floor plans displayed at the meeting.] If funding is found, the Library hopes to open the facility in September 2005.

9. **Hours**
Vivian Lewis distributed copies of
- the extended hours at Mills and Thode Libraries for the weekends of April 10, 17 and 24
- summer hours for all campus libraries for the period April 29 - Sept. 5.
Hours are available at  http://library.mcmaster.ca/about/hours.htm

Erin Robinson reported that the MSU is not certain if All-Night-Study will be running this year due to funding issues

10. **Brief Reports from Libraries**

i. **Mills Library (Barbara McDonald)**
WebSPIRS, the platform through which we access a large number of our e-resources, is no longer being developed. The Library conducted a review of other platforms. Databases are now being migrated over to new platforms as their subscriptions come up for renewal.

The Library is investigating Open URL link resolvers. Open URL would allow users to link directly from a database citation to the full text of the article in a subscribed e-resource.

We continue to catalogue the LP collection. We are also collapsing the two music reference collections into a single sequence.

ii. **Innis Library (Ines Perkovic)**
Ines Perkovic has been appointed Acting Business librarian until the end of June. A new librarian has been hired until the end of April to help with instruction and reference.

Traffic has been steady this term. Study space and computers are being well used. Group study space is in high demand. Conducted approximately 70 instruction sessions (in-library, lab, classroom) in January.

The Library, in conjunction with the area chairs, will be updating the collection policy for Business to reflect the current curriculum.

As part of a campus wide initiative, energy efficient lighting is being installed throughout the library. We plan to replace some broken chairs and refurbish the existing group study rooms this summer.

iii. **Thode Library (Kathy Ball)**
The suggestion box has been relatively quiet this year - except for suggestions that we introduce wireless connectivity.

The Library is participating in the Public Space Utilization Study.

Signage issues, mentioned at the November 2003 meeting, will be addressed after the collection has been shifted.
11. Questions from Student Members

i. **How can the library support research intensity and a strong public research profile with limited library budget and resources?** [question prompted by Sil article of February 26 - distributed at meeting]

Vivian reported that the Library was extremely pleased to see the *Silhouette* take an active interest in the health of the campus libraries. She noted that, given the large number of consortial purchases being made, library e-resources across the province are actually becoming more similar each year.

The Library plans to devote more effort to promoting our resources and services during the coming year. [Student members recommended that the Library take out an advertisement in the *Silhouette* notifying students of new products - a pared down version of the insert we did a few years ago.] We also hope to simplify access to our electronic collections by streamlining our e-Resources database and by introducing Open URL link resolvers (to take users from citations in databases to licensed full text). We’re also discussing the introduction of bibliographic management software (like EndNote, ProCite or RefWorks) to allow users to manipulate citations more easily.

Vivian noted that, with the exception of Business, faculty members select the books for each subject area. Students are encouraged to speak to the library representative for their area if they notice any gaps in the collections. The list of reps, found at [http://library/mcmaster.ca/cat-coll/coll/lib-reps.htm](http://library/mcmaster.ca/cat-coll/coll/lib-reps.htm), was distributed at the meeting.

ii. **The compact shelving in the Music Area seems to malfunction a lot. Any plans of improvement?**

Vivian agreed to speak to the Manager of Circulation Services about the issue and report back to the group via the minutes.

*NOTE:* The Circulation Services Manager reports that they had some difficulty with the compact shelving units on the 1st floor in early February, but the units seem to be working very well now. Students are encouraged to report problems to the Circulation Desk.

iii. **Many students use the Music Area as a study and socialization area - not for listening to music.**

Will be reviewed by the Public Space Utilization Group.
iv. **Photocopiers on the first floor are ALWAYS jammed. Are the machines too old?**

Vivian reported that copiers and printers are serviced by an outside contractor. The volume of copying on the 1st floor of Mills is significant (proximity to Reserve Desk), so paper jams are more frequent. Vivian agreed to report students concerns to the Library Administrator who oversees the contract.

*NOTE: Concerns have been reported.*

v. **How frequently do we replace our public computers? The monitors on the first floor of Mills are very poor quality.**

The bulk of our public computers are replaced on a four year cycle. The stations on the 1st floor of Mills are designated as “e-mail stations”: small numbers of these older stations were introduced in Mills, Innis and Thode a few years ago to reduce the demand on our research stations. The stations are not upgraded regularly.

vi. **Can you put signage at stations with MacConnect ports [laptop access] to discourage other students from using them?**

Vivian will check the signage and report back to the group via the minutes.

*NOTE: Signage was already in place on the MacConnect carrels at Innis and on the 1st floor of Mills, but not the carrels on the 4th floor. Vivian will arrange to have proper signage installed.*

vi. **Are people able to “log” your search after you log off a public station?**

Vivian agreed to ask the Associate University Librarian (Information Technology) this question and report back through the minutes.

*NOTE: The Associate University Librarian (Information Technology) reports that, once students log off the proxy server, other students can not access or log previous activity. If users fail to close down properly, the next user can use the back button to track searches. Computing & Information Services) can track activity - as is required to maintain the University’s “Acceptable Use” policies.*

vii. **Why don’t the libraries provide change?**

The Library is unable to provide change for security reasons.
viii. **Why can’t you take out sound recordings?**

Given the large number of students requiring access to the sound recordings, faculty have recommended that the items be used in the library. Students may borrow sound recordings for class presentations by presenting a “Need to Borrow Audio Materials” form signed by the faculty member at the Circulation Desk. For more information, please see  http://library.mcmaster.ca/guides/music-2.htm@loans.

ix. **Many students find it hard to find sound recordings in the Library.**

Many students are not aware that the sound recordings are in MORRIS.

The Music Librarian will update the *Music Area* brochure to notify users about the ability to limit results in MORRIS to scores, cassettes, etc.

x. **Why is the Library only open until 11:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday evenings during the Extended Hours period?**

The Libraries close at 11:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday during Extended Hours (instead of midnight, as during the week) to allow staff [and students!] sufficient travel time to meet final bus connections downtown.

12. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:45.

**Next Meeting:** November 2004