Minutes of the Student Library Advisory Committee (SLAC)  
Wednesday November 21, 2007  
Multipurpose Room, Mills Memorial Library

Present: Karen Nicholson (Library), Steffen Walma (Kinesiology), Gregory Elvikis (SOCS), Arvin Jacob (MSU- SRA), Catherine Baird (Library), Jenn LeNestour (IRC), Kristina Agur (Science Society), Jonathan Borrelli (Social Sciences Society), Barbara McDonald (Library), Linda Michtics (Library), Vivian Lewis (Library), Jeannie An (Library)

1. Welcome
Vivian welcomed all members to the meeting.

2. Business Arising
None

3. University Library Budget
The Library is facing a challenging financial situation. Our share of the University’s overall budget is small compared to other Canadian academic libraries. As of 2006, we were receiving 3.91% of the University budget. Our counterparts are typically receiving 5-7%. We are the lowest funded medical doctoral library in Canada. We are lowest in Canada in terms of total staff expenditure, monograph expenditures and total expenditures. In 2003/04, the Library received $1.3 Million from Indirect Costs of Research. In 2006/07, we received $656K. Our subscription prices are often calculated based on our “research intensity factor” (which is based on a variety of variables - including the number of faculty and the total amount of research grants coming into the University.) Based on this factor, we pay the 4th highest subscription fee for Elsevier (our biggest subscription) in Canada. In 2007/08, we are projecting a balanced budget. In 2008/09, we are forecasting a deficit of $1 Million. In 2009/10, we are forecasting a deficit of $2.5 Million. The Provost has struck an Alternative Budget Model Review task force. We hope that the work of this committee will improve the Library’s budget situation.

4. Thode Learning Commons
The Library is embarking on a large-scale renovation of the Thode Library. The project is part of the University Campaign. We hope to raise approximately $4 Million for the work. The Library is currently engaged in a public consultation process. The Library has scheduled several focus groups for undergraduates, faculty, graduate students and staff. Focus group sessions include: a) questions about user behaviour; b) reactions to images from other learning spaces; c) reactions to proposed floor plans. Reactions to floor plans from the SLAC members:

- Zoning by floor currently works well in Thode. Group work confined to basement.
- Concerned about noise from 1st floor traveling up through the building.
- Like idea of glassing in the atrium. Like the online room booking system.
- Intense demand for more electrical outlets.
• Question the need for an auditorium in Thode. There are already lots of lecture spaces.
• Question the placement of tables in silent study areas. Should replace with carrels.
• Some concern about the lack of collection space on the floor plan.
• Need enhanced software options for sci/eng students. Want GIS software in Thode.

**ACTION:** Vivian will forward dates for new sessions to group members.

5. Liaison Program (Barb)
See Liaison Report Fall 2007  [http://library.mcmaster.ca/about/advisory/liaison-report.pdf](http://library.mcmaster.ca/about/advisory/liaison-report.pdf)

6. LibQUAL
LibQUAL is a standardized on-line survey of the perceived quality of library services, collections and facilities. Instrument was created at MIT. LibQUAL is endorsed by the Association of Research Libraries. McMaster has run the survey twice (2006 and 2007). Results fairly consistent between the two runs: Undergraduates fairly satisfied with collections but very concerned with space. (Some improvements made between 2006 and 2007). Faculty satisfied with space but very concerned with collections. Graduates concerned about both facilities and collections. Senior Librarian currently doing an environmental scan of our assessment needs in the Library.

7. Burlington Campus
Jeannie updated the members on the proposed Burlington campus for McMaster. The new campus will extend the DeGroote School of Business to Burlington with a focus on executive education including moving the current MBA School to Burlington. Currently the University is looking for another location for the site as the downtown location does not meet the needs of the new campus including: space to expand and accessible parking.

A new location should be announced shortly. In the meantime, members were encouraged to visit the “Burlington Campus” update page: [http://www.degroote.mcmaster.ca/about/burlingtonc.aspx](http://www.degroote.mcmaster.ca/about/burlingtonc.aspx) for further updates.

8. Other Business
a) Group Study Rooms @ Health Sciences Library
   • Currently only Health Sciences students are allowed to book the study rooms in the Health Sciences Library.
   • Non-Health Sciences students are not allowed to book the rooms although they are allowed to book the rooms in the other libraries
   • Vivian explained that since Health Sciences Library is not part of the University Library, they may have different policies and are governed differently

**ACTION:** Vivian will convey this concern to the Director of Health Sciences
b) Future SLAC meetings

- Discussion arose on the best time for SLAC meeting. Student members agreed that earlier in the term, mid-September was the best choice. It was suggested that having a WIKI component and making sure this was done early in the term was the best way to get students to attend the meetings. As for the spring meeting, it was suggested that the best time for the meeting was two weeks before the February reading week.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.