Library Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 23rd, 2025
Zoom
Start Time: 3:00 PM

Agenda:
1. Welcome and Introductions (Kyle Bradbury)
2. University Library Update and Strategic Realignment Impacts (Joe Salem)
3. Agenda setting for this academic year (Kyle Bradbury)

Present:
Astrid Adele Giugni, Kate Driscoll, Blue Branton, Alex Zhang, Dracine Hodges, Tsitsi Jaji, Misha Angrist, Aaron Welborn, Edward Triplett, Jennifer Knust, Tim McGeary, Michael Reiter, Sunag Udupa, Dean Smith, Angelina Lucento, Naomi Nelson, Tracie Canada, Emily Daly, Megan Crain, Joe Salem, Esther Kim Lee, Kyle Bradbury, Jameca Dupree, Bill Seaman, Jon Reifschneider

Absent:
Lauren Ginsberg *(On Sabbatical)*, Thavolia Glymph *(On Sabbatical)*, Giuseppe Lopomo, Jocelyn Olcott, John Quinterno, Saskia Ziolkowski, Beverly Murphy, Akhil Eraniyan

1. Welcome and Introductions (Kyle Bradbury)

- Kyle Bradbury opened the first meeting of the academic year, welcoming members and reviewing the Library Council's advisory and communication role.
- Members introduced themselves and shared their favorite library resources.
- Reviewed the mission of the Library Council: "The Library Council advises the University Librarian and the Provost on matters relating to general policy. In addition, it acts as a sounding board for proposed major changes and serves as a communication link between the library and the faculty." The interpretation of this charge includes:
    - Discussing emerging challenges, needs, and opportunities for the Library and advise on those issues
    - Sharing the perspectives of our individual departmental experiences to advise Library strategy and policy
    - Acting as ambassadors for the Library and its services throughout the university

2. University Library Update and Strategic Realignment (Joe Salem)

Joe Salem provided an update on strategic realignment work at the university level, budget reductions, and their impacts.

- The Libraries were responsible for $4M in cuts.
    - While other units took a 20-25% cut, the library cuts were around 10%
    - The university's $350M cost-reduction initiative included $150M from the Provost Area Management Center (PAMC), and the Libraries fall under PAMC
    - Debt servicing accounts for 16% of Library budget

- Key impacts of the strategic realignment:
    - Reduced staffing by 40 FTE
    - $1M cut to collections (this was already a direction the Library was heading in)
        - The Library Service Center is near capacity; focus shifting toward digital resources and evidence-based acquisitions.
    - Closure of Marine Lab
    - Reductions in IT operations and contracts
    - Reorganization of select library departments
    - Reductions and changes to some Library services, but no eliminations of services.
- Joe emphasized the need for Library Council's input on navigating the impact of these changes.
- Summary of decision-making process for the strategic realignment:
    - Library leadership team focused on communicating with library staff throughout the process, which involved making difficult decisions independently as a leadership team. The strategic plan, finalized last year, helped identify areas for collection cuts and realignment with the university's growth areas.
    - Summary of stakeholder engagement:
        - Reliance on the Libraries' 2024–2029 Strategic Plan (which the Council and faculty were deeply engaged in developing) for guiding decisions. The plan emphasizes connection building, inclusivity, research support, outreach, and organizational wellness.
        - Protected areas based on faculty engagement (Trinity curriculum and research data support)
        - Summer meeting with Trinity department chairs
        - August 15th message to all faculty sharing the outcome of the process

Discussion

- *The role of stakeholder consultation in the strategic realignment process, with a focus around personnel and collections changes and process transparency*. Joe clarified that while the provost's office approved the submitted impacts, there was no formal consultation with stakeholders on personnel decisions due to the confidential nature of that decision making process. He shared that discussing potential personnel cuts with the Library Council presented privacy concerns since library staff serve as observers on the Council.
    - The cancellation of Library Council meetings in March 2025 was due to logistical issues (the plan was a LSC Visit), unrelated to the strategic realignment. The April 2025 meeting was cancelled due the need to maintain confidentiality during the VSIP process.

- *The reorganization of area studies and related services*. The department has been renamed Global Studies and now operates with a team-based approach rather than having specialized librarians for each region. A needs assessment will be conducted to determine future staffing needs. The library is working to better integrate Global Studies into its overall services and maintain close partnerships with other departments.

- *Concerns around the move towards digital materials, reliance on interlibrary loan*. The libraries are not eliminating print materials but are prioritizing digital resources where feasible due to space constraints and declining circulation numbers. Joe acknowledged the concerns about this trajectory and explained the challenges of balancing resource allocation and maintaining a comprehensive collection.

- *Evidence-based acquisition*. It is an acquisition model based on having a wide variety of digital books and then the libraries only acquire them or purchase them based on use. In many ways, it casts a wider net than we may have if we were purchasing them physically.

- *Who to turn to for services in light of personnel changes*? The Library team shared that they are working to update all directories and referral points.

3. Agenda Setting for 2025–26 (Kyle Bradbury)

- Kyle suggested that we gather the feedback from today and work key topics into agenda items for future meetings
- Kyle invited all on the Council to suggest topics they would like to discuss in future meetings. Currently slated topics include the impact of AI, the Library Service Center, Lilly Library, and journal models.

Adjourned.