

Senate Library Committee
October 25, 2017
Minutes of the Meeting

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.]

[In these minutes: Discussion and Vote on Proposed Changes to the Library Committee Charge; Affordable/Open Educational Resources; Action Items Based on AER Presentation]

PRESENT: Irene Duranczyk (chair), John Butler, LeAnn Dean, David Brown, David Goldfeld, Lori Helman, Bo Hu, Wendy Lougee, Hikaru Peterson, Matthew Rosendahl, Mary Beth Sancomb-Moran, Tim St. Claire, Jill Trites, Marlo Welshons

REGRETS: Owen Williams, Theresa Beaulieu, Connie Lenz, S. Douglas Olson, Joanne Richardson, Courtney Billing

ABSENT: Claire Dahl, Nabil Matar, Paul Myers, Richard Nho, Reilly Ruechel

GUESTS: Kristi Jensen, program development lead, eLearning Support Initiative

Chair Irene Duranczyk welcomed the committee and the members introduced themselves.

1. Discussion and Vote on the Proposed Changes to the Library Committee Charge

Duranczyk introduced the proposed addition to the Library Committee charge proposal and opened the floor for discussion. In Theresa Beaulieu's absence, she sent an email proposing a change to the existing proposal requesting that the committee add the word 'university' before 'senate' in the charge. With Beaulieu's change, the charge would read as follows:

To make recommendations to the University Senate on all matters concerned with the policies, administration, programs, and services for students, faculty, staff and stakeholders of the libraries of the University of Minnesota.

Lori Helman made a motion to adopt the updated language to the committee charge. David Goldfeld seconded the motion. All present committee members approved the motion with no opposition. The library committee charge was amended by committee members on October 25, 2017.

2. Affordable/ Open Educational Resources (AER/ OER)

Tim St. Claire provided the committee with a [student perspective on AERs and current textbook challenges](#), including textbook affordability, access and quality. St. Claire explained that textbook costs have raised in step with tuition costs, which is roughly four times that of inflation. He also pointed out that the College Board recommends that students plan to spend \$1,250 per year on textbooks and course materials, which is a significant cost, especially paired with tuition at the University of Minnesota. As a result of these costs, St. Claire told committee members that some students illegally download materials, share books with other students to split costs, or wait until classes have started to determine whether a book is needed.

John Butler asked St. Claire if he had encountered faculty resistance regarding the quality of AERs. St. Claire said that he had, but that it was at another school. He said the faculty member's reasoning was that open source textbooks did not include materials that had been reviewed by respected members of his field. Another issue brought up by faculty was in regards to transferability. St. Claire was told that the faculty member was concerned that if he changed his textbook, which was also taught at the University of Minnesota, then perhaps his course would not be transferrable to the University.

Bo Hu commented that there are universal, classic textbooks used all over the world for certain subjects, and he wondered why the University would want to put faculty in a position where they could not use those materials if they are not available in open source. St. Claire pointed out that 80% of textbooks come from only five publishers, so limitations on open source materials could be a publishing issue. Hu suggested, given the publishing monopoly, that perhaps the University could offer publishers a group purchase rate. Kristi Jensen explained that if the University can guarantee a 100% sell through, then publishers will often give big discounts. She added that federal regulations permit students to opt out of these negotiations. Jensen also told the committee that Unizin negotiates contracts with the publishers on behalf of the University, and can secure steep discounts on the school's behalf.

In response to committee members discussing the opportunities students take to buy course materials from other countries, Wendy Lougee pointed out that purchasing textbooks abroad has led to some legal issues, mostly around copyright infringement and illegal copy production.

Jensen then provided the committee with an [Introduction to OERs](#). She discussed the cost of higher education, new approaches to publishing, and what resources are offered by the University to support open educational resources. Jensen explained that OERs can be used piecemeal as a supplement, or as a complete package. She suggested that University of Minnesota faculty planning to piece OER solutions together should use a librarian to ensure all resources are taken into consideration. She added that in addition to finding OER solutions, librarians can also assist with helping faculty publish open textbooks. Through Partnership for Affordable Content Grants, the libraries also work with the bookstore to get book lists and then cross check for eBook licensing options. Jensen explained that the libraries also negotiate discounts with publishers through Unizin Engage. Jensen concluded by saying that open textbooks offer the greatest flexibility for different learning preferences.

Lougee explained that the University Libraries also look for options that may not be free, but may be more affordable. She told committee members that last year they saved students the potential of 1.3 million dollars through open educational resources or by identifying duplicative licensing of course materials.

Adding to Lougee's comments, Butler said that one central motivation for the digital course packs was to help students avoid paying twice for content because they would purchase materials as a requirement for a course, and sometimes the library would already own licensing to those materials. So in addition to textbook and course materials cost, they'd be paying for the licenses through student fees.

Duranczyk added that in using open source books, she noticed an increase in student equity because all students were provided access to the course materials regardless of financial status. She noted that it led to less issues around students not having the resources to start class, and it felt like a more level playing field.

Hu commented that open source is a national issue and asked if the Department of Education is doing anything to help with the issues.

St. Claire told committee members that he met with the Department of Education (DoED) and asked about open textbooks. He was told that there may be bills moving through the legislature, but the DoED takes a hands-off approach and allows states and individual universities to make determinations regarding OERs. Jensen added that the DoED requires all content created by the DoED or by grants from the DoED have an open license. However, Jensen added that most of that content wouldn't be applicable for University of Minnesota students. Duranczyk explained that the Minnesota legislature negotiated requirements with the MnSCU system requiring a certain percentage of their course materials to be open source, and tied that requirement to state funding. St. Claire assumed that since the University of Minnesota already has a good open textbook model set up, it would be difficult to convince the legislature to negotiate terms that mirror the MnSCU requirements.

Lougee explained that a publishing issue under consideration by Unizin relates to textbooks becoming increasingly more than just a textbook. In addition to providing secondary sources, Lougee added that they also provide data to publishers about student behavior and how students are succeeding. Lougee pointed out that it is in the best interest of the University to keep this data local rather than giving it to the publishers. The analytics, she said, is an increasing part of what the big publishers do. Unizin is motivated to develop the kind of content environment that keeps this data at the academy. Jensen added that the new licensing contracts that Unizin signs will focus on getting that data back to the University.

St. Claire shared his concern about personal student data being tracked and housed by third parties. He said that the level of disclosure almost amounts to an outside party having access to his grades. Duranczyk reiterated that Unizin is working to keep that information local and with the University.

Butler validated St. Claire's concerns and explained that in the course moving to the Unizin, the University has been clear to engage FERPA officers to monitor and set guidelines and controls to protect student data. He explained that a number of people are monitoring changes to functionality or other issues that could expose or release unauthorized data to third parties.

Helman explained that, as a textbook writer, she wants to clarify that it feels inadequate to present a publisher and author as the beneficiaries of abundant royalties. She added that she makes about one dollar per book of royalties on a \$30 book. She told committee members that free materials does not necessarily mean good materials, and quality assurance can sometimes be lost with online publications. In response, Jensen clarified that she'd prefer a model where the writer received pay for the work through a Partnership for Affordable Content Grant rather than a publisher, with the intention of publishing the work as open source material.

St. Claire pointed out that incentive models are an important component when considering open textbook publication. Helman agreed and added that one of her concerns is the time commitment associated with finding open source materials while teaching class. She added that she would probably need to find time in the summer and would look for support and pay for her time and effort.

Jensen explained that the library works with faculty to identify individual needs and to hopefully find an open source solution. She added that she understands that sometimes the answer is to use a textbook from a publisher.

Regarding the quality of OERs, Duranczyk told committee members that when she finds content that isn't up to her standards, she makes the necessary derivatives. She said she doesn't feel like it needs to be an all or nothing situation. She also added that products like MathLabs now consider opportunities to add ancillaries to existing materials for a smaller cost to students. She suggested that there may be OER models where a book is available for free, and ancillaries are added for a price.

One committee member added that she felt it was up to each college at the University to decide how much to support or buy into the OER model. She explained that a member of her college championed the OER method in her department and saved hundreds of thousands of dollars for the group. She pointed out that the shift required tech support and buy in from the dean's office, and she added that she wasn't sure if other colleges would be as willing to invest in the model.

St. Claire wondered what action items the committee could work on to help support the shift to OERs. He suggested the committee recommend that faculty review OER options when courses go through the reaccreditation review process. Duranczyk added that the review process happens for each course every three to five years. Helman clarified that her licensing courses are approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching every five to seven years.

3. Items for Action Based on AER Presentation

David Brown commented that student debt in his college averages to roughly 130K. He added that he doesn't think his department faculty ever considers alternative textbooks, and guessed that most faculty members do not know about the resources. He added that perhaps the conversation should be introduced among educational leadership for a collegiate discussion. As for faculty interest, Brown suggested that a bit more marketing, especially around available grant funding, would help boost interest.

Brown added that textbooks in his field are generally encyclopedic, and in addition to providing students with large volumes of text, faculty will often hand out notes as part of an on-going clinic setting. Jansen explained that her team could help format those notes into an OER and the work could be potentially considered a textbook as far as grant funding is concerned.

Duranczyk asked Jansen if OER information had been presented to the curriculum committees and if not, if it could be included. Jansen said she was not aware that any information had been disseminated.

Brown suggested developing a reference guide that addresses student affordability to be distributed to associate deans explaining available OERs. He added that the guide could be paired with a survey at a later date to gather feedback on OER adoption.

St. Claire suggested that the committee send a letter to all deans asking for a financial incentive for faculty members who adopt OERs and dedicate time to rebuilding their courses around new materials.

Duranczyk told committee members that she would send out a Google Form to the group to gather ideas for discussion and action items at the next meeting.

With no further business, Duranczyk adjourned the meeting.

Bobbie Erichsen
University Senate Office