

Library Committee
2:00-3:30 PM
Friday, December 10, 1999

In these minutes: Report on services available from the Library's membership in the Center for Research Libraries; Report on the use of e-mail vs. paper notifications of overdue book loans; Discussion of maintaining Telnet access to Library databases; Discussion of the Card Catalogue.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Robert Seidel, Tom Shaughnessy, Livija Carlson (for Mathur Kannan), Peter Firchow, Karen Fischer, Jill Gidmark, Barbara Martinson, Amy Myrbo, Lisa Norling, James Orf, Jim Parente, Jean Richards, Walter Sargent, Bill Sozansky, Suzanne Thorpe, Warren Warwick, Owen Williams.

REGRETS: Geri Malandra, Paul Ruden

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

The library committee met at 2:00 PM on Friday, December 10, 1999 in 300 Morrill Hall on the East Bank Campus of the University of Minnesota.

- At 2:00 PM, the meeting was called to order by Robert Seidel, and the minutes were approved.

REPORT ON THE SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE LIBRARY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH LIBRARIES

- Jim Cogswell introduced Jim Green and Susan Rabe, representatives from the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), who presented information about their company.
- CRL is a consortium of over 200 libraries in the United States and Canada, which contains over 5 million volumes.
- CRL was founded 50 years ago, in 1949, and has moved from general circulation to more specialized research.
- According to Jim, there are three main reasons why libraries belong to their Center: Libraries are allowed to borrow as much as they want, and also the terms of those loans are unlimited; CRL adjusts its library so that they are not simply duplicating materials in

many other libraries; and the Center contains materials which would not be possible or sensible for any other library to acquire.

- There are five collection components in the CRL
- The first is the Global Newspapers, in which the Center contains 6,000 world newspapers and 1,500 U.S. newspapers. They also actively collect 300 foreign newspapers and one paper from every state in the US.
- The second component are the scholarly journals, which are divided approximately equally between foreign science and humanities, although the emphasis is on collecting science journals that other libraries do not have.
- The third component is the International Doctoral Dissertations, which are foreign but do not include Canada. The Center has acquired about 700,000 dissertations which come in all forms of media including print, microfilm/fiche, CD-ROM and some multimedia dissertations.
- The fourth component is the Repository Collections, dubbed as "other" by Susan. These collections include special collections under many different subjects. They come in many forms and include reprints and monographs.
- The fifth component is the Area Studies Collections: a group of materials that are microfilmed and preserved. These materials may not be accessible for any library in any other way. The Center has materials from many foreign areas: Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Slavic countries, East Europe etc.
- Individual analytics, foreign doctoral dissertations, and foreign documents are not catalogued. However, if the Center does not have what the Library needs, they do have a demand-purchase policy, meaning that they will attempt to purchase what they do not have.
- In order to find out what the Center does own, information can be accessed through their website (<http://www.crl.uchicago.edu>) or through Lumina (go through Lumina to MnCAT Web, click on "other catalogues," to the CRL). There are five databases on this site. (Foreign and Ethnic Press, Russian/Soviet Union serials, Civilian Conservation microfilm, and current science serials.)
- The Center shelves by size and keeps their materials climate controlled at 58 degrees. They have had problems preserving newsprint and 19th century paper, but will circulate many documents, and microfilm them if necessary.

REPORT ON E-MAIL VS. PAPER NOTIFICATIONS OF OVERDUE BOOKS LOANS

- An issue was raised at the last meeting about whether the library would be able to send out advance warnings electronically rather than to use paper.
- Sue Hallgren told Tom Shaughnessy that the advance warning was done at the request of the faculty, and also that e-mail may not be considered an official medium of communication.
- Tom then went to VP Kvavik who says that the University must address this issue, and was passing the memo on to the University's Executive Committee. However, he felt that e-mail should be an official means of communication.
- If the University says that e-mail is in fact official, then the electronic notices could not be put into effect until next fall because of all the projects the Library has going at present.

- One problem with the idea of e-mail notifications is that patrons would need to check their e-mail regularly and have access to e-mail.

DISCUSSION OF MAINTAINING TELNET ACCESS TO LIBRARY DATABASES

- Christopher Loring led the discussion about maintaining Telnet access to Library databases. This will not be an easy task because vendors are moving away from Telnet and toward the Web.
- Some access may cease to be provided as early as March 2000, but that is questionable.
- Another problem is that even if it were possible to access the indexes or bibliographies, there isn't any staff at OIT (Office of Information Technology) that would be able to update the files, and Telnet has become such a "dated" technology that it may not be supportable.
- Quoting from the handout: "The University Libraries will continue to provide Telnet access to databases for which it exists. Telnet access to INDEXES will migrate away from the PA Menu to Telnet sessions launched from Web browsers. We already do this for some indexes, e.g. databases accessed via OVID software such as BIOSIS. Eventually, PA menu will provide access to only MNCAT, MNNEW, and Hours."
- One reason behind the lack of support may also be that the vt100 software costs \$5 million.
- Bill Sozansky said that that possibly OIT's lack of support was not a de facto decision but decided based upon what is needed and requested and how to spread that cost over bodies, trying to keep all popular programs, but still keeping cost low.
- Robert Seidel expressed concern that the U will become too dependent on the Web and then find that some other resource is much better and then want to change over to that program
- The committee agreed that discussing this issue further would be necessary, as well as contacting the Senate Committee on Information Technology.

A DISCUSSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE CARD CATALOG

- The future of the card catalog is in question.
- The card catalog once was in Walter Library, but then removed to make more room for stacks and student study space. It was made available to students in a Como Avenue warehouse, but in the two years it was there, not one student asked to see it.
- The library received notice for the card catalog and it must be removed by the end of February.
- No new cards have been added to the catalog since 1985, and the records have become inaccurate.
- The underground caves will be packed too tightly to house the card catalog as well.
- The card data has been recorded electronically, and there is a tape of the records in Illinois, as well as a microfilm copy.
- The Veterinary Library, Law Library and the Duluth Library have already gotten rid of their card catalogs and have not needed them for some time.
- Concerns about selling the card catalogs include:
- Two backups may not be enough.

- Microfilm can deteriorate.
- The card catalogs may become something of value because most libraries are selling theirs off, and the cabinets at the U are of top quality.
- Library schools may be interested in keeping them in an archive. There is not any space for them at the Minnesota Historical Society, either.
- There are also many other information systems that people regret getting rid of.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30.

[return to library committee minutes webpage](#)