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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	DATE	July 18, 2011
FROM	Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP	PAGES	1/1
RE:	Library External Review Report (SCUP 11-35)		

At its July 6, 2011 meeting SCUP received for information the Library External Review Report. It is attached for the information of Senate.

encl.

c: C. Eckman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Jon Driver", is written over the signature line.



OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH

B. Mario Pinto, Ph.D.

Vice-President, Research
Professor of Chemistry

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ATTENTION Jon Driver, Chair, SCUP

FROM Mario Pinto, Vice-President, Research

RE Library External Review

DATE June 24, 2011

Attached please find the following documents for information only for the SCUP meeting on Wednesday, July 6th, 2011.

- 1_SFULibraryExternalReviewFinal.pdf
- 2_Library Response to 2011 External Review.pdf
- 3_ExternalReviewLibraryActionPlan.pdf

SFU Library External Review 2011

Report of the Review Committee

January 2011

Marnie Swanson (Chair)
University Librarian
University of Victoria

Karen Adams
Director of Libraries
University of Manitoba

Margaret Haines
University Librarian
Carleton University

Dan Laitsch
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Process

Dr. Mario Pinto, Vice President, Research at Simon Fraser University, called for a third review of the SFU Library to be conducted in January 2011. The terms of reference are attached as Appendix 1.

The members of the Review Committee were:

- Marnie Swanson, University Librarian, University of Victoria (Chair)
- Karen Adams, Director of Libraries, University of Manitoba
- Margaret Haines, University Librarian, Carleton University
- Dan Laitsch, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

The Review Committee was given an extensive suite of documents to prepare for the visit including excellent self-study reports.

During the three day visit, the Review Committee met with staff, members of the user community, key committees involved in the management and governance of the Library, and senior university administrators. The Committee visited all three library locations and met with the executive directors of the Vancouver and Surrey campuses.

Confidential responses were sent to the VP Research's Office via an email feedback mechanism that enabled input to be provided by those not able to attend meetings.

The Review Committee appreciated the support of the VP Research Office with respect to the smooth organization of the review's logistics.

Progress since the 2004 Review

Two members of the Review Committee were involved in the previous review. We applaud the many positive changes that have taken place under the leadership of Lynn Copeland. In addition we commend the tone being set by the new Dean of Libraries, Dr. Charles Eckman; staff appreciate his open style and look forward to working with him on the new strategic plan.

It was clear to the Review Committee that staff on all three campuses are committed to excellent library service and that users are appreciative of the services they provide.

The depth and breadth of the collections is appreciated by the Library's users, especially the faculty. Despite the fiscal environment of the past few years, the protection given to the collection budget in the current fiscal year is an essential strategy to maintain this level of satisfaction.

More specifically, with respect to the last review, the Review Committee noted that:

- the Library's needs for collections have been taken into account when programs are expanded or new programs added; however, there is a need to address staffing and space issues at such times;
- the new Vice President Research strongly supports the Library;
- three new Associate University Librarian positions have been established;
- the new strategic plan affords an opportunity to continue the work towards a cohesive vision, and strategic directions encompassing all three campus libraries;
- the Library needs to continue to seek opportunities for staff at all levels and all locations to interact and to experience each other's work environments. Some staff indicated that there continues to be a need to pay attention to a "respectful workplace" that carries respect within work units, across the Library and across the three categories of staff;
- some improvements have been made to the Bennett Library. The Committee appreciated hearing about the plans for renovation of the third floor, removal of the boiler and establishment of a Research Commons. However, the condition of the Bennett Library continues to be sub-optimal for both users and staff;
- while the Belzberg facility remains vibrant and attractive, with the move of the School for the Contemporary Arts to this campus, the Library has struggled to adequately serve the needs of its community. It is regrettable that more than 40 study spaces were lost in order to accommodate a portion of the contemporary arts collection;
- the Surrey Campus Library is innovative and technology based, as is the entire Surrey campus; and
- while improvements have been made, internal communication and staff training and development clearly continue to be issues.

Findings of the Current Review

1. Strengths

The Review Committee recognized the strengths noted below in addition to the many others identified in the self-study documents:

- The university has treated the Library equitably in times of budget reductions;
- All staff are genuinely excited about a new stage of development for the Library and are committed to excellent service and innovation;
- Faculty value the liaison model; there is general enthusiasm for the Library on all three campuses;
- The Student Learning Commons has been established and is well received;
- Library staff report increased activities supporting community engagement; and
- The Library has been recognized as a leader in scholarly communication, including becoming an official partner in the PKP project.

Recommendation 1:

That the upcoming strategic planning process recognize and support the identified strengths and programs currently in place across the library and support those programs as reasonable within the new strategic plan.

2. Space

The Review Committee heard repeatedly about the challenges of space in all three libraries. Deferred maintenance and cleaning services are clearly problems at Bennett and detract from the user and staff experience in this facility. Climate controlled environments for Special Collections also need to be expanded. Both Belzberg and Fraser Libraries identified the need for more space.

Recognizing the current fiscal environment, the University still needs to place a high priority on adequate space for students, staff and collections.

The Review Committee was reassured to hear the senior university administration's commitment to reallocating freed up space such as that occupied by the boiler to library purposes.

Recommendation 2:

The University and the Library give high priority to the adequacy of library space.

Recommendation 3:

A Library Advancement Officer be hired as soon as possible to develop the Library's case for support for physical facilities and to identify potential donors.

Recommendation 4:

In the context of the space crisis, that a plan be developed for weeding all collections with a view to future participation in a province-wide shared print repository.

3. Staff

The liaison librarian model is greatly appreciated on campus and the planned review of the model will be critical to its continued success. It is clear that workload is an issue and there is interest in determining things the liaison librarians can stop doing. The committee agrees with the self study report that there is both a challenge and an opportunity to look at new roles, such as support for data management, scholarly communication, and content for an expanded institutional repository.

Recommendation 5:

That the review examine and identify system-wide leadership for the evolving role of liaison librarians, and also identify expertise requirements, training and support, goal setting and recruitment issues.

Many staff identified the need for training and development opportunities and a transparent process for allocating training resources. In addition, staff at the Belzberg and Fraser Libraries note the difficulty in participating fully in staff training and development activities and in dealing with unplanned absences.

Recommendation 6:

Identify the skill-sets required to fulfill the strategic directions and develop an appropriate training strategy for all staff.

4. Organizational structure

The Review Committee recognized the positive impact of the new AUL structure. However, questions were raised about the roles and workload balance of the AULs. It was also asked whether they should be out of scope, as is common practice in other university libraries and with comparable positions in the Faculties. The current organization chart appears to make the AULs responsible only for the Bennett Library. It is not clear how system-wide initiatives led by the AULs are implemented on the Surrey and Harbour Centre campuses.

Some staff saw a need to strengthen the relationship between collections and acquisitions in order to balance workloads. The Review Committee agrees and has a further question about the separation between Special Collections and Collections.

Recommendation 7:

That once the strategic plan is completed, there be a review of the organizational structure to ensure that it is the most effective structure for achieving the plan.

5. Systems

Both the meetings and the self study reports acknowledge the challenge of sustaining external systems-related projects. The Review Committee agrees and believes that the Library needs to establish the priorities for the work of the staff in the Systems division. The Library may need to choose between continuing to maintain external projects, and developing new, innovative internal systems projects.

The Review Committee noted that in other universities, collaboration between Library Systems and other technology support units can make a contribution to emerging areas such as management of research data.

Recommendation 8:

The strategic plan needs to establish the priorities for systems developments, both in-house and externally.

6. Committees and Communications

The Library has some support for external communication; however, internal communications continue to be a challenge. Library staff report feeling unable to cope with the amount of information they receive and are confused about the dissemination of that information: blog, staff intranet, email, etc. The Review Committee questions whether monthly reports, for example, are the most effective way of communicating and the most efficient use of staff time.

Recommendation 9:

That management investigate how to improve internal communications including consideration of a more effective communication strategy than currently exists.

Some members of both the Library Planning Committee and the Library Council indicated a lack of clarity about the roles of these two bodies. Furthermore, members of Library Council were unsure whether they were there to represent a constituency or to communicate the discussion to others. Some members felt that their time would be better spent on task groups relevant to their expertise and responsibilities.

Recommendation 10:

That the number and role of committees and task groups be reviewed following the strategic plan.

The Committee was surprised there was so much commentary on the Theses Office, including several e-mail messages. Users have a sense that instructions are onerous and responses not prompt. It was not clear to the Committee why the Library has an enforcement role in this process rather than the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Recommendation 11:

That in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Library review its role in the submission of theses.

Conclusion

The Review Committee once again wishes to recognize and commend the SFU Library staff and their achievements under the leadership of Lynn Copeland. With the new leadership of Charles Eckman, and the development of a new vision and a strategic plan, the Library will clearly play an important role in the future success of Simon Fraser University.

Summary of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1:** That the upcoming strategic planning process recognize and support the identified strengths and programs currently in place across the library and support those programs as reasonable within the new strategic plan.
- Recommendation 2:** The University and the Library give high priority to the adequacy of library space.
- Recommendation 3:** A Library advancement officer be hired as soon as possible to develop the Library's case for support for physical facilities and to identify potential donors.
- Recommendation 4:** In the context of the space crisis, that a plan be developed for weeding all collections with a view to future participation in a province wide shared print repository.
- Recommendation 5:** That the review examine and identify system-wide leadership for the evolving role of liaison librarians, and also identify expertise requirements, training and support, goal setting and recruitment issues.
- Recommendation 6:** Identify the skill-sets required to fulfill the strategic directions and develop an appropriate training strategy for all staff.
- Recommendation 7:** That once the strategic plan is completed, there be a review of the organizational structure to ensure that it is the most effective structure for achieving the plan.
- Recommendation 8:** The strategic plan needs to establish the priorities for systems developments, both in-house and externally.
- Recommendation 9:** That management investigate how to improve internal communications including consideration of a more effective communication function than currently exists.
- Recommendation 10:** That the number and role of committees and task groups be reviewed following the strategic plan.
- Recommendation 11:** That in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Library review its role in the submission of theses.



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Mario Pinto
Vice President, Research

DATE June 20, 2011

FROM Charles Eckman,
Dean of Library Services and
University Librarian

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RE: Response to External Review 2011

The External Review Committee report reflects a thoroughgoing review of SFU Library programs, operations and University support. The SFU Library appreciates the Report's acknowledgment of the Library staff's commitment to excellent service, high ratings by Library users of its services and collections, and SFU's historic commitment to the Library collections budget.

The Library is currently in the final phase of a strategic planning process. The External Review Committee's report and recommendations form a critical part of the environmental scan. We fully intend to address all of the External Review Committee's recommendations as appropriate in forming and implementing the new vision and strategic plan.

Recommendation 1: That the upcoming strategic planning process recognize and support the identified strengths and programs currently in place across the library and support those programs as reasonable within the new strategic plan.

The strengths of the Library's service programs have been identified in user surveys (2010 LibQual and Undergraduate Student Surveys), by staff in the Staff Survey, and by the External Review Committee throughout the report. The strategic planning process underway provides a further opportunity to clarify those strengths. During April, Library Council members engaged in an Appreciative Inquiry exercise that surfaced impressions of these strengths among Library staff, and a series of focus group exercises with faculty and students confirmed these assumptions. The

new vision and strategic plan will build upon these strengths and identify areas where additional capacity is required.

Recommendation 2: The University and the Library give high priority to the adequacy of library space.

The need for renewal of Library spaces is a top Library priority identified in its Self Study. The Library appreciates the affirmation of this need by the External Review Committee. The Library has moved forward with addressing some space issues as evidenced by the work progressing on the Bennett and Belzberg facilities. University commitments to these initiatives are evident based on allocations from the relevant University budget lines for the Bennett Library renewal as well as for the Student Learning Commons renovations at both the Belzberg and Surrey libraries. Further evidence of University commitment is provided by the presence of the Bennett renewal initiative as a high priority on the current Five Year Capital Plan.

Recommendation 3: A Library advancement officer be hired as soon as possible to develop the Library's case for support for physical facilities and to identify potential donors.

The Library appreciates the affirmation of this critical need. The Library and Advancement agreed in early February to co-fund a Library advancement position. The position has been posted, recruited and a new Associate Director for Advancement, Library Services will begin work in July 2011.

Recommendation 4: In the context of the space crisis, that a plan be developed for weeding all collections with a view to future participation in a province-wide shared print repository.

The Library has begun to review its print journal collections and recommends weeding titles whenever trusted digital equivalents are available. The Library is participating in a BC Research Libraries Group initiative to develop a shared storage facility program that will focus on low-use, "last-copy" books and journals. This program is tied strategically to the Bennett Library facility renewal initiative. The Library is also participating in a Western Canada regional approach under the auspices of the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries.

Recommendation 5: That the [anticipated] review [of the liaison librarian program] examine and identify system-wide leadership for the evolving role of liaison librarians, and also identify expertise requirements, training and support, goal setting and recruitment issues.

The review of the liaison librarian program is well underway. The review involves stakeholder consultations, examination of the evolving and appropriate roles of liaison librarians, and recommendations regarding new expertise, training, goal-setting and recruitment requirements. A report is anticipated in September 2011.

Recommendation 6: Identify the skill-sets required to fulfill the strategic directions and develop an appropriate training strategy for all staff.

The Library recognizes the need to identify these skill-sets once the new vision and strategic directions are identified. Responsibility and support for developing a training strategy will be identified once the process is complete.

Recommendation 7: That once the strategic plan is completed, there be a review of the organizational structure to ensure that it is the most effective structure for achieving the plan.

The Library administration will conduct a review of the organizational structure's effectiveness in achieving current strategic goals once the new vision and strategic plan is completed. Recommended changes if any will be vetted appropriately and moved forward through the University administration.

Recommendation 8: The strategic plan needs to establish the priorities for systems developments, both in-house and externally.

The Library administration acknowledges the ongoing need for such a prioritization process. We are moving forward with a sustainability review of existing Systems "external" initiatives and intend to incorporate this review into standard processes for considering new initiatives. An important criterion here will be the extent to which the proposed project provides direct benefit to related Library functions and the SFU community. We will also develop a clearer set of protocols for proposing new "internal" Systems projects and prioritizing existing ones.

The Library works closely with SFU Information Technology Services (ITS) as is evidenced for example by the Bennett Library Information Commons program. New collaborative projects involving ITS-Library partnership are in the discussion phase. The Library is represented on several CIO committees: the Web Experience Librarian serves on the CMS Steering Committee;

the AUL for Processing and Systems serves on the Research IT Committee; and the Dean serves on the IT Strategies Committee.

Recommendation 9: That management investigate how to improve internal communications including consideration of a more effective communication function than currently exists.

The Library recognizes the challenge of ensuring concise, accurate and timely communication across organizational silos. Several staff have identified “information glut” (that is, over-communication) as a key issue. Addressing this challenge will include the reduction of formal, hierarchical communication paths and enhancement of less formal and technology-enhanced paths. The new vision and strategic plan will contain an explicit objective that responds to this recommendation.

Recommendation 10: That the number and role of committees and task groups be reviewed following the strategic plan.

This is a critical issue that relates to effective use of staff time, as well as the issues outlined in the recommendations regarding organizational structure and communication. The Library intends to incorporate the question of number and role of committees and task groups in addressing both organizational structure and communication. The over-riding principle will be ensuring that staff time is focused upon on the provision of research and learning services.

Recommendation 11: That in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Library review its role in the submission of theses.

After consulting with the Dean of Graduate Studies as recommended, the Library’s role in ensuring that theses are submitted in accordance with University technical formatting requirements established by the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will continue. Submission protocols have recently been changed to support full electronic processing. Implementation of the new electronic submission process – and the recent hiring of a new Library Thesis Assistant – afford an opportunity to simplify and streamline procedures. In addition, the “Research Commons” that is planned for the Bennett Library second floor adjacent to the Thesis Defence Room will include advising functions that relate to graduate thesis work (how to obtain copyright clearance, etc.). The thesis advising function will be a core component of the Research Commons suite of services.

EXTERNAL REVIEW – ACTION PLAN

Section 1 – To be completed by the Responsible Unit Person e.g. Chair or Director

Unit under review LIBRARY	Date of Review Site visit JANUARY 18-21, 2011	Responsible Dean, CHARLES ECKMAN	Vice President MARIO PINTO
<u>Note:</u> It is <u>not</u> expected that every recommendation made by the Review Team be covered by this Action Plan. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified and some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded. Should an additional response from be warranted it should be attached as a separate document.			
1 PROGRAMMING			
1.1 Action: 1.1.1 The Library's strategic planning process will recognize and support identified strengths and programs currently in place across the library and support those programs as is possible in the context of the new direction and vision. (External Review Recommendation #1) 1.1.2 Resource implications: None 1.1.3 Expected completion date: Summer 2011			

2 RESEARCH

2.1 Action:

- 2.1.1 The liaison librarian program review will examine and identify system-wide leadership for the evolving role of liaison librarians. The review will explore how to adjust or expand the roles of liaison librarians to accommodate enhanced support for faculty and student research activities. The review will identify expertise requirements, training and support, goal setting and recruitment issues. (External Review Recommendation #5)**
- 2.1.2 Resource implications: Unknown**
- 2.1.3 Expected completion date: Fall 2011**

2.2 Action:

- 2.2.1 The Library will review its role in the submission of theses in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies. (External Review Recommendation #11)**
- 2.2.2 Resource implications: None**
- 2.2.3 Expected completion date: Summer 2011**

3 ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Action:

- 3.1.1 The Library's organizational and committee/task group structures will be reviewed to ensure that it is the most effective structure for achieving the new strategic plan. (External Review Recommendations #7, #10)**
- 3.1.2 Resource implications: Unknown**
- 3.1.3 Expected completion date: Summer 2011**

3.2 Action:

- 3.2.1 Procedures and criteria for prioritizing systems developments, both in-house and externally, will be established. (External Review Recommendation #8)**
- 3.2.2 Resource implications: None**
- 3.2.3 Expected completion date: Summer 2011**

4 WORKING ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Action:

- 4.1.1 Management will investigate in consultation with Library staff how to improve upon existing internal communications for responding to diverse staff communication needs. (External Review Recommendation #9)**
- 4.1.2 Resource implications: None**
- 4.1.3 Expected completion date: Fall 2011**

5 FACILITIES & OPERATIONS (OTHER)

5.1 Action:

- 5.1.1 The University and the Library give high priority to the adequacy of library space. (External Review Recommendation #2)**
- 5.1.2 Resource implications: Potentially considerable depending on scope**
- 5.1.3 Expected completion date: Ongoing**

5.2 Action:

- 5.2.1 In the context of the space crisis, that a plan be developed for weeding all collections with a view to future participation in a Province-wide, shared print repository. (External Review Recommendation #4)**
- 5.2.2 Resource implications: Unknown pending business modeling for the Provincial repository**
- 5.2.3 Expected completion dates: Fall 2011 for the weeding program proposal; ongoing for Provincial repository planning**

5.3 Action:

- 5.3.1 A Library advancement officer be hired as soon as possible to develop the Library's case for support for physical facilities and to identify potential donors. (External Review recommendation #3)**
- 5.3.2 Resource implications: cost-share between Advancement and Library (ideally self-funding)**
- 5.3.3 Expected completion date: Summer 2011**

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The above action plan has been considered by the Unit under review and has been discussed and agreed to by the Vice President, Research.

Dean (signed) Name <u>Charles E. Eklund</u> Title...Dean of Library Services/University Librarian.	Date <u>June 27, 2011</u>
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Section 2 VPR's commitments and endorsement of the Action Plan

VP Research



Date

June 27, 2011