

LIBRARY REVIEW DTF REPORT

INTRODUCTION

On January 11, 1978, the Library Review DTF held its first meeting, to discuss the charge submitted to it by Provost Ed Kormondy. At that meeting, the DTF requested that the charge be reduced, and on January 18 a second charge was presented to the DTF (Appendix I). Except for a period during and immediately after the spring break, the DTF has met regularly, either as a whole or in subgroups. We interviewed many members of the Library staff and other faculty and staff whose knowledge or opinions were relevant to our study. We produced and analyzed a user survey questionnaire (Appendix II) to which about 400 persons responded. This report, then, is the result of thorough consideration of many aspects of Library operations.

Two things made the work of the DTF more difficult than we had anticipated. Concurrent with our review, a Library internal task force was analyzing Library operations and suggesting changes. Not only was there duplication of effort; with some aspects of the charge, our DTF could not be certain but that the area we were reviewing might be changed at any moment as a result of recommendations of the internal task force. The second complication came from pressures to make recommendations that could be used in budget preparations for 1978-79. Since this was the first review of the Library since 1973, we thought it more appropriate to devote our attention to long-range concerns than to immediate budgeting problems. In the future, when review DTF's are called, we strongly recommend that care be taken that their work not be scheduled at a time likely to overlap with that of other groups recommending changes.

PREMISES

The DTF considers the Library the single most important support area for all academic programs; it provides both essential resources and the instruction necessary for the best use of those resources. Any school that cares about the quality of its education must have a library adequate to the task; in a school that emphasizes independent study, as we do, this is even more important. This DTF accepts the basic premise of the 1973 Library Review DTF, that "the essential library function is to provide access to, maintenance of, and development of library holdings and resources" but would add to it that it is the responsibility of the Library, and of the college as a whole, to emphasize those holdings and resources that best support the teaching and learning in our academic programs and contracts.

RESPONSES TO THE CHARGE

I. THE 1973 LIBRARY DTF REPORT: AN ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER THE RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

Most of the recommendations of the 1973 Library Review DTF Report (Appendix III) have been implemented. The important exceptions are the following:

1.200 The goal of providing media services has met with varying degrees of success. At one extreme, Photo Services is a model in providing access to students and in devoting most of its efforts to support of academic work. At the other extreme, the Graphics Studio has become less and less able to serve a proper Library function due to budget cuts and demands for administration-related production. More detailed discussion of the involvement of media areas in teaching and production appears in our response to part III of the charge. We believe it is essential that all media areas work toward meeting fully the recommendation that instruction-related production take priority over production for other purposes.

1.300.c. Unless the Library receives more money for acquisitions, it cannot hope to "acquire new materials in response to the stated immediate needs of present and foreseeable programs," nor to "acquire new materials to build a solid basic collection." Many of the questionnaire responses referred to the need for a larger collection of printed materials. We recommend that the administration of the college and of the Library support the building of the collection of catalogued materials by maintaining the level of the resource budget as allocated by the Legislature, and by searching for other funds to develop the collection.

1.350. During the past five years, faculty expertise has not been "systematically exploited to produce explicit guidelines for the building of a sound basic collection." In part, this has been as much the fault of the faculty as the Library personnel. A new resource selection policy has been proposed and is discussed in our response to part III of the charge.

1.500. The recommendation to locate the College Information Center in the Library has not been implemented.

2.500. The Library is a member of the Washington Library Network. The automated Library system component of the Network consists of four sub-systems: a bibliographic data base, an acquisitions system, a circulation system, and a serials system. The bibliographic system is being used. It includes print materials only at this point. The acquisitions and circulation system will be utilized when they are operational and when funds are available. The target date for utilizing these two systems is July, 1979. The serials sub-system will not be available for several years.

At present the Library has a traditional card catalog. If in the future the Library wants to convert to the microfiche catalog available from the Washington Library Network, the change would be highly visible to users and might considerably affect their ability to use the Library. We therefore recommend careful attention to involving users in consideration of effects of a catalog change before any decision is made to adopt the microfiche catalog.

II. THE LIBRARY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

We find the stated goals and objectives (Appendix IV) generally desirable but so lacking in specifics of implementation that critique is difficult. Some relevant comments will appear in our responses to parts III and IV of the charge.

III. SERVICES TO USERS

A. Evaluation of the Quality of Services Provided

The questionnaire responses praised the overall quality of the Library services (in contrast to some discontent with holdings of printed materials). The helpfulness of the staff was frequently mentioned, and there was praise for the accessibility of those types of media equipment available through media loan. The DTF agrees with these judgments; in fact, we believe the quality of services is far ahead of the quantity of money available to support them.

B. Priority Ranking of Services into High, Medium, and Low Categories

The guiding principle in deciding priorities should be judgment of the extent to which the service directly serves the academic needs of many segments of the college. Printed materials (especially books and journals) receive the most wide-spread use, and should receive the HIGHEST priority for acquisition and for services to make them accessible (see also our comments in response to part I of the charge, on section 1.300.c). But if Evergreen and the Library are to continue to support the principle that skills other than reading and writing are an important part of education, we should also place a high priority on non-print catalogued materials (such as slides) and on certain kinds of media equipment. There was general agreement in the DTF that media services should continue to be made available to the campus through the Library, but we do not believe that all media services should receive equal priority. We recommend that full support should continue to be given to making accessible media equipment that:

- 1) can be used by a diverse group of programs and individuals, as opposed to equipment that is so specialized that it can only be used by a small group of people;
- 2) requires relatively little training for use, as opposed to equipment that requires extensive technical training before it can be used;
- 3) does not require a disproportionate number of staff to supervise, maintain, and train people in the use of the equipment.

Examples of the kinds of equipment that meet these criteria would be the portable equipment available through media loan.

The color television studio, the audio studio, and the master control center are among the kinds of equipment that clearly do not meet the criteria given above. The DTF recommends that they be given a lower priority. This recommendation is justified both by considerations of cost and of educational policy, and comes as the result of much deliberate discussion by the DTF. Unless some serious advance thought and effort are given to finding replacement funds from other than state sources, it will probably be necessary to phase these out within a few years. The cost of repair and maintenance is now about 20% of the media repair time, and costs may be expected to rise as the equipment ages. We recommend that repair and maintenance costs not be allowed to become unreasonable as the equipment begins to age. The Report on Communications at Evergreen, distributed in March, 1977, recommends that no communications special area be established; also, although it recommends that modules be taught to instruct students in the use of the equipment we now have, the report contains many comments indicating that such sophisticated equipment is not necessary to educate people for careers in communications.

The lowest priority should be given to media production that is not directly connected to academic instruction. If production for non-instructional purposes does take place, the full costs should be charged back to the appropriate area. The 1973 Library Review DTF made a similar recommendation, which has not been fully adhered to (see our response to part I of the charge). This indicates that special vigilance may be required to assure the priority of activities related to teaching and learning.

C. Operating Policies

With one notable exception, the questionnaires indicated little discontent with Library policies. The exception was the overwhelming call for increased Library hours, especially on weekends. We strongly recommend that funding be found so that Library hours may be extended.

The questionnaire response favored the one-quarter loan period for catalogued materials by a margin of five to one, but of those commenting, almost all suggested that the loan period be reduced. This, together with difficulties in recalling materials (over half of the people who tried to recall books did not receive them when needed), suggests that the Library should consider reducing the loan period if recall problems persist. Maintaining an accurate local mailing address for patrons should also produce improvements.

The Hands-On Book, intended (among other things) to inform the user about Library policies, is not widely known or used. The Hands-On Book should either be better advertised, or the policies should be presented in a simpler format.

We recommend that the Library continue its policy of not establishing satellite libraries.

The DTF finds the general goals of the Audio DTF proposal (i.e., establishment of an Audio Listening Center as described in part II of the proposal) desirable, but we did not assess the impact of the space requirements given in the proposal.

The proposed resource selection policy is basically sound as GENERAL POLICY. We recommend, however, that specific mechanisms be developed to involve the faculty in the resource selection process. We recognize that this is not easy--that faculty are usually reluctant to participate--but we believe it is essential if there is to be a well-balanced collection serving all academic offerings.

D.E. and F.I. Human Resources, Instructional/Teaching Role of Library Staff, and Accessibility of Equipment to Users

User Services

The people in the various user services areas are doing an excellent job. The circulation desk staff received high marks for being courteous--the main complaint seems to be about the machines, not about the people. There was also praise for the staff of media loan.

The librarians who have been working as "active outreach/librarians/teachers" in the reference area have done a superb job, and we believe they deserve more support for their activities from the faculty. Student utilization of library resources is still not what it should be. Library tours, workshops, and modules must be advertised directly to the students, through the Cooper Point Journal or otherwise. The librarians have depended too much on faculty to do this advertising. We recommend more faculty-librarian exchanges to increase faculty knowledge of and support for these services.

Interlibrary Loan is being handled well, but more people need to know about it. People should also be made aware of their right to request that books be ordered. The relative costs of ordering books for the Library and ordering them for use through interlibrary loan should be made better known.

The DTF did not study the space needs of the Library relative to those of other college areas, and so we cannot make a recommendation about space allocation. Questionnaires and interviews indicated that more space might be useful for: interlibrary loan; a reserve room; improvement of the upstairs lounges, with better lights and seating; periodicals; more study rooms. The questionnaires also indicated that establishment of an all-night study area outside the Library (not to be confused with the library building) is desirable.

Technical Services and Acquisitions; Media Engineering

The units grouped under this heading share a certain invisibility from the point of view of most Library users, since the chief function of these units is to maintain the Library's collection and inventory in useable condition, whether by quickly and accurately processing catalogued material (print and non-print), by quickly and effectively servicing defective media loan equipment, and so forth. With the exception of those who work directly in these areas, Library users are unaware of the details of technical services' work; only the results really matter. We are not aware of significant complaints about the effectiveness of these units. On the contrary, our impression is that the work of processing acquisitions before and after purchase, choosing and installing media equipment, maintaining it, and operating the important media production areas have all been conducted most effectively.

Such debate as there is centers on the indirect effects these units now have on the Library users, and principally on whether the media area's claim on the Library budget is an unwarranted drain on resources that, even without media, would perhaps barely suffice to maintain an adequate library. This concern was not eliminated by the recognition that the source of most media funding is different from that for catalogued materials. This issue is discussed in more detail in the section on priorities.

Master Control

The Master Control Center is well run and presents no problems.

Mini-Media

Mini-media is working well, but we recommend the combination of mini-media and media loan to make more effective use of the staffs of these areas. Users sometimes check out equipment from media loan when they could better do their work in mini-media. And sometimes users in mini-media need the kind of instruction provided by media loan. Thus combination of the two areas should result in better services to users.

Photo Services

Student access to Photo Services seems to be sufficient at the present time. Some eighty percent of the work of the Photo Center is in support of academic programs. Much of this work is done by students in their programs, assisted by the staff. The satellite darkroom situation seems to be adequate and stable. There appears to be adequate staff to handle the current demand being placed on Photo Services. Work is accomplished promptly; staff is courteous and helpful; there are very few complaints.

Graphics

Of all of our areas of study, this one is in the biggest difficulty. In spite of the wishes of its (former) staff, this unit has been less and less able to serve a proper Library function due to budget cuts imposed by the upper administration of the college. Further, in an effort to make this unit more and more self-supporting, an ever increasing rate structure has been imposed on the Graphics Studio by the same administration, so that it has virtually priced itself right out of the market. About the only people who can now afford to use this service are those offices of the college required to produce fancy P.R.-type publications, namely a few of the administrative offices. For a "Library service" this is highly undesirable and entirely artificial in terms of the Library's own goals and objectives, as well as the 1973 report.

We recommend that Graphics function as a Library service analogous to other such services (e.g., Photo Services, which is very successful), so that charges will be made to academic programs only for materials, and so that it can provide support to other college functions at modest costs. Our second choice would be to provide moderate support to Graphics and allow them to establish a differential rate structure which would attract a lot more business--e.g., higher rates for rush jobs and highest quality jobs, lower rates for postponable jobs or lower quality demands, more use of students aides or interns--allowing Graphics to operate as a partially subsidized business.

If neither of the above recommendations is possible, and the present situation continues, we should no longer pretend that Graphics is a part of the Library. In this extreme case, the de-facto situation should be recognized and Graphics transferred over to the administration. We would regret this move as it deprives the Library of an important service function to the remainder of the college.

Television Studio

The present situation in the television area seems to be surprisingly good, but it is not known how long this can be maintained. The separation of the audio from the television responsibility has worked well according to all accounts. But the major reason for the success of the television operation has to do with the presence of a visiting faculty in television production, who has worked with advanced students through the group contract mode. Meanwhile, the television staff has provided a module each quarter for training beginning students in the use of the television equipment. This appears to be both efficient and adequate, as no substantial number of students is being turned away. In the future, however, if the faculty person is not replaced, there may be difficulties arising again with inadequate training and opportunity to use the equipment. For example, the Communication Report's recommendation that we not open a Communications specialty area raises doubts about the long range future of this whole area. This year, however, the television studios were used considerably by some 81 students; 42 in the module, 11 in the Television and the Real World group contract, 12 students on individual contracts, and 16 students in the Television and Drama group contract.

Audio Studios

Access to audio equipment is considerably limited since an audio module lasting three consecutive quarters is required. Furthermore, more students have been turned away from this module than have been accepted. An alternative route to use of the audio equipment needs to be devised. The present tests may serve this purpose but they should be checked to be sure that they do not make unreasonably high demands. Access to equipment in some graduated way dependent on need and sophistication should be worked out. The present policy of restricting use only to students who can demonstrate that they have serious career goals in audio is far too rigorous and is unreasonable given the TESC student body and its legitimate interests in this equipment.

Audio services to the campus are provided by an audio production crew involving nine paid positions. These positions are filled by advanced audio students, all graduates of last year's three-quarter Audio module. This system seems to be fairly efficient in supplying services to the general campus. But it does constitute a clique of those with privileged access.

Again, adding faculty in the audio area would undoubtedly make this entire operation function much more smoothly. But given the Communications Report recommendations, it seems unlikely that this solution will occur, so something else will have to be devised by the Library media people themselves.

Lecture Halls

Most patrons appear to be happy with the performance of the Lecture Hall service; but a few significant patrons complain of consistently poor service. There is the feeling on the part of those complaining that the staff gives excellent service to their established "friends" and mediocre, if not desultory, service to others who have not established "properly friendly relations". If this is the case, the staff must endeavor to provide good service to all patrons.

Efforts are under way to improve the sound quality and technical quality generally of Lecture Hall 1. These efforts should be encouraged and monitored. A small budget should also be given to this area for the purchase and maintenance of basic film cleaning and repair equipment; they should also be given training and equipment to do simple, on-the-spot repair and maintenance work on Lecture Hall gear.

F.2. On Equal Accessibility

We recommend that the policy of not discriminating between faculty, staff, and students in checking out materials at the circulation desk be continued.

The question of access to media loan equipment presents more problems. The rate of deterioration of some kinds of media loan equipment may necessitate more restrictive access policies if funds are not provided to replace the equipment. The media loan area might consider restricting access to such equipment to contracts or study programs in which a faculty member certified

that the equipment was being used for study purposes.

G. Security of Collection and Equipment Resources

According to our findings losses of circulating materials are quite low, and there is no need for a book security system. Information available from past book inventories is questionable; however, a complete inventory of books should not be made until the Washington Library Network circulation system is implemented.

IV. INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Introduction

The Administration Subgroup of the DTF conducted interviews with two representatives from each Library budget unit. Concurrently, the Library internal task force concluded its own investigations and recommended a new management plan. This action had a direct effect on our report, which is written with the new management plan in mind.

Decision-Making in the Library

Due to the existence of a dual authority system, the interviews revealed a lack of clarity in decision-making and reporting procedures. Generally, those interviewed believed that the dean and associate dean had two different management styles.

Old Management Structure

Under the old management plan, the DTF noted the following problems: 1) The budget unit heads had widely varying degrees of responsibility for supervision of employees; 2) the purpose of the budget unit head meetings was unclear. There was a lack of agreement on whether they were decision-making meetings or information-sharing and advisory meetings.

New Management Structure

During the period that the Library Review DTF was meeting, the Library adopted a new management plan. This plan appears to the DTF to address some of the problems identified under the old plan. Specifically: 1) Reduction in the number of budget unit heads directly involved in the management process; 2) Clarification of the role of the management group; 3) Clarification of the role of the management group; 3) Clarification of reporting procedures; 4) Increased involvement by the rank and file in the management process.

Although the Library Review DTF believes the new plan represents a sincere effort to improve the management function, it foresees potential problem areas, on the basis of which it offers the following recommendations:

- 1) That the management group be aware of the potential for diffusion of responsibility for decision-making, and the difficulty of locating the responsible party.

- 2) That the management group make every effort to represent the Library as a whole, rather than special areas, through the use of such techniques as: job dialogue; cross-training; rotation of employees through areas of the Library when feasible; efforts to break down the dichotomy between the areas dealing with catalogued materials and with media equipment (upstairs/downstairs) through shifts in physical space allocation and/or creative lines of reporting.
- 3) That the management group make every effort to assure two-way communication (i.e., between the policy-making group and the rank and file) through the use of such techniques as: communications skills workshops; Library newsletter; timely general informational meetings and area meetings.
- 4) That the management group implement the regular evaluation process for all members of the Library.
- 5) That the management group adopt a clearly defined grievance procedure.
- 6) That the management of the Library make every effort to hire women and/or minorities for some of the higher paid positions in the Library as a whole. In order to motivate this, we further recommend that affirmative action workshops be offered within the Library, and that a formal training program be set up to train women in the media equipment operation and repair, and in the photography area. (See Part D, below, and Appendix V.)
- 7) That the management group be vigilant in adhering to the lines of authority set up by the new management plan.

Professional Development of Staff

The potential for professional development of staff has been limited in the past because of a lack of promotional opportunities and a lack of expansion. A study of the work history of all the present Library employees shows large salary differentials between male and female employees (see Appendix V), corresponding for the most part to differences in pay for work with catalogued materials and work with media equipment. The salary differences are reflective of community salary differences between library jobs and media jobs. We recommend cross-training of staff, so that they can be ready when openings occur, as the only hope of making any dent in the salary problem.

CONCLUSION

The DTF feels satisfied that the recommendations it has made are good ones, even though the task was not easy. The work of future review DTF's would be made easier if some of the more detailed tasks given in the original charge (e.g., assessment of holdings) were assigned to DTF's specifically established for that purpose (but such DTF's should not be meeting at the same time as a review DTF).

If five years are to elapse before the calling of another review DTF, some method should be devised for monitoring, in the interim, whether every effort is being made to fulfill the recommendations of this report.