AU Librarians Meeting  
November 21, 2013

Present: Ellen Bahr, Steve Crandall, Bev Crowell, John Hosford, Laurie McFadden, Mark Smith, Eva Sclippa, Brian Sullivan

Pre-Game Show
Before the meeting officially got started, we chatted about the search for a new Engineering/Emerging Technologies Librarian and the desire for more applications. Mark is seeking additional places in which to advertise the position. Mark also shared about the exorbitant cost of Compendex, and told us that we will be starting a trial to Web of Science, a promising alternative. One drawback to Web of Science is the recent announcement that they will not be including their resources in Summon, or any discovery tool.

Philosophical Discussion Regarding Expectations for Non-Tenure Track Librarians
Mark, Steve, John, and Bev are continuing their work on a document that will lay out the guidelines for evaluating non-tenure track librarians. Although the details of each position will be worked out between the individual non-tenure track librarian and the Dean/Associate Dean, with expectations clearly spelled out in their job description, the document will contain some basic guidelines. For instance, there are several key differences between non-tenure track and tenure track librarians, including: Research & Scholarship is not required; Professional Activity focuses primarily on keeping up with developments in the field as they relate to the position requirements; College and University Service is strongly encouraged where possible; expectations do not increase each year; and there are no ranks. Once the document is further updated, it will be shared with the AU Librarians.

Beyond the details of the document, we agreed that there is a larger philosophical conversation that needs to happen regarding our approach to future hiring and the value of having tenure-track faculty librarians. We briefly started to have the conversation, with Steve noting that tenure-track faculty librarians are the ideal we should always strive to hire. Ellen proposed that a small group be formed to discuss these matters and bring recommendations back to the larger group to further the conversation. The small group will consist of Ellen, Laurie, and Eva.

Strategic Planning Discussion
Prior to this meeting, each of us were given the assignment of going through each of the items in the new strategic plan and indicating whether they are A) something we are planning to work on this coming year; B) something that should be addressed this coming year (by someone); or C) something that is already being addressed. Laurie added D) something that should be addressed, but not necessarily this year. It was decided that the best course of action is to send our responses to Steve to collate and report back to us so that we can discuss the next steps in a separate meeting. It is hoped that this discussion will help us to prioritize the elements of the plan and determine how the plan will be implemented and used by the two libraries (both together and individually).
Deans Council, Graduate Council, and AU Faculty Senate Reports
Steve and Laurie provided updates from the most recent meetings. Some relevant topics included the Middle States Self-Study, the teaching of online courses, the usefulness of Blackboard, and instructional design. Mark asked about AU’s potential involvement in Open SUNY in light of these related topics.

Library Conversations
Brian will coordinate the re-institution of our lunchtime discussions of academic library issues in the Spring. The first Friday of each month seems like the best date for most people. The first conversation will be Friday, February 7, at noon in the Herrick Book End Lounge. Brian will lead the first conversation and send out the topic/reading in January. It was suggested that the library staff be invited to these conversations, so Brian will extend the invitation to them in January.

Writing/Research Guide
Brian will be working on revising the Writing/Research Libguide. Eva expressed interest in working on that project with him. It is hoped that their work will make that guide more useful and attractive for AU students. It was suggested that they contact Vicky Westacott to determine ways in which to include the Writing Center’s resources and services into the guide.

Personal Librarian
Brian expressed an interest in forming a Working Group to explore the feasibility and desirability of starting a personal librarian program at AU. Although the concept was briefly discussed by the AU Librarians in the past, nothing became of it at the time. Steve and Mark agreed to join Brian in this project. It was suggested that it might be useful to start with a sub-group of AU students, such as those on academic probation or those in the FYE program. Andrea Burch from Special Academic Services was recommended as a good person to consult for further ideas and starting points.

Reflecting on our Teaching/Instruction
Brian noted that although all of us teach as part of our work, we do not frequently talk about our experiences (good and bad) or share ideas, strategies, and tools with each other. We will have a meeting on December 9 as a starting point for these sorts of conversations. Brian will send out some prompts ahead of time to help everyone prepare, and will lead the meeting. He hopes that these sorts of conversations can happen more frequently as a way to assist and encourage each other as classroom teachers.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian T. Sullivan