

All-Staff Meeting Minutes

September 4, 2016

Attendees: Brett Arno, Ellen Bahr, Stephen Crandall, Amanda Criss, Natalie Skwarek, Linda Sootheran, David Snyder, Brian Sullivan

Hurricane Harvey

Steve discussed the possibility of making a donation to a library in Texas that has been partially or fully damaged by Hurricane Harvey. The money donation would be used to replace an item or several items damaged by the storm. Staff members were encouraged to let Steve know if a library in need comes to mind. Alan Littell has also expressed interest in making a contribution.

Social Media update

The AU Libraries have a new social media intern named Daniella Stebe. As the point PR representative for the libraries, Dave will be in contact with Daniella and coordinate social media and blog postings with her. Dave would also like to bring more attention to library staff achievements, events, and displays. He has requested that future all-staff meetings include PR as an agenda item for the group to discuss. Ellen suggested that in regards to Daniella's blog posts, it would be a good idea for someone to check her work for accuracy prior to any posting.

Study Rooms

Dave announced that four of the study rooms in Herrick will now have themes. The study room on the first floor behind Natalie's office will be called the "Garden Room." The two side-by-side study rooms on the ground floor will be called the "Purple Room" and the "Gold Room." The study hall near the entrance to the library on the ground floor will have a nautical theme, though the name of the room has yet to be determined. Gray accent walls have been painted in each study room and will be decorated in accordance with their theme. Steve posed the question of whether the air conditioned study room should have reservation status. Staff agreed that while air conditioning is a feature worthy of increased advertising, it should not have reservation status.

Systems Work at Scholes

The Systems and Engineering Librarian position will not be rehired until the reorganizational consultancy is completed. Ellen and Brett will be taking on systems work for both libraries until the vacancy is filled. Ellen stated that due to the increased workload, the Digital Projects Workgroup that she leads will be put on hold for the remainder of this year.

Weeding Project update

Weeding has been put on hold as there has been a high turnover in the history department and new faculty have yet to come select books to be weeded from the collection.

Consultancy

Steve began the discussion about the upcoming consultancy by stating that he would send staff a copy of the consulting proposal for the Alfred University Libraries. He stated that there are various scenarios and a range of possibilities that could occur as the libraries continue to have either the same or fewer amount of resources. One possibility is leaving everything unchanged, though this option is unlikely.

Linda was interested in the highlight of the retreat was that she was unable to attend. Steve responded that the primary discussion during the retreat addressed concerns by the staff regarding the consulting process.

Ellen asked whether the information collected by the consultant, Jenica Rogers, would be accessible to everyone for the sake of transparency. Steve responded that Jenica believes in “radical transparency” and that she, along with Steve and Mark, will take measures to ensure transparency.

Brian added that it is important for staff to feel like active participants in the process rather than reactionaries.

Ellen asked if one of the goals of the consultancy is to unify services. Steve replied that some services are more likely to be merged than others.

Brett inquired whether Jenica is aware of the LSP transformation. Steve acknowledged that Jenica is aware of the issues and is taking the LSP transformation into account.

Dave asked about the funding and cost of the consultancy. Steve answered that the consultancy will be funded through Herrick Library’s endowment fund and that he will talk with Mark before disclosing the specific amount being offered to Jenica. Dave followed up on his initial remarks by mentioning that President Zupan has stated the importance of Alfred University taking better care of its employees, and he suggested that this be considered as a goal of the consultancy.

Brian wondered how everyone will be involved in the process. Steve responded that Jenica will collect anonymous opinion surveys from staff in addition to spending a full day on campus which will include everyone.

Ellen felt that all staff members should have an opportunity to react to the options before Mark and Steve make a final decision; everyone should have input in order to feel more comfortable. She added that Jenica should be aware if the budget is fixed so that she won’t go into a direction that is not feasible. Ellen also inquired about the potential to create jobs that didn’t exist before or to combine existing jobs in new ways. While it is not certain how this will come about, she stressed the importance of factoring personalities, skills, and preferences into any new jobs or the alteration of current job titles that may emerge.

Steve suggested that if there is a lack of a skill set for a particular activity, that activity may be outsourced.

Ellen concluded that the AU Libraries need to focus on the most essential services based on limited staffing and that the goals of the finalized consulting plan need to be realistic.

Staff Updates

Steve has been and will continue to focus on the consultancy throughout the fall semester as well as open access resources.

Brett has been working on deployment, setting up new laptops, uploading Alfred Today issues into AURA starting from 2006, and will focus on systems maintenance throughout the academic year.

Ellen is thinking about the ALMA migration and reclamation. She is working on getting ALEPH records in order, eliminating e-book records from the catalog, and will work with Brett on systems maintenance and teaching library instruction classes throughout the semester.

Brian has also received a large number of teaching requests for the fall. In addition to teaching, he will focus on assessment and open access resources. His most recent project involved preparing documents for tenure. Brian also announced that the ITS after-hours helpdesk has been temporarily suspended but the conversation regarding the helpdesk will continue.

Natalie has spent the summer updating the front desk manual, hiring new student workers, preparing for student worker orientation, working with a student to complete a number archival summer projects, shifting the archival collection, answering research questions, cataloging honors theses, and digitizing a portion of the Howells/Frechette Collection. She will train a graduate assistant to help her with various digital projects throughout the fall semester.

Amanda stated that her daily ILL duties are going smoothly. ILLIAD and ILL labels have been updated and statistics have been completed.

Linda notified staff that because Susan isn't returning to her position, Linda will be in charge of the entire department and corresponding responsibilities on her own. She pointed to the fact that the elevator's settings have changed so that the elevator travels back to the first floor after every use. She requested that the settings be changed back to the elevator remaining on the same floor in which the last occupant has gotten off of it in order to save time on each use. Steve answered that he will contact the physical plant about adjusting the settings.

Dave spent his summer updating front desk materials such as the student worker handbook, hiring new student workers, and shifting in the stacks. He is also in the process of decorating the newly themed study rooms.