Tisch Library Director’s Report
December 8, 2017

Update since last Library Committee meeting on October 19.

New staff. Jennifer Ferguson joined us this week as Team Lead for Arts & Humanities in Research & Instruction. From our announcement:

For the past six years Jennifer has been at Simmons College, serving as the Arts, Humanities & Careers Liaison Librarian. She brings a wealth of experience working with first year students. At Simmons, she coordinated the first-year instruction program, leading a successful redesign of the program focused on a systematic approach to information literacy. She has designed, taught and assessed classes and workshops for undergraduate and graduate students, both in person and online. She co-taught a course in the Art & Music Department. She has substantial experience in collection development and collection assessment as well. She is a frequent presenter at library conferences. Jennifer began her career in industry as a research associate, gained additional experience at Rivier University, and worked for several years as an independent consultant.

Among other groups, Jennifer will be working with the History Department and the First-Year Writing Program.

Later today, I will announce the appointment of Susan Brady as our Coordinator of Document Delivery. This role includes oversight of interlibrary loan lending and borrowing, “scan & deliver,” and streaming media for all three Tisch branches. Susan has been a Library Assistant since 2009, and stepped into the coordinator position on an interim basis last May when Annmarie Ferraro went on leave.

Lauren McKinney joined the staff in the Director’s Office in late October. In addition to those administrative duties, she is working with Research & Instruction supporting programs and events such as the Tisch Undergraduate Research Awards.

Other staff news. Connie Reik, Humanities Research & Instruction Librarian, retires next week after 27 years at Tisch. Marsha Paiste, Cataloging Librarian, will retire in February, after 37 years here. Soren Henry has had to relocate out of state, creating an open Library Assistant position in Cataloging as well. We are evaluating the alignment of responsibilities across Metadata Services before proposing replacement roles.

FY2018 budget developments. The plan for reducing current year expenses that we discussed at our September meeting is still in effect. This includes a combination of salary savings from open positions, targeted reductions in collections allocations, extension of the refresh cycle for some of our technology, and postponement of a few small projects. The challenge for Tisch has been the evolving approach to filling positions in A&S. There is now what in effect amounts to a hiring freeze, perhaps with some exceptions. But we are adapting to a delay in replacing certain positions that we had not planned to hold open, such as the Humanities Librarian.

The AS&E budget planning meetings held in November with the EADs were focused on the current year; but we need to plan ahead for FY2019 now as well. We are going to
forecast the impact of different scenarios for collections – a flat budget, a small increase, and an increase that would cover inflation – and will present that to the committee in January. We had a similar budget planning meeting at the SMFA, as the library there is being accounted for separately from Tisch. The SMFA budget forecast is very challenging, as we know. We have substantially scaled back spending on SMFA collections this year after providing a much-needed infusion of support in FY2017.

**Strategic planning.** The Library’s current strategic plan ([http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/sites/default/files/TischLibraryStrategicPlanFY2015-17_Final%2BIntro.pdf](http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/sites/default/files/TischLibraryStrategicPlanFY2015-17_Final%2BIntro.pdf)) was intended to take us through 2017. Based on prior experience, we know we want to incorporate two things more effectively this time: input from our users and stakeholders, and broad engagement from library staff. The core planning group includes the members of the Library Management Council and several additional staff. We held a mini-retreat in mid-November. Guided by a facilitator, the group took a very productive step forward. We realized we need a bit of internal work before we can successfully do the outreach to stakeholders that we envision and engage more staff in meaningful ways. Stakeholder outreach and staff involvement are key, not just for developing a strategic plan, but to ensure the ongoing success of the Library’s work.

The next steps are to create conversations and learning/work experiences that will help us become truly user-centered, and to work more effectively across departmental lines. The broad strategic priorities outlined in the current plan still drive us: transforming spaces and services to enhance learning, curating and stewarding the scholarly record, and fostering research and knowledge creation. We want to pursue these priorities with a stronger and more cohesive organizational culture.

I’ve done a lot of strategic planning work over time. I always come back to: *It doesn’t matter what the plan says. It matters what we do.* So, we are going to focus on what we do. I invite you to continue to provide valuable advice and feedback as we go (actually, I’m counting on it!). Thank you for being such good partners to Tisch Library.

Dorothy Meaney
Director, *ad interim*