Tisch Library Director’s Report
September 2017

Highlights from activity at Tisch Library since the last Library Committee meeting in April.

Staff changes. In June we welcomed Liz Settoducato, Engineering Librarian, and Thomas San Filippo, streaming media specialist. Earlier this week we welcomed Allison Gofman, Social Sciences Data Librarian. There are still several vacancies to fill: Social Sciences Team Lead in Research & Instruction, a role which has been vacant for about a year; Arts & Humanities Team Lead, replacing Chris Strauber; Document Delivery Coordinator (including Interlibrary Loan), replacing Annmarie Ferraro who retired September 1st. We will also need to hire a Digital Media Technologist in the DDS, and a librarian to fill Connie Reik’s spot after she retires in December. And, of course, Laura Wood left in June.

This is an unusual amount of staff change in Tisch! We are doing our best to be responsive to requests, particularly for instruction and research consultations, being as creative and adaptable as possible while we are short-staffed. Our team structure helps somewhat, as it provides backup where we may not have had it before; but we are looking forward to completing our active searches soon, and welcoming new colleagues, to restore needed strength and depth to our partnership with faculty and service to students.

Single service point. Data we collect about our interactions with patrons at the Information Desk and in the Research Hub has led us to move to a ‘single service point’ model for questions, reference help and research consultations. This involves understanding the ‘tiers’ or types of questions, and differentiating between questions that can be answered quickly and those that are better addressed by more substantial time with a librarian having in-depth expertise. Our staff at the front desk are prepared to assist with the wide variety of questions that make up most of our inquiries. We are solidifying our internal referral process so that expert assistance with research is available where and when it’s needed. (http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/get-help/ask-librarian) This does mean, however, that students cannot expect to have an expert available for in-depth assistance whenever they may come into the building. This was never actually the case; but we realize the need to adjust expectations.

Virtual reference help is available during peak hours (11-5 M-F) for September. We will evaluate whether adjustments are needed as we move through the semester and demand patterns change.


(From a press release at a prior location)
Conceived by Robert Frank and Gerhard Steidl, the exhibition Robert Frank: Books and Films, 1947 – 2017, presents Robert Frank’s entire artistic oeuvre from 1947 to the present. The films, books and photographs, like Frank himself, are immediate and humble. Unframed and printed in sequences of four to five on newspaper banners, the photographs are mounted directly onto the wall on simple paper. As instructed by Robert Frank, the banners will be destroyed after the exhibition so that it does not have any commercial value. The exhibition is designed to
engage a young generation. Students...and other visitors will be able to experience the work in
the manner in which he created the photos.

- On Thursday October 5th, from 6-8pm in Cohen Auditorium, Steidl will present his lecture,
  “Print is not dead: the beauty of analogue media in the digital world.” The lecture will be
  open to the public.
- We are hosting an (invitation-only) opening reception the evening of October 6th, which
  includes a talk by Steidl.
- Steidl will offer a master class the afternoon of the opening, and we are working with SMFA
  faculty to determine the lucky 10-12 participants for that.
- We have also arranged a panel discussion about Robert Frank’s influence on the
  photography book for the Saturday of Family Weekend, October 14th. The panel will be
  moderated by Dina Deitsch, Director of University Art Galleries, and panelists will include
  SMFA faculty members Jim Dow and Bill Burke, as well as Karen Haas, photography curator
  at the MFA.
- Some students will be involved in assisting with installation and de-installation of the
  exhibition.

Levine Center for Research and Learning. Thanks to the generosity of Richard U. and Ellen R.
Levine, their named Endowment Fund will now more broadly support “equipment and media
appropriate to help keep Tisch Library at the leading edge of librarianship and technology.”
Room 223 and 224 will be renamed in their honor. The rooms together will be called the Levine
Research and Teaching Center, with Room 223 the “Learning & Teaching Commons” (dubbed
LTC; no more ERC) and Room 224 the Research Hub. Advancement is working on creating new
permanent signage and a (low-key) ‘ribbon cutting’ later this fall.

Other initiatives.
- Our Textbooks-on-Reserve pilot is continuing for the 2017-18 academic year.
- We now offer free, on-demand 3D printing in the Digital Design Studio.
- The Academic Resource Center will be using one of our conference rooms (204) for
  language study groups during Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings this fall. We
  continue to do our best to find ways to support our campus partners and maximize use of
  the library’s space.

Dorothy Meaney
Director, ad interim, Tisch Library
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