Present: Daniel Abramson (Chair); Michael Reed; Sam Thomas; Malik Mufti; Ning Ma; David Ekbladh; Patrick Forber; Chris Rogers; Sophie Pearlman and Janna Karatas (TCU Senate reps)
Ex Officio Members: Laura C. Wood and Laura Walters
Absent: Matt Panzer; Valencia Joyner Koomson; Rachel Bonoan (GSC rep)
Guests: Kevin Dunn, Vice Provost; Michael Klein, the William L. Clayton Professor of International Economic Affairs, The Fletcher School

1. Chair’s Welcome and Member Introductions: Daniel Abramson, Chair
Before moving on to the report presentation and discussion, Danny summarized the Library Committee’s work this year:
First meeting: Prep for DeEtta Jones and Associates Consulting (DJA); discussed members’ perspectives about what a 21st century library should be.
Second meeting: Further discussion and feedback gathering for the DJA consultants from the Library Committee as well as faculty from The Fletcher School and the Boston and Grafton campuses. There were 4 main points made during this meeting:
• the strong desire to maintain the culture of the library(ies) at each campus
• the strong desire to maintain library staff and resources at each campus
• the vital importance of the libraries to faculty and student research, learning, and teaching
• the critical role of the library as a physical as well as a virtual space
Third meeting: Prep for the library’s faculty research study – feedback/refinement of questions and name gathering for outreach to faculty for interview participation.

2. DJA Report Presentation and Discussion: Laura Wood, Director, Tisch Library
Laura displayed and explained a series of slides, including the current ULC structure, the background for the DJA assessment, and DJA recommendations and scenario options.

The 4 scenarios are as follows:
Scenario 1: “School-Based Libraries” - > status quo
Scenario 2: “Main Library + Spokesperson” - > centralize Tisch Library and have a University Librarian
Scenario 3: “Users Local, Collections Central” - > Harvard hybrid – Tisch, DCA, and collections (“collections” needs to be defined) will be centralized while the other libraries will remain school-based
Scenario 4: “Strategic Integration, Libraries As A Common Good” - > full centralization of the libraries

A great deal of questions and discussion ensued about the pros and cons of the scenario options. Regarding a University Librarian, this position will need to have a close relationship with AS&E even if there’s a dotted line reporting relationship. Danny asked if there would be a conflict of interest if the University Librarian is also the head of Tisch Library. Laura responded that there is a potential for conflict of interest, especially depending upon the financial model adopted. Laura also explained that libraries don’t subdivide well between “front and back of the house” since the staff tend to straddle both sides now.

Risks of inaction include:
- lack of vision for university services/lack of voice for strategic issues in university planning
- an inordinate amount of time spent on internal negotiation
- highly customized local services with difficulty creating uniformity where it would be beneficial
- limited fundraising for the libraries
- librarians forced to be generalists at the expense of securing solid specialist expertise (i.e. – each person wears multiple hats and is spread thinly)
- increased duplication and silos and/or internal billing
- potential difficulty in engaging external partnerships –> this is one of the most important and salient issues
There need to be new possibilities to better support research and learning. Each of the scenarios pose challenges, making it difficult to choose one as is. Just as the library directors are split in their agreement about which one seems best, so were the members of the Library Committee. A hybrid model appears be the better solution. Centralization would create opportunities, including freeing up time for the local librarians to engage in things in which they do not have time now. Michael Klein presented the opinion of The Fletcher School Dean in addition to his own. The Fletcher School Dean’s biggest concern was not having a real voice or control regarding budget, space, resources, and staffing, as would be the case in Scenario 4. [Ginn Library’s structure is currently similar to Scenario 3.] This, however, poses a big problem for the A&S and SOE Deans in scenarios 2 and 3, but not for the other Deans. Scenario 2, particularly, creates greater stress on resources at Tisch and a complete disconnect from the funding sources. Faculty likely would suffer as a result. When asked, Laura replied that she believes that scenario 4 is the most equitable in terms of all of the libraries and schools having to make sacrifices. Scenario 4 is not native to current Tufts culture, however. We need to gauge and evaluate what will be gained and lost by going this far.

Chris Rogers commented that none of the peer schools have libraries at distances such as Tufts does, and asked how this would work re: resource-sharing. He wondered if the model might not include 2 “pots” of money – one for funding for the local libraries and one that is university-wide.

Danny views the report as to how faculty can do their jobs better, and wondered why innovative and new services was not listed in other scenarios other than 4. Laura responded that, unfortunately, we do not have the staffing and the time to do these things. Scholarly communications, which is a universal issue, is an example of this problem. There is much more that could be done in this realm, but the current structure cannot support the level of need. It is difficult, also, to determine how to hire a person to manage scholarly communications as well to whom they would report.

Several members voiced their worry about scenarios that include the University Librarian reporting to and receiving funding from the Provost, especially since the faculty have a more direct relationship with the Deans. In summary, members’ concerns revolved around transparency, perceptions, trust, accountability, control, and the funding model. Laura assured members that the faculty will continue to be the ones the libraries respond to regarding their needs for teaching and research.

Danny will work with Library Committee members to write a formal response statement to the report and recommendations before faculty disperse for the summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

We would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the members who have served on this committee and are rotating off this year: Rachael Bonoan; Janna Karatas; Sophie Pearlman; Michael Reed; Chris Rogers; and Sam Thomas. Additionally, we extend deep gratitude to Danny Abramson for his dedicated commitment for the last two years as Chair.