

Council on the Libraries Meeting of January 3, 2008

Present: Douglas Bolger, Kirk Endicott, Jeffrey Horrell, Hussein Kadhim, Elizabeth Kirk, Mary Munter, Cynthia Pawlek, David Seaman, Barry Scherr, Roxana Verona, Ellen Waite-Franzen, Kent Yrchik-Shoemaker, Walter Simons.

Excused: Alisa Koonce.

The meeting opened at 12:05pm.

1. Introductions of attendees.
2. Minutes of the November 1, 2007 meeting were approved.
3. Next Generation Library Systems Planning (David Seaman, Associate Librarian for Information Management)

In his introduction, Jeff Horrell noted how important it is for the Library to evaluate at regular times the range of new library systems available and the extent to which they might meet our need, always provided they are affordable, of course. With this in mind, David Seaman reviewed a number of systems recently produced and in use at other institutions. Dartmouth's system, with nearly 2 million records, frequently undergoes adaptations or adjustments--a new web design is nearly completed and changes in the catalogue are underway—but more far-reaching shifts are possible. These include a transition from a fully integrated system to one in which inventory control systems are separated from discovery; smarter result pages; special interfaces for particular audiences. Several systems present such features now. Endeca, used by the North Carolina State University libraries, which employs a third-party system and allows faceted browsing; WorldCat (including WorldCat Local); Encore systems with faceted searches, tag clouds, federated search results, such as Dartmouth's Search 360 service; Google Books, and others. David concluded by reminding us of the rich contents of our libraries; what is needed now is to make our system more flexible and nimble. In the ensuing discussion, a different perspective between faculty members and library staff became apparent. The former were intrigued, but somewhat alarmed, by the new trends, which seem to favor simplicity and ease over depth or accuracy; there was also a concern that commercial enterprises such as Google and Amazon were garnering too much influence on library system browsing. Library professionals, on the other hand, assured the council that there were no real shifts in cataloguing systems and that the option of personalizing interfaces, for instance, actually improves the ability to tailor consultation to one's needs and screen out superfluous data.

4. Dartmouth Digital Information Steering Group (Jeffrey Horrell, Dean of Libraries and Librarian of the College)

In accordance with the recommendations of the task force that examined the digitization of record-keeping practices, a Steering Group has now been formed that will formulate a campus-wide, strategic plan to present to the Provost, Barry Scherr. A recently awarded \$352,000 Mellon grant will provide funding for a 4-year Directorship of Information Strategy, demonstration projects, an advisory council that will include input from other academic institutions, and small, specialized panels to investigate the actual implementation of these techniques in practice. Several members of the Council emphasized the importance of and challenges posed by these issues, including that of privacy. Barry noted that Dartmouth is in advance of other institutions that have become aware of these issues only recently, while Ellen Waite-Franzen called attention to the great diversity of the information to be processed, which will complicate policy making.

Dartmouth Digital Information Steering Committee

Ellen Arnold, Associate General Counsel

Jeffrey Horrell, Dean of Libraries and Librarian of the College

Wess Jolley, College Records Manager (Chair)

Cheryl Josler, HR Information Systems Manager
David Seaman, Associate Librarian for Information Management
Ellen Waite-Franzen, Vice President for Information Technology
Martin Wybourne, Vice Provost for Research

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.