



Library

COUNCIL ON THE LIBRARIES

Tuesday, 12 April 2022
12noon – 1:00pm

Minutes

Present: Cantor, Castelot, Chor, Clarke, Davis, Donovan, McCabe, Mehrer, Parker, Singh, Skinner, Snyder, Sunde, Tell (Chair)

Apologies: Gleiser, Goodman, Marinho Ramos, Quint

Library Leadership Team: Chamberlain, Reynolds

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Council and reminded everyone the next meeting would be May 24.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 8 March 2022

The Minutes of the March 8, 2022 meeting were approved with a correction to the meeting date.

3. Matters arising from previous Meeting

None.

4. Repatriation of Occom's Papers to the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut

As announced on March 30, the papers of Samson Occom are being repatriated to the Mohegan Tribe. Stemming from a proposal by the Native American Visiting Committee (NAVC), the repatriation will be celebrated in a ceremony on April 27. The Chair noted the repatriation was not brought to the Council in advance. The Dean explained the repatriation was an institutional decision made by the President's Office in consultation with the NAVC and the Mohegan Tribe, and that communications were closely coordinated with the needs of our Mohegan partners.

5. Course Textbooks and Open Educational Resources: continued

Continuing the conversation started at the last meeting, Associate Librarian Daniel Chamberlain provided an overview of the Library's Open Education Initiative, which provides grants to support the adoption and creation of open educational resources for Dartmouth courses. The application window recently closed and five proposals from across campus have been approved to move forward with \$1-4K in funding. Some proposals are directly aimed at addressing textbook affordability, while other projects are driven by pedagogical or disciplinary needs, such as the specificity of a topic and what resources already exist. A council member asked how openly the resources will be shared. The goal is to make OER open to anyone with an internet connection, and they are designed to be configurable so they can be reused and adapted.

The Council briefly revisited an idea raised by the Vice President for Information, Technology, and Consulting at the previous meeting to explore the possibility of supporting a student project to facilitate textbook exchange among students. When asked about the viability of such a

project, the VP suggested it could be a good project for the DALI (Digital Applied Learning and Innovation) Lab, but it would require rich collaboration and continued conversations. The Dean indicated such a project would need to originate from ITC rather than the Library.

One council member observed that many students are simply not willing to purchase books, partly due to affordability, but also because they are seen as an outdated medium compared to e-resources. The faculty member made a point to assign electronically-available books, but was unaware of the access limits until it became a problem. The Dean and Associate Librarians encouraged faculty to work in advance with liaison librarians and course reserves staff to identify and address such issues.

Some council members agreed with the observation that students are not purchasing books, noting the availability of potentially illegal/unlicensed copies online. In contrast, another council member observed that even when using freely available online resources, some students still purchased the book. Attitudes and behaviors around textbooks may depend on the discipline and/or pedagogical approach. For example, textbooks are considerably more expensive in the sciences, but there are also more used books available. In these disciplines, affordability can be managed by using the same edition for a few years rather than always purchasing the latest edition.

Council members also commented that faculty or departments sometimes purchase extra copies of books to have available for students, though there isn't any data on how often this occurs. One council member asked whether any peer institutions do not require students to purchase textbooks. At Tuck, textbooks are provided for students, but the cost is included in the course fees, which does not address affordability. Some institutions are labeling courses without required book purchases as "zero cost" as a way of increasing transparency and highlighting affordability for students.

Textbook affordability is an issue across higher education, not unique to Dartmouth. This topic will remain on the Council's agenda. As a next step, the Chair suggested further exploring what peer institutions are doing.

6. Committee on Priorities Meeting 25 April: Draft Letter from CoL

The Chair reviewed the Council's priorities for the year, which included consideration of the impact of budget cuts, changing the council's workflow, and sharing/connecting with other faculty governance structures. The draft letter to the Committee on Priorities ties together all three priorities and makes two primary recommendations: that the Library be considered an academic rather than administrative unit, and that the Provost's Office consults with the Council should future budget cuts be considered. While there is no official designation for academic versus administrative units, the budget cuts were communicated in terms of reallocating funds to the academic mission. Many members of the Council were confused and surprised the Library was not considered part of the academic mission and felt this was important to address with the Committee on Priorities.

7. Any Other Business

None.

8. Next meeting: 24 May, 12noon-1pm