

**COUNCIL ON THE LIBRARIES ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR AY 20-21**

**Membership:**

<u>School, Department, Office represented:</u>	<u>Name:</u>
A&S	Janice McCabe*
A&S	Devin Singh
A&S	Håkan Tell
A&S	David Glueck
A&S	David Webb
A&S	Michelle Clarke (Sabbatical 2020-21)
Geisel	David Goodman
Graduate Student	Hunter Snyder
Guarini	Amanda Skinner
Information Technology	Mitch Davis
Library	Sue Mehrer
Postdoc Student	Kathleen M. Rose
Provost	Alicia Betsinger
Student Affairs	Joe Castelot
Thayer	Geoffrey G. Parker
Tuck	Davin Chor
Undergraduate Student	Michael Green '21
Undergraduate Student	Jordan McDonald '21

\*Denotes Council Chair for the past year

**Charge as described in the Organization of the General Faculty of Dartmouth College (OGFDC):**

1. To represent the faculty and students in maintaining the excellence of the Library with respect to its collections, resources, services, programs, and spaces for the benefit of the Dartmouth community.
2. To assist in strategic planning for the Library by keeping the Dean of Libraries informed about current and future library needs for teaching, learning, and research, and providing liaison between the Dean of Libraries and the faculties of Dartmouth.
3. To advise the Dean of Libraries on formulation and implementation of policies and programs in relation to collection development and collection management, development of new library services and on other matters of general library policy.
4. To submit a report to the General Faculty at the end of each academic year.

### **Number of meetings per term (or season), for the past academic year:**

The Council on the Libraries met six times during the past academic year: in October, November, February, March, April, and May.

### **Activities for the past academic year:**

This year, we welcomed two new members to the Council: Amanda Skinner is representing the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies where she serves as the Assistant Director of Outreach and Communications; Kate Rose, a postdoctoral fellow in the Institute for Writing and Rhetoric, is representing the campus post-doc community. The addition of these two new members reflects the expanded membership that resulted from the review of the Council's charge and membership in FY18.

The Council on the Libraries (CoL) had four main topics of our discussions this past year:

1. Closing of Kresge and Paddock Libraries
2. Library Budget Reductions FY18-FY22
3. Role of the Council on the Libraries and deepening Council members' engagement in library strategic planning
4. Updates on initiatives within the library

A summary of each of these topics follows.

***Closing of Kresge and Paddock Libraries.*** This was our main topic in Winter term and continued into Spring. Council members and library staff discussed the steps that were taken and what we believed should be the CoL's role in the decision, given the Charge of the Council. Council members expressed their grave disappointment and criticism in relation to the closure of the Kresge and Paddock libraries. Several members expressed frustration that the Council was not consulted on the plans in advance. Members felt they could have offered valuable insight into the impact of such closures. Members further highlighted the important role these libraries have played for their respective departments and the benefit of adjacencies for those communities. Sam Levey, Associate Dean for the Arts & Humanities, and Dan Rockmore, the Associate Dean for the Sciences, attended our March meeting for this discussion. We also discussed and received updates from library senior leadership on the space in Fairchild and the Hop, the Collections, and the staff that had been working at Kresge and Paddock libraries.

***Library Budget Reductions FY18-FY22.*** This is a discussion that had continued from previous year's CoL meetings; however, it also provided the backdrop to the closing of Kresge and Paddock libraries. Under Dartmouth's FY18-FY21 reallocation process, the library has sustained permanent cuts from its central subvention budget of \$1.7 million. During this period, there have been no layoffs or furloughs of existing staff; instead, permanent cuts have been achieved by eliminating existing vacant roles. Prior to the closing of Kresge and Paddock, the library had

been able to protect spaces, collections, and services; however, continued budget cuts will make this increasingly difficult.

***Role of the Council on the Libraries and deepening Council members' engagement in library strategic planning.*** The broader discussions related to the previous two items raised important questions about the role of the Council and how to make the engagement more meaningful. In response, Dean of Libraries Sue Mehrer outlined four high-level areas that will influence the library's strategic planning going forward:

- i) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice and the Library's role in advancing DEI and social justice at Dartmouth.
- ii) Collection Development and Management: Leading in the acquisition and management of the scholarly record.
- iii) Fundraising and Development: raising the Library's profile and its central role in the academic mission of Dartmouth
- iv) The Evolution of Scholarly Publishing, Open Access, business models of big publishers and alignment to scholarly values.

Responding to a pre-meeting survey and discussion during a meeting, Council members expressed interest in engaging with Library leadership on these areas and considered how best to proceed. Members suggested they would need to work outside of the regularly scheduled Council meetings, perhaps through subcommittees, in order to best represent the views and interests of our divisions and the broader campus community.

The 2020-2021 CoL chair (Janice McCabe), the 2021-2022 chair (Håkan Tell), and Dean of Libraries (Sue Mehrer) met with Chris Cook in the Provost's office in March to discuss the current charge and role of the Council, in the context of other councils at the College and to refine best practices for councils.

***Updates on initiatives within the library.*** Our monthly meetings also included updates on initiatives within the library, provided by senior library staff. We discussed the library's phased approach to operations during the pandemic, including access to materials, support for online classes, and access to the physical spaces of the library. We also discussed ongoing initiatives in the library, including Research Data Services and the delayed work on the Library Collections and Service Facility (LCSF) on Etna Road.

Two dedicated Research Data Program staff members are now working in collaboration with other librarians and ITC's Research, Teaching, and Learning team to support data-related work in the undergraduate curriculum, provide data-related consultations to advanced researchers, to offer workshops and training programs to graduate students, to launch a research data sharing infrastructure (Dartmouth Dataverse), and to increase capabilities around computational textual analysis of Library owned and licensed collections.

The Library Collections and Service Facility (LCSF) on Etna Road was delayed by at least one year, along with other capital projects at the College.

## **Key insights or recommendations:**

Over the past year, the CoL has been moving towards a more active, engaged, and proactive body, shaping the topics of discussion as well as responding to them. In the past, meetings were generally in a format where the CoL members would receive information in the form of reports and presentations and provide feedback when asked. Spurred by the lack of consultation in the closing of Kresge and Paddock, the CoL discussions in the Winter and Spring term meetings centered on better understanding the role of the Council, improving communication, and the desire to have a more proactive role in choosing topics for discussion at our meetings. Council members suggested that part of their active engagement should be supporting the library through advocacy, highlighting its critical role in support of the academic mission of Dartmouth. It was acknowledged that fostering a culture of engaged membership requires commitment from all members.

## **Recommended topics for the council to consider in the coming year:**

***Library Budget Reductions FY18-FY22.*** Given the sizable budget cuts that the library has sustained over time, the CoL should look more deeply into the impact of the cuts, the possible impacts of future cuts, and benchmarking budgets across peer institutions.

***Communication across the College.*** How should the CoL communicate more broadly with other entities at the college, including established channels of communication, like the Committee on Priorities (CPr) and Committee on Organization and Policy (COP), and more direct links to other committees and the Provost's Office? How and how frequently to maintain these channels could be a useful topic to consider.

***The Role of the Council on the Libraries.*** The CoL should continue to discuss the role of this Council, including continuing the discussion of which areas and how to deepen Council members' engagement in library strategic planning, specifically in these three areas:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice and the Library's role in advancing DEI and social justice at Dartmouth.
- Collection Development and Management: Leading in the acquisition and management of the scholarly record.
- The Evolution of Scholarly Publishing, Open Access, business models of big publishers and alignment to scholarly values.

The annual strategic priorities for the Council should be guided by the Chair in collaboration with the Convener and discussed at the first meeting of the academic year to outline a broad roadmap for the focus of subsequent meetings.

**Report Completion Date:** September 17, 2021, by Janice McCabe, CoL Chair 2020-2021