

To: Bill Fry, Dean of Faculty

From: Mary Beth Norton, chair

RE: annual report of university faculty library board, 2010-2011

Fortunately, this academic year was nowhere near as fraught as the last. In fact, it was positively calm by comparison. One major issue has arisen over the almost last-minute decision to relocate the Fine Arts Library to unfamiliar quarters in Rand Hall while construction on Milstein Hall continued (and renovations were performed in Sibley). Although the faculty of the architecture school was consulted and aware of the move, other users of the library were taken by surprise and protested a lack of consultation. Still, the furor died down fairly quickly once the reasoning behind the temporary move was fully explained; the space in Rand did not pose a logistics problem for Milstein construction (as did the previous location), and the previous location also had inadequate climate controls for the books and other materials in the collection. (A further move to permanent quarters is planned once Milstein is complete, people can be relocated, and space can be properly renovated.)

By comparison, the combination of the ILR/Business/Hotel libraries has gone quite smoothly, first under the leadership of Janet McCue and subsequently under a new permanent head. Books with recent circulation histories are being moved to Catherwood Library, others (including some currently in Catherwood) are being moved to the annex, and the faculty members of the three schools (students too) are being consulted every step of the way.

The board also approved the library's adoption of a policy of refusing to sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) with large suppliers of databases, even though this might have some negative financial consequences for us. The NDAs (which forbid the library from informing other libraries what we are paying for access to particular journals) foster secret 'deals' which might benefit us but which also might hurt us. In addition the library finds them distasteful, as does the board.

In addition to such moves and consolidations of collections, the board's business has included the following:

- 1) Overseeing a reworking of the policy for holders of faculty studies (now to be known as research spaces) in Olin and Kroch libraries, to try to open spaces for new faculty. This has been done in conjunction with the Library Humanities Collection committee, instituted last year, which has been serving as a successful liaison between the library and humanities departments.

- 2) Reviewing the library's strategic plan for the next 5 years, which we discussed extensively.

3) advising the library staff on possible revisions to the current catalogue interface, which is regarded as unsatisfactory by many (including many members of the library board).

4) Working with the library staff to try to increase alumni access to databases and other library resources, especially for recent graduates.

5) Thinking about how space in Olin Library might be reworked and more seminar rooms or group study spaces be developed after the fire safety project is completed this coming fall.

6) Developing a new funding strategy for supporting arXiv, a free online service for sharing scientific papers brought here by Paul Ginsparg when he moved to Cornell. We supported the library's plan to ask regular users to contribute financially to the support of arXiv, a strategy which has been quite successful.

7) Persuading the Faculty Senate to adopt at its final meeting of the year a resolution urging the Provost and President to increase funding for library collections so that the goal of returning to the top 10 university libraries nationwide can be attained in the next few years after we have started to fall behind.

The board members have worked well together this past year. I have no particular requests for the future, except to note that it would be helpful for me (and the library staff) to receive from the dean of faculty's office a complete and up to date list of the members of the board as early as possible in the new academic year. This past year there was considerable confusion for a couple of months as some people did not know they had rotated off and others were not aware that they had rotated on as the memos that went out prior to the meetings went to an outdated list of members because we had not been sent a current one.

Let's hope this coming year is as quiet.