Introduction

This report is based on two meetings with Dean of Library Services, and ex officio member of the committee, Terrance Burton.

Library Renovations

The charge to our committee this year was to report on the effects of the ongoing renovations on the operations of the Library. The renovations are intended to increase the space available for study and for scholarship, as well as to provide increased shelving space for books.

As of our last update, at the Faculty Senate Meeting in February, work had not yet begun – we were waiting for a decision on the need to provide sprinklers for the old section of the library. Unfortunately, the decision went against us and it became necessary to provide emergency sprinklers, which would be up to modern code, in both sections. This forced a reconsideration of the work in the old section and made the project significantly more expensive – an addition of $4 million to the original budget of $43 million. The Library Dean has assured us that various minor redesigns have whittled this overage down to $2 million and that the entire budget is still drawn from federal money and from donations.

These problems have been resolved, and the project is now underway – the timeline is more or less unchanged.

1. April 2011: all books which are going to be kept during the renovation will be moved; those books and journals which are going into storage will be moved offsite.
2. June 2011: renovation of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors and the basement, except for the computer labs, will begin.
3. December-January 2011: renovation of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors will be complete; renovation of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors will begin; all retained materials and all seating will be shifted to the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.
4. May-June 2012: student seating will be restored.
5. Summer 2012: renovation of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors and the basement will be complete.
6. September 2012: the entire project is complete.

A project of this scale will inevitably affect the library and its patrons.

1. We will not have access to the whole collection during the project. Roughly one third of the collection will be retained – materials which are newer, or which
circulate frequently, or which have been specifically requested by faculty. The rest of the material will be sent into offsite storage – the exception will be materials related to Crime and Justice Studies or Political Science, which will be sent to the Law School Library. Faculty and students will be able to use Interlibrary Loan to obtain books owned by UMass Dartmouth but unavailable due to their location in offsite storage.

2. The renovation will also clearly affect the use of space in the library. Meeting space will be limited during the project. The concentration of all materials and all seating on the 5th floor during fall 2011 will probably result in a cramped and noisy learning environment. The absence of the learning commons between fall 2011 and spring 2012 will likely cause students to move to the computer clusters elsewhere on campus.

Overall this committee feels a high degree of confidence in the efficiency of the planning and in the commitment of library administration to minimize the inevitable impact on patrons.

Journal Survey

At our last library committee meeting, on 9 March, we learned of a plan which should be presented to the faculty senate for discussion. Between Late March and Early April the library administration will be conducting a review of all our roughly 1,800 journal subscriptions with an eye to using the subscription budget more effectively.

The administration has already prepared a spreadsheet document listing: 1) title, 2) cost, 3) usage (print and electronic), and 4) cost per usage. This document will be circulated to all faculty members, who will be asked to note which journals are most useful for their field. The raw data and the survey results will be used together to decide which journals can safely be eliminated – which journals, in other words, are used so infrequently that it makes more sense to order them as needed through Interlibrary Loan. The savings will then be reallocated for subscriptions to journals which have a greater value to faculty. The survey would be repeated every five years. The committee has only just learned of this plan, and so we have not had much time to consider it, but we agree that it could be useful. We do, however, have several questions: 1) have all the variables which might determine the value of a particular journal been included in the administration’s document, 2) who will decide how the saved money will be allocated (what should be done when there are conflicting claims as to which journals are absolutely essential), and 3) is there any chance that this review will penalize certain faculty, departments, or colleges?

The administration plans to undertake this survey in the coming weeks, and so we welcome your comments.