



## **Council on the Libraries**

October 16, 2024

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

### Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Castelot, Davis, Feiler, Goodman, Granger, Kull, Mehrer, Miller, Olivetti (Chair), Peters, Sahu, Will

**Apologies:** Albert, Cirnigliaro, Chee, Jawad, Saxby, Webster

**Library Leadership Team:** Chamberlain, Johnson, Taxman

**Guest:** Chukwuka Odigbo (Dartmouth Student Government President)

#### 1) Welcome and introductions

The Chair and Dean welcomed the Council, and members introduced themselves. The Chair provided an overview of the Council's function and membership.

#### 2) Minutes of the meeting held on May 21, 2024

The minutes from the meeting on May 21, 2024, were approved as written.

#### 3) Matters arising from previous meeting

The Dean updated the Council on Baker-Berry Library's late-night opening. On May 21, 2024, the Council approved the recommendation to adjust Baker-Berry hours due to staffing challenges and presented data. The recommendations were implemented at the start of the fall term 2024, when Baker-Berry's hours changed to:

- 8 AM – 12 AM (Sunday to Thursday)
- 8 AM – 10 PM (Friday & Saturday)

The 24-hour spaces remained the same, with Reiss Hall, the 1902 Room, and the Novack Cafe Study Area open 24 hours a day.

Following the changes, the library administration received expressions of concern from students and has been engaging directly with students through in-person meetings to discuss their concerns. The most consistent feedback was on the need for quiet and comfortable study spaces. Students shared that the 24-hour spaces were unsuitable for focused studying due to issues with noise, furniture, and temperature regulation. Students

noted that many assignments were due at midnight (or 1pm with extension), and changing study locations close to these deadlines was disruptive.

The Dean presented planned improvements aimed at addressing the students' concerns:

- Beginning early October 2024, two library meeting rooms were made available for students from 5 PM – 8 AM (Monday – Friday) and 24 hours on the weekends.
- Beginning October 16, 2024, the Tower Room will stay open until 2 AM, seven days a week.
- Beginning October 18, 2024, Baker-Berry Library will stay open until 12 AM, seven days a week.

Student members of the Council stressed the importance of having quiet study spaces and expressed a preference for partitioned spaces like study carrels. The Dean reported that based on student feedback, Libraries are exploring various furniture options for the Seuss Room, the area outside the Tower Room, and the Novack study rooms to accommodate quiet individual study.

Other suggestions included opening the Orozco Room as a 24-hour space, and ideas to address staff shortages. The Dean reiterated that the changes to opening hours were not due to budget constraints, but challenges with sustainable staffing for the late hours. She expressed her commitment to continue engaging with students to explore further improvements.

#### 4) Discuss and approve new/updated Libraries' policies

The Dean introduced three draft policies (shared with members ahead of the meeting) for the Council's feedback:

- Signage Policy
- Short-term Displays Policy
- Challenged Materials Policy

The signage and short-term displays policies are based on existing guidelines and have been formulated as policies to provide clarity and transparency. The challenged materials policy is new and states that materials acquired by the Libraries shall stand as published and that Dartmouth will not remove materials from its collection perceived as being offensive or problematic. The policies had been discussed with the Provost and the academic deans prior to bringing them to the Council. The Council discussed if the challenged materials policy adequately addressed collections that include concerning content as well as how materials would be flagged for harmful content. A member shared that preserving problematic material is important because it reflects historical and societal contexts. The Dean noted that acquisitions are made thoughtfully in collaboration with faculty and that difficult ideas are part of the educational process. The Dean also shared

that library staff assess harmful or problematic content and have mechanisms for flagging such content. The Council approved the motion to adopt the three policies.

5) Priority areas for the Council for this academic year

The Council discussed priorities for the academic year. Much of the discussion focused on the following three topics, which were suggested as potential priorities by the Chair and Dean:

- Investigate the Libraries' current budget structure and fundraising to bolster investments.
- Build upon the new strategic plan and identify concrete goals.
- Focus on open access mandates and plan for upcoming changes.

Additionally, Council members shared interest in the following topics: expanding the collection of books in languages other than English; understanding the process of new journal acquisitions; and focusing on Dartmouth's future with Generative AI.

Regarding funding, members discussed potentially reviewing the funding structures of peer institutions, collaborating with Dartmouth's Office of Development, and creating an advisory board. It was noted that in relation to budget and fundraising, clear and specific goals were critical, especially in aligning potential investment areas with the priorities and goals laid out in the strategic plan. The Dean and Chair will review the discussed suggestions and aim to articulate concrete priorities for the next meeting.

6) Any other business:

None