LOSAC Annual Report 2016-2017

Library Operating Staff Advisory Committee

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COMMITTEE TRANSITION

The previous and newly elected committee members, including alternates, met together on September 21, 2016.

Outgoing members: Stacey Bivens
Teresa Jacobsen
Sara Richter*

Continuing members: Joe Thomas
Katja Marjetic

Newly elected members: Michele Hunt
DeeAnna Phares
Anthony Velazquez

Alternates: Stacey Bivens
Teresa Jacobsen

*After Brian Prall resigned in August of 2015, Sara Richter took his place on the committee to serve the remainder of the term.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Officers for 2015-2016 were elected as follows: Joe Thomas, Chair; Katja Marjetic, Vice-chair; Michele Hunt, Secretary; DeeAnna Phares, Historian; Anthony Velazquez, LAC Representative.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY OR BROUGHT TO THE COMMITTEE

A. Annual Report

The annual report for 2015-2016 was submitted and approved by Dean Olson.

B. Library Advisory Committee

LOSAC continued to provide a representative assigned to attend LAC meetings. The LAC representative reported back to LOSAC on the status of those meetings, and reports were published with the LOSAC minutes.

C. Department Heads Meetings

LOSAC continued to send a committee representative to the Department Head meetings. They reported back to LOSAC on these meetings, and these reports were published with the LOSAC minutes.
D. Operating Staff Council

LOSAC’s continues to provide a link to the Operating Staff Council minutes in the LOSAC minutes.

E. Annual Meeting with Operating Staff

The annual meeting between LOSAC and operating staff was held on October 19, 2016 in the staff lounge. The annual report was reviewed and copies made available. The meeting raised a number of questions and concerns that were discussed in the subsequent LOSAC meeting and relayed to the Dean.

F. Birds

Birds hitting the windows of the library are a continuing concern. Additional ideas on inexpensive ways to avoid strikes are welcome.

G. Revision of LOSAC Constitution and Election Timeline

Dean Olson requested that LOSAC change the LOSAC election timeline, so that it would be completed by August 1st. LOSAC complied with the request and in the process made additional changes to the constitution to make it more clear and comprehensive. The Constitution was approved by Dean Olson in May 2017.

H. Dean Search

The Dean search was conducted by an NIU committee, with no search firm assistance. The search committee included: From Library Council, Jim Millhorn; from library faculty, Leanne VandeCreek, Matt Short, Beth McGowan; from Library Advisory Committee, Sharon Nelson & Meredith Ayers; Operating Staff, Nancy Adams; SPS, Cindy Ditzler; Library Administration, Etc. It started in November and concluded when Dr. Fred Barnhart accepted the offer in April. His appointment start date is July 1, 2017.

I. Staff Notification of Events in the Staff Lounge

Concern was again raised that operating staff were not always being notified of functions/events taking place in the library staff lounge during work hours, and requested information on policy about the use and reservation of the lounge. The Dean reaffirmed that they will do their best to inform staff of any events taking place during work hours. There is no formal policy about Staff Lounge reservations. While the staff lounge is being used for events/functions, the kitchen is still available for use. Those who reserve the Staff Lounge are made aware of this. To raise concerns regarding use of the staff lounge, please contact Renee Kerwin or TJ Lusher.

J. Foot Traffic through 71S

In the fall there was still a lot of foot traffic through 71S by individuals en route to 71N. Concerns were brought to the committee, and possible solutions were discussed with the Dean.
Solutions discussed were closing/locking doors, improving signage to 71N, and staff offering directions as well as instructing these individuals to use different routes. The concerns subsided by spring.

K. Blackboard Reorganization

LOSAC brought up the issue that Blackboard - Libraries’ Community Center is hard to navigate. TJ Lusher requested suggestions on how to improve navigation, and some changes were made.

L. Loading Dock Stairs

Stairs on the west side of the loading dock were deteriorating and the safety concerns were brought up at the annual meeting. LOSAC Chair discussed the issue with the Dean. The stairs were repaired.

M. Library-Wide Policy on Serving on Committees outside the Library

A question if there is a library-wide policy was brought by a staff member because they wished to serve on more committees than their supervisor approved, citing department policy. The library policy is that deciding how many committees a staff member can serve on is up to the department and their needs.

N. Library’s Air Quality

The Library’s air quality was brought up in relations to the staff’s health and LOSAC investigated the possibility of an air quality test for the building. It would be very expensive to test the entire building, but it will be done if there is sufficient reason to suspect indoor air quality is making individuals sick. If anyone is feeling sick and believes this to be the cause (especially if their doctor suspects it), a report should be filed with either Joel or the Environmental Health and Safety Department – it is called “Indoor Air Quality Form” and is available on EHS’s website: http://www.niu.edu/ehs/forms/index.shtml.

O. Anywhere Printing

The NIU Libraries underwent major technological changes in the past year, most without issues. In contrast, Anywhere Prints provided a number of challenges which effected patrons and staff, and these were brought up at LOSAC numerous times. Concerns were passed on to the Dean, and scenarios were shared with Operating Staff in LOSAC minutes to keep everyone updated.

P. History of the Library

There was discussion about a project involving collecting and disseminating information on the history of the Library. LOSAC Chair discussed this with Ete, suggesting starting a committee for the project.
Q. LOSAC Blackboard Suggestion Box

LOSAC would like to get more input on what Operating Staff would like to be brought up at the meetings. We are considering implementing anonymous suggestions through an online survey made available on Blackboard. This required changes to the LOSAC constitution because, according to the wording, anonymous submissions were not acceptable. The Suggestion Box has not yet been approved or implemented.

R. LOSAC Log

An idea was brought to the committee to implement an internal communication log used to record important reminders, procedures, and exemptions to be passed down to subsequent members for reference purposes. New generations of LOSAC members can add and edit it as necessary. LOSAC has decided to implement it.

S. Program Prioritization

Program prioritization report was released in the Fall, with the following results:

1. Collections and Technical Services - Enhanced
2. Public Services - Sustained
3. Library Administration & Office of the Dean - Sustained
4. Regional History Center & Archives – Reduced
5. Technology Initiatives and Support Services – Transformed

The Libraries requested a change to the Reduced category for the Regional History Center and Archives, but their request was denied. In light of the recommendations changes have been made to throughout the Libraries, including the internal reporting structure and relocation of material. The situation is ongoing.

T. LOSAC elections

The committee performed the election according to the timeline proposed in the revised Constitution. Nomination ballots were distributed in May 2017, and final ballots were due June 16, 2017.

U. Operating Staff Meeting with the Dean

The committee invited Interim Dean Olson to address Library Operating Staff. The meeting was held on June 28th at 2pm in the Staff Lounge. Dean Olson discussed various topics, including:

- Arrival of the new Dean Fred Barnhart on July 3rd.
- Anticipated University, and State Budget for Fiscal Year 2018.
- Library and University personnel concerns.
- Effects of Program Prioritization.
- Various news which is not directly linked to the University Libraries, but effects our work.

Interim Dean Olson thanked all Operating Staff for their hard work, flexibility and patience over the past year, and pointed out her retirement date of September 1st.