

8-31-2017

LOSAC Minutes 2017-08-31 Fall Meeting w Dean

Library Operating Staff Advisory Committee

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Minutes of the LOSAC Fall Meeting with the Dean

Date: August 31, 2017

Time: 10:03am

Founders Memorial Library, Staff Lounge

Present: Katja Marjetic (Chair), Dee Anna Phares (Vice-Chair), Michele Hunt (Secretary), Renee Kerwin (LAC representative)

Excused: Anthony Velazquez (Historian)

Introduction

- Dean Barnhart (Fred) is happy to meet as often as we like and he will keep up with email updates as news is available.

Submitted Questions

1. What is the Dean's top priority for this year?

- Fred is focused on getting to know us, the library and campus community. He wants to discover the students' library needs in terms of what we do well so he can promote it and continue doing what is well received, but also what we need to change and accomplish to improve.
- He'd like to survey the staff, students and faculty to get a feel for issues, concerns and suggestions.

Open Question & Comment Period

1. Any follow up the OneCard Office move?

- No new news on the office coming over to the library temporarily. It won't close for remodeling until late spring.
- Interesting fact: 70% of the student population are first generation college students so making the library an open and welcoming place is an important goal. Having the OneCard office located in the library could help with that.
- Our café is being remodeled and upgraded to support more food options. It may happen during winter break.

2. Because of the upgrades will the café now be open during breaks?

- Not sure if that will happen if the traffic to support it isn't there.

3. There isn't always consistent food supply at the café.

- Food and dining services is aware and working on it. The upgrade and renovation will help with this problem.

4. The GDrive is going away. When and how do we move things over?

- Not sure, but Fred will check with TJ and see about getting training set up.

5. Any news on the President search?

- There is no timeline yet.

6. Has any money been sent to us from the State?

- Yes, there has been some funding, but the University has been vague about how much and how it will be distributed.
- Library Administration has a wishlist of repairs and items they would like to purchase if the funds become available. Gate repair and compact shelving are examples of priorities.
- Enrollment is flat and the University is working to increase out of state students.

7. How has working with Lisa Freeman been?

- It's been going very well. The library is on her mind. Fred has been invited to meetings he didn't expect to be asked to attend and has felt included. They have a great working relationship.

8. Will you participate in the dunk tank next year?

- Definitely! Fundraising is also on his mind. Not a huge priority this year, but working on it.

9. ALA presented on Escape Rooms. Perhaps it could be used as a fundraiser or a way to make the library more visible to students.

- Interesting idea to explore.

10. Any plans on hiring new staff?

- The IDS position should be moving forward. Other positions are being filled by current staff. AD positions are being held off for the time being and will be figured out in the future. A great team is in place right now so he doesn't want to implement change just yet.

11. Night at the Museum Archives Event

- A great way to promote the archives and the library. It has not been offered yet, but planning is in the works.

12. High school students used to visit often and learn about researching.

- Budget issues with field trips have led to less trips. Groups still visit, but less frequently.

13. Dean asked the Staff: What would improve things for you and the students?

- In the past, there wasn't always clear direction or focus coming from Library Administration. Fred is giving us the guidance we need.
- Can we have conversations about the future of our policies that seem outdated and not forward thinking? Our model doesn't fit where the campus is going. We want there to be a true conversation about what the Libraries' role is and who we are serving.
 - The Dean is very open to that conversation as well as having outside suggestions and information to inform decisions and changes.
 - Fred gets the feeling that other Deans are open to change as well. Opening the conversations is a good starting point. We're straddling two centuries, but there's a way to maneuver and find a way forward. We need to find ways to shift and improve work so we can serve more people effectively.

14. What are your feelings on e-books?

- Fred likes them. Having both print and e-books available would be ideal, but it's not a simple question. Print is still valuable. We need to find a balance based on what our patrons need. We also need to help educate on which format best suits people and how they need to process the information.

15. Structural issues are a concern. Condensation is heavy and the mildew smell is a reality. Any plan to fix these problems?

- Joel & TJ have a list of things that need to be fixed. Deferred maintenance is a big problem around the building. We're lucky with the structural integrity of this building. Fred has asked that the fix-it list be kept current and for us to be at the top of the list if funds become available.

16. We should be providing service where the students are. Students sometimes are afraid to ask at the desk, but often will ask people who are working in the stacks.

- We could implement a call box on each floor, a QR code to initiate a text or call to Circulation or Reference.

17. Students helping students?

- This hasn't been implemented since the close of the NIU Library Science program. We used to have an information desk that students staffed, but they would often get questions for reference.

18. Direct communication is greatly appreciated.

Conclusion

Fred appreciates our time, questions and comments. Please contact him if we have any more and he'll continue to keep us updated on anything new through e-mail.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:57am.
Our next regular meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2017 at 1:30pm in Room 411.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Hunt, Secretary