

LIBRARIANS ASSEMBLY COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING May 17, 2000 Swem Library Classroom

President Alan Zoellner called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Approximately 26 librarians were present. Following introductions, Alan presented the guest speaker, Karen Cary, a past chair and chair-elect of the Virginia Commonwealth University Library Services (ULS) Faculty Organization.

Ms. Cary provided an outline of her talk (attached) and gave an overview of the make-up of the VCU Libraries Faculty Organization. She reviewed the organization's history and present structure. The group was formed in 1976 to pursue issues of concern to librarians and to better define their status on the campus. Based on a 1988 report from the State Secretary of Education, university librarians were designated Administrative and Professional Faculty. At VCU, where they are also called collateral faculty, they are not tenure eligible, but have academic rank and can be promoted. All persons with a library faculty appointment are members of the ULS Faculty Organization.

The speaker then described past and existing ULS standing committees and their activities. Among them: Nominating, Academic and Professional Status, Administrative Liaison, Professional Development, and Peer Review. The ULS Faculty Organization does have representation in the faculty governance structure of VCU and are active members of the Faculty Senate and the University Council. They are also involved with other ad-hoc committees and task forces on the campus. They have strong administrative support and the tenure-eligible faculty members welcome their participation. Future ULS projects include integrating new employees, facility renovation issues, off-site storage questions, funding and budgeting concerns, and recruitment and retention of librarians.

Ms. Cary concluded by answering questions. She pointed out that the VCU Libraries have a single administrative head. She explained the system of ranks and the work of the peer review committee. She noted that meeting the requirements for "faculty" status takes extra effort, but the library faculty finds it worthwhile. Attendance at ULS meetings is good, because of the exchange of information about campus issues; although, not many members want to be officers. She advised new organizations to select projects that would be achievable and to avoid internal bickering.

During the second portion of the meeting, Alan asked the group to consider the results of the Librarians Assembly Survey and make recommendations for 2000-2001 projects. The survey was a compilation of the responses gathered by the Executive Committee when they interviewed the membership about expectations for LA.

The discussion centered on gaining representation on campus committees as a starting point. This could be as observers or as voting members. John Lawrence reported on the present campus committee structures. There are a variety of configurations, with participation on some being more restrictive than others. Further investigation is needed. Mention was made of the need to clarify restraints that are imposed by state guidelines and those that are the result of campus policies. Don Welsh pointed out that LA could issue position statements without having formal representation on campus governing bodies. A suggestion was made that LA publicize its formation and purposes.

Alan also asked about LA sponsoring informational programs for its members. Pros and cons were offered, but nothing conclusive was decided. It was generally agreed that a listserv or similar means of communication be established for W & M librarians. Alan suggested that the LA Executive Committee meet later this month to review the input from today's meeting and make recommendations about establishing LA standing committees and prioritizing future actions.

Finally, Alan informed the group that the Swem Administrative Council had asked LA to consider a statement of "Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries" that was compiled by ACRL. Copies were distributed. One of the tenets of the statement (#11) required that "a procedure ensuring due process" be in place to deal with requests for the removal or addition of library resources. The Council suggested that LA might want to be responsible for developing such a procedure. No immediate decision was made and the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.