SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
Thursday 19 November 2020 2:35-3:33 p.m. via Zoom

Attendees

Senators
Francis Andrew
Gage Averill
Janette Bulkan
Julia Burnham
Lawrence Burr
Alex Gonzalez
Maura MacPhee
Shigenori Matsui
Nick Pang

Alex Scott
George Tsiakos (Vice-Chair)
Ex Officio
Erik Kwakkel
Susan Parker
Regrets
Eshana Bhangu
Colin Godwin

Pam Ratner
Richard Topping
Senate Staff
Jessica Iverson
Guests
Claire Williams
Evan Thornberry

Call to Order
The meeting of the Senate Library Committee (the “Committee”) was called to
order at 2:35 p.m. on 19 November 2020 by G. Tsiakos, Vice-Chair.

Agenda
THAT THE Senate Library Committee adopt the 19 November 2020 agenda as
presented.

Moved: F. Andrew
Seconded: L. Burr
Carried.

Meeting Minutes
15 October 2020 meeting minutes

THAT THE Senate Library Committee approve the 15 October 2020 meeting
minutes as presented.

Moved: A. Scott
Seconded: M. MacPhee
Carried.

Business Arising
There was none to report.

Election of Chair
The Committee did not elect a Chair. G. Tsiakos expressed interest in the
position. J. Iverson said she would consult with C. Eaton regarding the question
of a librarian chairing the Committee.
S. Parker provided an update of the following:

**COVID Operations**
- The Library has not stopped operating. Doors to physical spaces were closed in March, but the Library’s operations have continued throughout.
- Book delivery service has been introduced. Access to the Library’s print collections remains important. Requests have increased from 2,600 in July to over 12,000 as of mid-November. The HathiTrust has supplemented access to print materials.
- The Irving K. Barber Learning Centre re-opened in September and began offering bookable study spaces. Around 350 seats are currently available on the main level, with plans to re-open the lower level in the future.
- When students reserve bookable space they are surveyed to gather information on Faculty, undergraduate or graduate, and online courses. Over 30% of students booking the space come from the Faculty of Arts, and many are enrolled entirely in remote coursework.
- Barber will be closed 23 December 2020 to 3 January 2021, which is the typical closure period. This information will be communicated in advance.
- The Library has relied on a cadre of employees, including student employees, to support its COVID operations. The VP Student portfolio has been involved in the coordination.

**Other Updates**
- S. Parker was elected to both the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) and Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Board of Directors.
- An IT management group has been created internal to the Library to support the necessary tools and systems.
- Together the Chung Collection, along with a collection focusing on the Yukon Gold Rush in British Columbia, will form the Voyages Gallery and will be relocated to the main level of Barber in 2022. The Chung Collection includes more than 100,000 objects and documents that show the history of immigration (especially Chinese immigration) to BC, the history of BC itself, and also the history of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Library is collaborating with a design firm on a museum-quality installation.
- The Research Commons is a new space in Koerner Library, but it is also a unit comprised of librarians and other staff who help researchers and learners by introducing software and other digital tools into their work and workflows. The Commons supports interdisciplinary scholars and the digital humanities, plus discipline-specific researchers. The Commons has been busy during remote operations, offering a variety of workshops. S. Parker mentioned the Common’s head, Eugene Barsky, was recently awarded the CARL Award of Merit in recognition of his contributions and impact in advancing research data management (RDM) in Canada and internationally. With the Tri-Agency’s upcoming mandates on data management, UBC’s focus in this area is well-timed.
Questions

- J. Burnham asked if the Barber space use data is publicly available, to which S. Parker said not yet. J. Burnham suggested the data be posted on the Library's website.
- A. Scott asked when faculty members and students will be able to take advantage of the RDM services available through the Commons. S. Parker said librarians in the Commons are ready and available to help people now. The national RDM infrastructure is in its infancy.

Geospatial Data from the Map Cabinet: Digitizing British Columbia's Mid-Century Forest Cover

G. Tsiakos introduced the Committee’s guests, C. Williams and E. Thornberry, both of whom have been part of a collaborative project between the Library and the Faculty of Forestry, that resulted in the scanning and digitization of 149 maps detailing BC’s forest landscape during the 1950s. As a result of this project the digital archive now enables users to better conceptualize the historic ecosystems of BC.

Highlights on the presentation included:

- The maps were created in 1958 by the British Columbia Forest Inventory division based on information collected through land surveys, forest inventories and aerial photographs. The maps were created in a standard format and style, making them easy to read and compare differences. From an archival point of view, the maps make up a significant portion of the cartographic materials within the MacMillan Bloedel fond (500 boxes of textual records, 20,000 photographs, 500 maps). C. Williams began by transferring the fond to an archival database so that all items were described electronically and could be easily navigated and searched.
- In May 2019 C. Williams was connected with Ira Sutherland, a PhD student from Forestry, who took an interest in the maps. They embarked on a project to digitize the maps by December 2019. The project team came up with creative solution to help meet their deadline, including hiring a work-learn student (Kevin) to assist with the scanning, and an iSchool graduate student with library archive experience (Frances Chan) to assist with creating metadata for the map collection. A project plan was in place by August 2019.
- The metadata took about one month to create, after which time scanning began. Scanning activities started on the 149 maps and their informational envelopes during Term 1 of 2019W. The documents were processed and prepared to be made available online. The metadata would eventually be loaded into the digital collections repository along with the maps.
- F. Chan also undertook geographic information system (GIS) work to extend the findability of the maps. The series of maps was published on a grid, with each section of the grid representing an individual map. The digital images were disconnected from the physical maps, so to solve the problem E. Thornberry suggested a digital map index. The metadata created earlier in the project was then mapped to OpenIndexMap and a geographic file for the index in GIS was created. Finally, the OpenIndexMap metadata was coupled with the geographic file, so each
geographic section contains all the metadata needed for that particular location.

- The next step was georeferencing, the process in which scanned images of maps are transformed into a geographically-placed image. I. Sutherland led a “georeferencing party” to complete this work. Volunteers worked from a shared drive, and georeferenced images and information was uploaded to a cloud service. All 149 maps were georeferenced in less than two months with the help of approximately 15 volunteers. The result was a mosaic of maps covering all of BC that I. Sutherland was able to extract information from using GIS software in support of his research.

- Since completing the project C. Williams has taught class sessions on how to search for items in the collections related to land use history. The maps provide a comprehensive example of the kind of dataset that can be really useful for research projects.

**Questions**

- J. Bulkan asked whether the map collection had been shared with the Global Forest Watch project at the University of Maryland. E. Thornberry said he did not know about the resource and would look into it. The maps are already open access.

- G. Averill asked if the project team had connected with the Department of Geography. E. Thornberry said not for this project, but he does collaborate with the Geographic Information Centre periodically.

**Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 17 December 2020 2:30-4 p.m.

**Adjournment**
The meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.