

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

To: Dr. Emily Tai, Chair of the Academic Senate Steering Committee

From: Dr. Jane Poulsen, Chair of the Library Committee

Re: Annual Report of the Library Committee, 2011-2012 Academic Year

Date: May 18, 2012

Committee Members: Dr. Jane Poulsen (Chair), Dr. Yusuf Gurtas, Dr. Jose Luis Madrigal

Steering Committee Designee: Prof. Liz Di Giorgio

President's Designee: Prof. Jeanne Galvin

Dates Met: October 12, 2011, November 9, 2011, March 28, 2012

Narrative Summary of Activities

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the committee met three times. We discussed the following major topics:

Electronic Textbooks: The committee discussed the current constraints on providing e-textbooks to students through the library. Although e-books are available in the bookstore for less than the price of hard copies, and publishers loan e-books for less than the purchase price, the e-versions are for single use only. Although the Library would be willing to pay for e-textbooks that allow for multiple simultaneous users, publishers do not offer library-friendly electronic textbooks.

Hours of Operation: In the Spring semester, the Library extended its hours for an additional hour on Fridays (until 5:45 p.m.) and added Sunday hours (from 10:00 a.m. until 2:45 p.m.). Professor Galvin reported in March that students were making use of the Library's new Sunday hours of operation.

Crowding: The committee discussed the ongoing problem of crowding, with as many as 4,000 students visiting in one day. Several factors contribute to the problem: the library is open to the public, including students from Cardozo High School; many students use the library as a place to go during breaks; some students come to the library because the cafeteria is too crowded or

because they are unaware of the Student Union. Although an added security guard has helped, the library does not have sufficient space and seating to accommodate the number of students.

Noise Level: Students sometimes complain about the noise level on the third floor. The issue is one of balancing space for group work and for quiet study. It was suggested that the library take out some of the tables on the third floor and put in carrels. Library staff felt that it would not be workable to have carrels (quiet, individual study space) next to tables designed for collaborative work. The library has carrels on the second floor, and staff still has to remind students that they cannot study together at the carrels. The library had carrels on the third floor before the renovations, and students simply gathered in groups around the carrels.

At one point student government leaders and Ms. Rivera suggested that the library switch the third floor group study space and the silent study room in the corner of the second floor. They did not consider that the silent study room would have space for only three or four tables.

Professor Galvin has raised the issue with Ms. Rivera and Vice President Hartigan. She also invited Student Government members to walk through the space with her and to offer suggestions. Student representatives, however, did not follow-up on the invitation.

Pathways: Professor Galvin reported that the Library has proposed a credit-bearing course under the Pathways category of “Individual and Society” with a focus on information literacy. It has not yet been accepted.

2012-2013 Committee: Committee members were unable to meet to select a new chair for the 2012-2013 academic year. Prof. Liz Di Giorgio, the only current committee member who will be serving next year, agreed to organize a meeting early in the Fall semester to select a chair. The new committee members are Diane Carey and Joanne Chiung Wen Chang.

Respectfully submitted,
Professor Jane Poulsen, Chair