



**AGENDA FOR THE COUNCIL OF LIBRARIANS MEETING
Held on May 24, 2022 at 1:30pm**

Present: Brigette Kamsler, Megan Potterbusch, Debbie Bezanson, Ann James, Cathy Zeljak, Hannah Sommers, Jen King, Josh McDonald, Matt Mihalik, Nia Phillips, Dan Kerchner, Elizabeth Waraksa, Jennifer Froetschel, Matthew Bright, Paul Kelly, Peter Cohn, Shira Eller, Shmuel Ben-Gad, Dolsy Smith, Yan He, Vakil Smallen, Leah Richardson, Amal Cavender, Mark Yoffe, Misty Trunnell, Morgan Stoddard, John Taylor (27)

Absent: Bill Gillis, Kelly Grogg, Geneva Henry (3)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:35PM.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the last regular meeting on [March 22, 2022](#) were unanimously approved.

REPORTS

1. From the Dean (Geneva Henry)
The Dean did not have an update.
2. Faculty Senate Committee on Libraries (Holly Dugan)
The report is [attached](#).
3. Standing Committees
 - Librarian Review and Development Committee (Vakil Smallen)
The report is [attached](#).
 - Grievance Committee (Cathy Zeljak)
The report is [attached](#).
 - Code & Bylaws Committee (Yan He)
The report is [attached](#).
4. Search Committees
 - Eckles Librarian (Peter Cohn)
The report is [attached](#).
 - RUS and NEA librarians (Leah Richardson)
The report is [attached](#).



NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Software Development Librarian position (Senior Associate Dean Hannah Sommers)

Council was provided a [link to slides](#) ahead of the meeting for review. Hannah Sommers detailed the decision making for this role, describing the recruiting challenges and the decision to recruit through a dual pathway: staff and librarian. Senior AD Sommers met with the Council Executive Committee, Faculty Affairs, and HR while Dean Geneva Henry spoke with the Provost.

Related to the challenge that people want full time remote opportunities, Colonial Temps have reached out to potential candidates and this is the feedback received. The decision was to make a pathway for someone who is qualified for the role, but who does not have an advanced degree or wants to be staff designated; and those who want to be a librarian and have an advanced degree. When reviewing the software developer position business needs, they are the same: write, test, deploy and maintain code (tweetsets, SFM, ISIS files, ORCID, GWScholarSpace, Invivo, others); research consultations; workshop delivery and teamwork.

Brief Statements and Questions:

A question was raised that if the candidate hired came in with a bachelor's degree then pursued additional education and got a master's degree, would there be a possibility for them to transition from a staff role to a librarian role. An additional point was raised that the role is currently a Council position, and what would happen to that voting member position if this is filled through the staff pathway.

Senior AD Sommers responded that what we have are positions in the library and job classifications. The Code and Bylaws define who and what job classifications are members of Council, but we don't have a number of positions that are "Council positions." We have "LAI positions." It's a good thing when we have the opportunity to hire - head count is important to the university. An opportunity to fill a position is a really good thing.

Regarding the master's degree, Senior AD Sommers has discussed this with Dean Henry, and it is believed that if the person came in as staff and then wanted to later transition to a Council librarian and received the master's degree, then this could be done. In part because of the process here to establish a librarian search committee. The person would be recruited through a national search and evaluated by a librarian search committee. If, on the other side of this, the successful candidate receives an advanced degree, it is believed there is a pathway for that.

Another question was raised about the position's salaries, and if more could be said about the distinction in difference in salary bands for staff versus a Council member. HR representative Nia Phillips said the salary would be commensurate with what they are qualified for when they come in the door. When compared to a librarian role, it depends. Librarian degree versus higher education degree, the bands may be higher but would depend on the position and experience. It would also depend on where the position lands in classification, experience, education, etc... They would be comparable, but it depends on the person hired.



A Council member asked if the position description for staff would be identical in terms of the job requirements and is education the only difference, and how this would work in practice: for example if someone applies for the staff role, are they only up for that role or at the end they decide? The supervisor of this role, Matt Mihalik, explained that the process through which the applicant applies is how they would be evaluated. If they apply for staff, they cannot be offered the librarian role. The job postings will be very similar; HR applies a template and the staff role would be in the enterprise application developer family in the career path system, which will lay out the template for duties and responsibilities, and minimum qualifications. There will be an extra portion that will have more written in, to make these as identical as possible.

The next question was regarding the interview process, and if staff would be interviewed differently and how would the search committee be able to evaluate those candidates equally if they don't have the same interview process. Senior AD Sommers responded that normally, the librarian interview process is different from the staff interview process. For this recruitment process to preserve the possibility that a staff person might want to qualify for a librarian role in the future, we want the interview process to be the same. It is envisioned that everyone in the pool would be evaluated the same way. A follow-up question was that it can be hard to understand the difference with benefits, and how can someone learn more or is there going to be an opportunity to clarify the differences. Nia said that applicants are always told they can reach out to HR. There is a robust brochure for people and links for more information. Senior AD Sommers added that they also envision doing an information session, where there will be an opportunity to say more.

Matthew Bright introduced a motion to guide discussion in terms of the advanced degree requirement. Someone being qualified to be a software developer is an unusual qualification since it is difficult to fill, and the following motion was proposed:

"Approve the following education requirements as an exception to the minimum requirement when hiring the Software Developer position to be posted summer 2022: ALA-accredited Master's degree in library or information science, or equivalent combination of education and experience appropriate to the position, which might not include an advanced degree beyond the bachelor's degree."

The motion was seconded by Leah Richardson.

After consideration, Matthew Bright moved to table the motion, seconded by Paul Kelly, to allow for further clarifying questions to be asked.

A Council member commented that providing the non-Council pathway is the pathway that allows inclusion of those without a master's degree, so it doesn't exclude those people from applying. They were glad to hear this proposal was discussed with Faculty Affairs, but were curious to hear their thoughts or feedback. Senior AD Sommers explained her outreach efforts and the anticipated challenges for this position. Faculty Affairs suggested the two pathways option and that they saw value in this idea. Nia also added that HR was excited to see this pathway and see if this works, and that future roles could be listed as both librarian and staff roles.

A Council member had a comment that tied into Matthew's motion. They were assuming with these job postings that there is a goal around inclusiveness, not just different educational background but a larger inclusiveness which has been a focus for the search committees for the NEA and RUS positions. A pathway to Council is an important avenue, because it is an avenue to institutional power that staff positions do not have access. There is no better way to bring inclusiveness than this shared power - for example with search committees and these discussions. We would be doing a disservice if we could not find a way to be more inclusive with the person we hire into Council. They support Matthew's motion when it gets untabled. There may be reasons a person wants to be staff and not librarian, but they would hate for them to be excluded only on their education. They believe strongly in what Council represents and shared governance is greater inclusiveness.

The next Council member seconded everything said previously regarding shared governance and greater inclusiveness. They then had a question that based on the job description, the position is going to have some librarian skills such as leading workshops, and is that a reasonable assumption for the search committee to make when making hiring decisions. Matt Mihalik said that STG business needs require the prioritization of technical work and code work on day one. If the search committee evaluated candidates that were strong on teaching but did not have fully developed coding experience versus someone who is high in coding but low on teaching, we would need to give precedence to someone with coding. Senior AD Sommers also commented on the characterization of activities that are "more librarian," and remarked this has been raised frequently. She asked what activities define a librarian. There may be people qualified as staff who are experts in teaching and also interested in pathways of opportunity at LAI. The goal is to make the job ads appealing to anyone who is qualified to help us.

Another Council member raised the question of keeping the position a librarian track but removing the master's degree requirement. In the Code and Bylaws this is allowed; specifically it says:

IV. A. 1. B - The minimum requirement for appointment to a librarian position is a Master's degree in Library Science from a library school accredited by the American Library Association. Exceptions to the requirement for the professional degree may be made when an individual possesses some unusual qualifications which are required by the library. Such appointments will be rare exceptions. For the purposes of this Code & Bylaws, the term librarian includes both those with degrees from ALA-accredited programs, and those with other credentials deemed by a majority of voting Council members to be sufficiently similar in scope to an ALA-accredited degree and/or relevant to the proposed position.

Senior AD Sommers responded that Faculty Affairs cautioned Council to be understanding of the precedent it would set, and document our processes, and what it would mean to reconsider minimum qualifications from the point of view of the Provost's Office.

A Council member raised that to be clear about what we are discussing, this motion is asking us to vote with the power we have given ourselves - this is a rare exception to the degree requirements as those cases arise. It is not something Council should take lightly and if the decision of a dual pathway comes down to the degree requirements, Council could level the playing field and make pathways more open, accessible and inclusive to be included in this body. The precedent of altering the degree



requirements for this position could be precedent setting, but so is the precedent set by holding two searches, which could apply to all positions going forward.

Another Council member requested further transparency from Senior AD Sommers regarding her comment that the Provost's Office might take issue with the removal of the master's degree requirement. Senior AD Sommers thanked the Council member and clarified by saying a personal concern she has is that if we are thinking of minimum qualifications and this being one case that changes everything for this classification.

Another Council member responded that the motion previously proposed was specific to the software developer position, for the purposes of this hiring and the position's technical requirements.

A clarifying question was raised to confirm that this motion still preserves the two pathways, but widens the scope for the librarian role. Chair Megan Potterbusch confirmed that this was correct. A Council member commented that a note could be added that this is a position that is hard to fill.

Next, a Council member commented that if the Code gives us latitude to make an exception to the degree requirements in rare circumstances, they did not understand why we wouldn't make that exception in this situation, instead of implementing a double pathway that seems in many ways needlessly complicated.

Upon request, Secretary Brigette Kamsler [shared the draft](#) of the Council motion with all Council members so that everyone could review the text collaboratively.

A clarifying question was asked that if the motion passes and the librarian's degree requirement is removed, is a staff role listing still relevant even though Council does not have control of that choice. Senior AD Sommers believed it is still relevant; someone who may not be familiar with libraries and higher education, but who is qualified, might not discover this opportunity. Looking at the GW website, if someone went to the jobs website and searched IT jobs, a librarian job would not show up here. Another pathway to be in front of candidates is useful. It is understood that the motion is intended to be a rare exception to allow a different set of minimum qualifications. This is not currently reflected in the position description, and Senior AD Sommers would work with Nia and HR on the wording if the motion passes.

Discussion, Motion(s), Voting, and Search Committee Formation

The discussion was moved forward to review and provide feedback on the [position description](#).

A comment was made that the description has heavy areas of paragraphs that is perhaps not the best way to attract people. A suggestion was made to add something catchy at the beginning to make it seem exciting. There are examples of positions at other institutions described this way that seem a better route. Senior AD Sommers responded that the sections here show up in a different order on the application page, and when being posted in a listserv for advertisement, it can be described differently and linked to the specific posting.



Another Council member mentioned that there were heavy development needs expressed by Matt Mihalik, and they wondered if this job description fully meets the needs described. Matt said they had considered being more specific about programming languages or saying “one or more...” Currently the plan is to be less specific in hopes that more people apply, and then evaluate candidates based on their application rather than having them self-select out. We need people who have experience in Python and Ruby on Rails long-term, but that is unlikely we will get that with an entry level applicant. Another Council member said that in terms of long-term retention, broadening the pool is wise, even if the business need is a priority, but that is not the only thing this person will do. This person will need to be open to workshops and consultations, along with software development. Someone who has aptitude and who can be coached might end up contributing more than someone who can “hit the ground running” but only wants to run on that track.

After edits by Council members, the motion originally brought by Matthew Bright and seconded by Leah Richardson was untabled. Matthew accepted the amendments and suggestions as friendly.

The original text read:

Approve the following education requirements as an exception to the minimum requirement when hiring the Software Developer position to be posted summer 2022: ALA-accredited Master’s degree in library or information science, or equivalent combination of education and experience appropriate to the position, which might not include an advanced degree beyond the bachelor’s degree.

The updated text as proposed reads:

In order to expand the applicant pool for the Software Developer position, and satisfy the specialized technical skills requirements, we approve the following education requirements for the appointment of a librarian as an exception to the minimum requirement specific to the job posting for the Software Developer position to be posted in the summer of 2022:
ALA-accredited Master’s degree in library or information science, or equivalent combination of education and experience appropriate to the position, which might not include an advanced degree beyond the bachelor’s degree, as allowed by the Council of Librarians Code Section IV. A. 1. B.

The motion was brought to a vote for active voting members of the Council of Librarians. The vote was 20 in favor, 2 opposed, and 1 abstain. The motion passed.

Senior AD Sommers will work with Nia, HR and Faculty Affairs to edit the librarian position to remove the master’s degree requirement.



Search committee membership discussion; draft and vote on motions

Under consideration was the labor required of this Chair, including the recruiting as well as logistical work of candidates from two streams, while recognizing how well the cluster hire worked. It was also thought to be hard to think about asking the existing search committee to take this on too. Senior AD Sommers consulted with Faculty Affairs, the Code and Bylaws and the Executive Committee about Matt Mihalik serving as the chair. Matt is the supervisor of this role but is not a Council member.

In particular was a review of Section 8A about librarian search committees, and Section 7 about general search committees. Faculty Affairs did not find issue with someone being appointed chair of a search who was not on Council. Section 8A does not talk about qualifications of the person appointed as Chair. Council has appointed staff to search committees in the past. It was recommended that if Council is open to the idea, Council could suspend this section of the Bylaws (section 7), or vote to allow an exception. After consultation with Parliamentarian Debbie Bezanson about these options, Debbie and Senior AD Sommers both agreed that a vote to allow an exception would be preferred.

A clarifying question was raised about whether a vote to allow an exception is an “in general” amendment to the Bylaws or if this was specific to this job search. Senior AD Sommers responded that it could be done generally and added to our new search procedures, but it is also specific to this role. There is value having an amendment explicitly discussed and voted on. Eventually Council may want to change the Bylaws to update or add this language; recently it has been difficult to add or change things and get them approved.

Senior AD Sommers confirmed when asked that the search committee for the software developer position will follow the new hiring procedures.

Hannah Sommers brought a motion to the floor which said:

That the Council allow an exception to Section VII of the Bylaws stating that “All members of Council committees must be regular active status librarians,” for purposes of including members of staff in the work of search committees.

The motion was seconded by Leah Richardson. Friendly amendments to the motion were made:

That the Council allow an exception to Section VII of the Bylaws which states that “All members of Council committees must be regular active status librarians,” for purposes of appointing a staff member as Chair of the search committee for the Software Developer position to be posted in the summer of 2022.



Council of Librarians

The motion was brought to a vote for active voting members of the Council of Librarians. The vote was 17 in favor, 1 opposed, and 5 abstain. The motion passed and Matt Mihalik was appointed as Chair of the search committee for the software developer position.

Formation of search committee

Nominations were sought from the floor to form the search committee. Leah Richardson nominated Brigitte Kamsler. Vakil Smallen self-nominated. Debbie Bezanson nominated Josh McDonald. There were no other nominations from the floor.

A secret ballot was conducted and Brigitte Kamsler and Josh McDonald were selected for the search committee. As Chair, Matt Mihalik can appoint another librarian as well as another staff member to the committee. Matt was waiting to hear from colleagues in HR about their understanding and ability to serve; at a future date Matt will send an email to Council naming the remaining members of the search committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39pm.



ADDENDA - Reports Attached

From the Dean (Geneva Henry)

- No update at this time.

Faculty Senate Committee on Libraries (Holly Dugan)

- Holly Dugan will continue as co-chair of the committee along with Rhonda Schwindt, from the School of Nursing, who has been on the committee the past two years.

Librarian Review and Development Committee (Vakil Smallen)

- LRDC has completed the review of all librarians up for reappointment or promotion for the fiscal year. Letters with the Committee's recommendations either have already or will soon be sent to the Dean.
- LRDC will now focus on wrapping up the year's work, including making proposed edits to the LRDC Procedures to be approved by the full Council at the beginning of next fiscal year.

Grievance Committee (Cathy Zeljak)

- The Grievance Committee has nothing to report.

Code & Bylaws Committee (Yan He)

- Internal cleanup of Code and Bylaws documents.
- We've drafted an updated procedure for submitting revisions to the Code and Bylaws.
- We believe this is ready for sharing with Council after the May meeting.
- After an inconsistency was discovered in the Code, we compared the documents on the Provost's website with the previous approved revisions and concluded that the previous language was correct. This is corrected in the next revision which will be submitted with the next recommended changes.
- Code and Bylaws investigated the specifics of non-librarians chairing/serving on search committees, and the procedures required to suspend the bylaws or any single rule.
- Upcoming:
 - Solicit Council feedback on the aforementioned proposed procedures for submitting revised Code and Bylaws documents
 - Submit proposed revisions and accessible versions of the Code and Bylaws from last summer to the Provost's website.

Search Committee: Eckles Librarian (Peter Cohn)

- The Eckles Librarian search committee has completed the finalist interviews. We're reaching out to references and looking at feedback from LAI stakeholders. Thanks to all who participated in the interviews.



Search Committee: RUS and NEA librarians (Leah Richardson)

- The RUS/NEA search committee conducted 14 phone interviews for the Research Services Librarian position and 8 phone interviews for the NEA Archivist position.
- We have selected 7 finalists for the Research Services Librarian position and 4 finalists for the NEA Archivist position. Full day interviews will be held over Zoom starting on May 31 and concluding on July 6, 2022 for both jobs.
- We appreciate the active participation of Council and all LAI staff in the interview process.
- My sincerest gratitude extends to the members of the committee (Debbie Bezanson, Matthew Bright, Dolsy Smith, Joyce Whitmore) for their hard work and dedication to an equitable and inclusive hiring process.