University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas
Faculty Monthly Meeting with the Dean
Tuesday, August 20, 2012
Present: Carolyn Allen, Jeff Banks, Molly Boyd, Donna Daniels, Judy Ganson, Necia Parker-Gibson, Mary Gilbertson, Tess Gibson, Norma Johnson, Phil Jones, Mikey King, Patricia Kirkwood, Kathleen Lehman, Lora Lennertz-Jetton, Elizabeth McKee, Jordan Nielsen, Tim Nutt, Martha Parker, Janet Parsch, Marilyn Rogers, Luti Salisbury, Sarah Spiegel, Joshua Youngblood, and Tim Zou.

Budget Update
Judy Ganson reported that she was working through the computer equipment requests with the assistance of Systems, including looking closely at multiple requests for tablets. Campus licenses are being reviewed for the software requests, and staff are getting necessary price quotes.

Communications Clearinghouse
Tim Nutt and Tess Gibson talked about the Communications Clearinghouse. The group has not met on a consistent basis and is not communicating in the way the charge indicates. Last week they both talked with the dean about refocusing the group, with a membership based on function rather than committee chairs, and taking another look at the charge. The newly reformed group would be charged with discussing issues related to goals and how to reconcile or refocus the Libraries’ goals with the chancellor’s goals for the university. The new group would include faculty and staff.

The group might be renamed the Strategic Communications Clearinghouse.

The faculty in attendance reviewed the charge. Necia Parker-Gibson stated that the original group as envisioned by the Organizational Structure Committee would have vetted suggested projects and bring recommendations forward to the administration.

Perhaps it is unclear to whom the Communications Clearinghouse reports or what authority it has. The dean stated the group was formed purely to share communication back and forth, not to solve problems. Its primary function was to share information. It was never intended as a means for accomplishing work. It was responsible for informing the entire library and determining the best method for disseminating information.

Since the work of the Organizational Structure Committee was completed, there have been several more communication committees or groups organized. Some of these include the monthly meetings with the dean, the department heads group, the Operations Group, and there are also the Selectors and the Dean’s Council. The Communications Clearinghouse charge should be clarified as related to similar groups. With the principal idea to work more efficiently, each of those committees should have its primary communication role specified. Is the Communications Clearinghouse redundant?

The dean noted that the staff do not have a forum to engage the work issues related to the larger organization, as they are left out of other large committees and working groups. The dean will address this issue in the meeting with staff this afternoon and get an idea of how the staff will use this communication tool. One issue that compounds communication problems is that some departments do not hold regular staff meetings to keep personnel informed.

The dean noted that we have planned to have the entire library meet to report on goals progress twice a year. We met once last April for an update from the goals chairs on the progress toward their goals.
Do we need this group? Each group or committee should share information about the work being done as a matter of course. They are not doing an effective job in letting people in the Libraries know what they are working on. Each group should post minutes on the StaffWeb.

The group generally agreed that regular reports from committee chairs would be welcome and informative. Perhaps we could establish a regular time every two months at which everyone was invited to attend, such as the Library Forum, and have reports from the committee chairs followed by a question and answer. Another suggestion was to meet once every semester.

It was also suggested that a standing issue of the Tuesday Times would be devoted to reporting committee information. Indicating only that minutes have been posted would not be enough information. Perhaps a digest of working topics, projects or decisions and a link back to the full minutes would be acceptable.

General Updates and Reports
Necia Parker-Gibson and Janet Parsch suggested reviving the Researcher’s Group, which was formed with the intention of providing an opportunity for people to share research, conduct trial presentations, practice, give run throughs, and get writing critiques. For several years, the group met once a month on Thursday or Friday at lunch, as this was when the most people could meet. This group has always included faculty and staff. Necia proposed that the group reform, looking at a different methodology and how the meetings are structured to make it more relevant to a variety of people. Several faculty agreed to hold a forum to discuss proposed changes.

Judy Ganson noted that Dennis Brewer gave a report on the campus network downtime experienced recently. IT Services installed new server hardware, and the software had a bug that caused problems, then a patch was installed that caused a different problem, but they believe it is all stabilized now and will not crash when classes begin.

In general, the academic environment is heavily targeted by phishing scams. The IT Services log about 70 inappropriate responses to phishing emails per month; these cause the entire campus .uark.edu addresses to be blocked, which takes a great deal of effort to resolve. Don’t click on the links in these bogus emails. Discuss the seriousness of the issue with new students and how clicking on these phishing emails affects the productivity and stability of the entire campus network. Don’t hesitate to send phishing emails to abuse.uark.edu when they make it through the filters. Also, encourage all personnel to use endpoint security protection software, such as Symantec, on their personal computers and laptops. The campus offers such software to personnel for free use at home. The campus IT Services is putting together an information packet to be distributed to all users.

All student employees are given an Exchange email address in addition to their campus provided gmail student address, because the gmail is not security protected. Patricia Kirkwood reported that when students are given an Exchange account, their gmail account is made defunct, which causes some problems with lost communication. Jeff Banks will check on that issue with our student employees.

Jeff Banks noted the New Employee Orientation for students will be September 4 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Instead of the old format, the orientation group will tour individual departments, where a department representative will give a brief overview of the department’s tasks and functions. This will give the new employees a better idea of how the library operates, both as employees and as students. Department
heads are welcome to send employees who are not new on this group tour. The tour will be followed by the traditional ice cream social in the break room. Jeff asked for volunteers to be tour guides. He noted that additional tours of the branches and Law Library will be made on a later date for new employees, and also that additional training sessions will be scheduled.