University of Arkansas Libraries
Faculty Department Heads
12/18/14

Present: Salisbury (chair), Allen, Banks, De Prosperis, Ganson, Gibson, Jones, Juhl, Kulczak, Lennertz

Staffing Needs
Salisbury called the meeting to order and Banks described two handouts: one the position request from February 2014 and one dated December 2014. The three positions approved this year were: Instruction and Outreach Librarian, Research Commons / User Experience Librarian, and Audiovisual Archivist.

Banks explained which position requests had been carried over to the revised list and which had been dropped because of other staffing changes. The Assessment Librarian position had been dropped as many of those duties have fallen to the Research Commons / User Experience Librarian. The Reference librarian function is being performed now by a librarian in a clinical line. The two positions requested for PAM have been rethought as staffing is now adequate to perform those functions.

Remaining, then, are 2 graduate assistant positions to cover areas where there is not a GA presently, including the College of Business, life sciences, and various humanities fields. A serials / special projects cataloger at the associate level also remains on the list as do 3 temporary positions for digital services.

Banks asked for feedback on the list of proposed positions.

Some of the discussion topics included:

- Graduate assistant tuition: going forward, the Libraries must pay tuition in addition to salary and fringe. Existing positions are grandfathered in for now. Salisbury asked about the high cost of these positions vs. traditional part-time or appointed positions and others concurred. The disparity between these salaries and those of some appointed positions is troubling. The group discussed the intangible benefits of hiring graduate assistants, including furthering enrollment in the graduate school, intellectual partnerships between supervising librarians and GAs, and assistance with teaching loads.
- Programmer expertise: the developing need for more in-house skills vs. buying commercial solutions. The high market cost in our area for those skills is a factor.
- Digital Services positions: the group discussed the appointment levels of the Digital Services Librarian and two senior library assistants. Allen and Ganson explained that these positions will be funded by the Libraries out of foundation funds in an effort to jumpstart the program.
- Overall funding trends: Allen reminded those present that legislative changes in terms of health care coverage and other budget decisions may well change the financial outlook for the Libraries.

Allen asked the group for a recommendation on priorities. Several librarians recommended the Cataloging position as a top priority, followed by the GA positions. There followed a discussion of initial appointment at the Associate vs. Assistant level, specifically the limitations that the higher rank can place on recruitment. In the end, it was agreed to keep this position at the Associate level for consistency with prior years.

Respectfully submitted,
B. Juhl