Jeff Banks facilitated the discussion continued from last Friday of the reports submitted by the Organizational Structure Committee.

In attendance: Diane Worrell, Beth Juhl, Joshua Youngblood, Juana Young, Tim Nutt, Janet Parsch, Elizabeth McKee, Marilyn Rogers, Tom Dillard, Cheryl Conway, Luti Salisbury, Necia Parker Gibson, Deb Kulzak, Tess Gibson, Kathleen Lehman, Phil Jones, Sarah Spiegel, Patricia Kirkwood, Tony Stankus, Tim Zou, Judy Ganson, Mikey King, Lora Lennertz Jetton, and Molly Boyd, notetaking.

**Organizational Structure Committee**

Two subcommittee reports were presented: the first is a molecular model from Subgroup 1; the second is a functional model from Subgroup 2.

**Subgroup 1: Molecular Model**

Discussion: This structure gives credence to the primary objective of operations, which is Outreach / Assessment and shows the inner relationship between departments. This emphasis is not an organizational change, but a chance in how we view our primary objectives. This helps the way we view our primary functions as a work flow process rather than a hierarchy or position. In this model, increased communication and reporting would change rather than the job functions of staff in each pod. Each pod would have one or two representatives who collect in the center and communicate back and forth. Notes: “Help the public” means public interaction. In this model, persons or departments that perform multiple tasks are not supervised by many people according to their functions. The model should be viewed for the concept rather than quibble over who was placed in what category, as that much in depth positioning requires more thought and discussion.

**Subgroup 2: Functional Model**

This model is very similar to our current departmental divisions, except names have changed to more 21st Century categories of work flows: Description, Discovery, and Delivery. This model does not change existing functions except stack are placed in Delivery and preservation is moved to Description.

Both proposals show that different departments and groups don’t talk to one another currently. Communication does not take place on a regular basis, and it’s always after the fact. In our current work environment, we need to realize that there are no independent decisions; a change in policy in one department often necessitates changes in other departments or areas. We need to have a greater consciousness about what we communicate to one another and how what we do affects other groups.

Both proposals look at the issue of where to put work groups, and both acknowledge that assessment is a key part of the leadership responsibilities and duties.

**Discussion continued on Friday, September 16: Subgroup 1: Molecular Model**
Discussion: Necia Parker Gibson gave an overview of the genesis of this model. Group 1 started with a spear diagram, with the people we serve at its tip and thinking of job tasks as a set of functions along the length, but there was too much non-linear activity to describe as a spear or arrow. Then Group 1 tried to separate functions related to undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty, but there was too much overlap of functions that made that model seem false. The flow between functions as diagrammed on this molecular chart is more pervasive than the arrows (which are limited to two directions) seem to indicate. The molecular model is not 2-dimensional or flat; it is three- and even multi-dimensional. To carry the molecular model analogy further, atoms and molecules bombard one another all the time.

What does this organizational structure diagram add to the way we currently do our jobs? What difference does it make to adopt it? The red hexagon on the diagram is the operational planning and communication clearinghouse, made up of leaders from each pod, who will talk collectively about what is happening, help review plans from other departments, serve as a critique group for plans, but also as a place to generate plans. This will allow full consideration of what effects plans will have on other workflows. The workgroups differ from our current organizational structure in that there are more members, team leaders within departments, and better communication.

The central location on the model is an acknowledgement of the key of outreach and assessment to the organization’s success. There is a general notion that we don’t do enough outreach; we need effective assessments to make sure our effect is known and felt. The assessments should be formulated two ways: for accountability inside of the Libraries and outside of it. Outreach could include any contact with outside partnerships, so it is a broad category.

The “Make Visible” pod includes such jobs as create catalog records, processing collections, Web services. This function is extraordinarily important to Special Collections, which relies on the good will of the state for donations of papers and collections. If our reputation is known and measurable via our web presence, we are much more likely to be chosen to house collections from other parts of the state.

There is evidence of operations that cut across job flows and departments now, so this model is not something entirely new. The underlying problem that needs to be solved is communication.

The TRAIL group is an example of a successful working group that including both government documents librarians and engineering librarians, neither of which functioned like the other; however, the differences created a synergy between the groups that moved the project along. This type of cross-group project allows project seeding more than a hierarchical structure, through which disparate groups do not normally collaborate on projects.

The Organizational Structure model seems like a cart before the horse project, as it was made before the strategic goals were formed. It seems a better organizational structure could be created by creating a project based on the goals, then collecting a group to accomplish that project and achieve that goal. Must consider what to do about barriers that crop up as we try to accomplish a project. These models are meant as food for thought. Currently we pay far less attention to how we are accomplishing the goals. What’s working to help us accomplish our goals? The underlying structure is not the issue in our current organization: the issue is how we communicate with each other. Past dismissal of individual or group endeavors has left faculty risk averse and reluctant to try new things or forge ahead because of past negative responses.
What should be evaluated are impediments of structure, practice, and culture in the organization.

Assessment might help. The models represent an idealized portrait of how we would like ourselves to behave. We should be a more consultative organization. Decisions are currently made by departments or administration without input from faculty whose jobs those decision impact. We need a regular input process, not to impede projects or decisions but to provide necessary information to create a better project.

What are the current barriers to communication? There are no faculty-wide meetings. The Faculty Concerns Committee is considering implementation of faculty-wide meetings. Selectors don’t meet with Acquisitions, so there is a lack of understanding of the impact of decisions, or how problems could be forestalled or worked around with proper advanced notice. Each group has intense ownership of job duties and areas. One-on-one communication takes place as needed, but area-wide communication is lacking. Press of work duties impedes full communication. Individuals and departments make decisions without realizing or considering the impact on other areas.

Seven teams require too much dedication of time and resources.

Model 1 advocates a rotating leadership team.

Subgroup 2: Functional Model

Discussion: The model represents the main functions of the library. The group did a lot of reading of materials on the subject of organization and shifts in library functions. Community outreach is the clipped phrase in the top rectangle. The top bar or rectangle does its work to enable other departments to do their jobs. The top bar is not the boss of the three function areas, but finds resources those areas need to operate. The focus of the top bar is to enable the three function areas to be the best they can be. The job flow between the function groups is left to right; group Description must complete their tasks before Discovery can take place, which must happen before Delivery. This implies a direction for each of these function pods.

Each function pod should send a representative to administration to describe needs rather than administration sending someone down to dictate processes to the pods. These representatives would tell the administration what ought to happen and what our position is based on practical knowledge gained from the front line experience. Faculty are competent specialists; their passionate expertise should drive accountability, authority, and responsibility. As respected professionals, the administration should consult with faculty before making assignments, and consider carefully the impact such assignments will have. Faculty are professionally trained, committed to a specific area, and the best person who was hired for a position. What faculty know matters, and they should be resources to turn to rather than people whom you tell what to do.

Have to consider the differences between library faculty and the teaching faculty located in the colleges. There are opposing models: the business model for library faculty rather than the academic model for teaching faculty. The lines are blurred, and there are no clear cut solutions or models to follow that are accurate. Faculty are not clerks. Also, there needs to be clear lines drawn between faculty and professional staff; what are the duties and responsibilities of each? What are the expectations for faculty, and how is that different from professional staff? What makes it a faculty position? We need to
consider what we do and what are the best types of positions to make that happen. We need to give support, responsibility, and authority to faculty to accomplish those tasks.

Faculty should educate themselves about contemporary issues in the library world. How can this be accomplished?

The faculty should be consulted by the administration before establishing new priorities in hiring new faculty and setting curriculum. The reduction in number of faculty means a shrinking pool of minds and hands to accomplish tasks and serve on committees. There are no faculty awards to recognize excellence in faculty, which would generate pride and promote excellence. The climate should be one that promotes taking risks.

Faculty should be able to vote on tenure track position candidates. Colleagues in the area of the new position should be appointed to the hiring committees.

This group does not perceive flaws in the current organizational structure. The organizational ills are those of practice and procedures, not of structure.

The diagram does not show the exchange between the administration and the three pods below. Also, Government Documents is located under Description, but does not appear on the model.

What is missing is cross-departmental communication between those who function at the supervisory level. They do not work to resolve issues or complete projects with their counterparts who are doing the doing the daily work.

One of the problems with interlibrary communication is the lack of a consistent vocabulary between administration and faculty; for instance, “program” to a faculty member means something like the film series, but “program” to the administration means a service delivery area.

Where does authority to make decisions reside? Group 2 gives authority to project leaders, with guidelines, parameters, and controls. The project leaders are given both the responsibility for completing a task and the authority to make decisions regarding best practices to get it done. In Group 1, the authority trickles down to responsibilities.

Trust and risk taking go along with responsibilities. Individuals should communicate with each other directly when there are problems. The goal was to make a more nimble organization, to give authority to colleagues, to provide more frequent critiques, and an open dialogue.

The leaders of the projects will make decisions and push the projects forward, and will be accountable for its completion. We cannot wait for everyone to agree; there are too many diverse views. Accountability for work flows is not clearly defined. The model supposes a quality control office, which is charged with solving systemic problems.

This model does not represent a concrete implementation; it is just a theoretical construct. The Committee was not charged with the mechanics of job functions on the position level or reporting structures not covered in the model.

Discussion continued on Thursday, September 22, 2011
Jeff Banks facilitated the discussion continued from last Friday of the reports submitted by the Organizational Structure Committee.

In attendance: Amy Allen, Jeff Banks, Norma Johnson, Donna Daniels, Mary Gilbertson, Beth Juhl, Joshua Youngblood, Juana Young, Tim Nutt, Janet Parsch, Elizabeth McKee, Marilyn Rogers, Tom Dillard, Cheryl Conway, Necia Parker Gibson, Deb Kulzak, Tess Gibson, Kathleen Lehman, Phil Jones, Sarah Spiegel, Tony Stankus, Tim Zou, Judy Ganson, Mikey King, Lora Lennertz Jetton, and Molly Boyd, notetaking.

**Topic: What are your recommendations to the Organizational Structure Committee?**

**Discussion:** The e-mail calling for a faculty meeting was misleading. Attendees will set aside any faculty issues to be discussed by the faculty concerns committee. They will move discussion along organically; informational and summative material can be shared. However, should issues devolve into a faculty meeting, non-faculty (Jeff and Molly) will be asked to leave the room and faculty will convene an ad hoc Faculty Concerns Committee meeting.

**Topic: Barriers to communication.**

**Discussion:** Communication takes work, and effective communication falls by the wayside for busy workers. People do not realize the impact their actions have on others. We have tunnel vision and do not see outlying problems and potential complications. We do not take the time to speak directly to the person affected by our decisions. We should take time to know all the issues at hand and communicate with those who may be affected across the organization. Part of this is habit, part is practice.

Sometimes it is challenging to talk to someone else about problems and issues. It is a socially uncomfortable position. There are no clear cut guidelines about when a person should go to a supervisor or go directly to an employee to discuss a problem. Should there be a standard for the organization, or should that be left to the supervisor’s preference?

In general, there is a lack of understanding of what other people do in the library. The less you know about what someone is doing, the less you can empathize with their needs or project potential problems.

The Communication Clearinghouse of SubGroup 1 intends to make communication cohesive and transparent. Does not imply a structural change; instead, it implies a more inclusive body that includes a broader definition of “leader.” Faculty in Reference rarely speak to faculty in Tech Services or know what projects they are working on.

The Library previously had a working group made up of individuals from each public services area, which worked toward presenting a common front for all areas. One of the side benefits of the group, which lacked follow through, was that members learned about what people in other departments did, and established standards for best practices. The aim was to give good service throughout the organization consistently. The group compiled a basic concise description of each area that provided reference service, which was a useful tool.
Since we consolidated the main service desk in Mullins Library, the environment and expectations for service have changed.

**Topic: Authority and Responsibility**

**Discussion:** Janet Parsch presented models of different types of decision making in an organization, which describes leadership behaviors and how the organization gathers input from members and makes decisions. There are five approaches to consulting members about decisions, which indicate a decision made by the leadership about who is involved in decision making. There is no “right” answer; each strategy depends upon the situation:

A. The autocratic model: the leader makes all decision independent of members of the group.
B. The leader asks members questions, polls for responses, but the members do not know the context for the answers they give or the intended outcome; i.e., what decision will be made.
C1. The leaders asks individuals one on one for information.
GROUP: The leader establishes context for the issue and solicits analysis and feedback from the group as a whole regarding it.
GROUP + D + M: The group is apprised of the situation and given authority to deal with it.

Each of these levels of collaboration have an appropriate place in the decision-making process and depend upon the context. The more autocratic and less informative the level, the more discomfort and speculation from members of the group. Administration could make an effort to make clear when soliciting information the reason for omitting the context for the issue (such as confidentiality), or otherwise explain why the context is not being explained. Too often the parameters or context for a request for information is not included, which may change the way the question is answered. All requests need to be put in a context. Employees like to have a sense of direction, some basic background information, including where the request will lead.

We should use training as a communication tool. As we become more technically sophisticated, paper trails have vanished, but the complex workflows that used to be included in those paper trails have not always translated to the electronic workflow.

There are benign failures of communication and deliberate failures. Deliberately excluding people from communication can happen between faculty members or between administration and faculty.

When more people are involved early in a planning process, it produces a more satisfying result.

The Library Forum as a communication and discovery tool is dormant. We could introduce a monthly symposium or presentation of what and how projects are being accomplished. Some of that was intended with the Communications Clearinghouse. People are so busy that full participation may be in question, the Clearinghouse would not be effective with few people participating. May use the Forum for training issues or communication and information sessions, rather than creating the Clearinghouse. Or the Forum could be run by the Clearinghouse. We should ask ourselves what don’t I know? to generate topics for discussion and discovery. We are limited in topics when we put out an open call for volunteers to talk about their job. How do we gauge the potential interest in a topic we may present?
We could be posting profiles in the *Tuesday Times* that regularly cover the same topic, such as 5 things you need to know about my department. Explore topics of interest, both in the Forum and in the *Tuesday Times*.

A failed, prolonged project was the Shared History project, in which Cheryl Conway was given the responsibility for completing the project but not the authority to compel participants to complete their portion of the project. This is an example of how not to do a project, and of how authority must be given to the project managers.

Would the Clearinghouse just be reporting meetings, with the administration continuing to make decisions or would the Clearinghouse be given authority to complete projects without the direction of the administration?

**What recommendations would this group like to forward to the Organizational Structure Committee?**

The molecular model is nebulous and would require training and sensitivity to implement a non-hierarchical model. Did not see a way to make the molecular model concrete. It would also require buy-in, a lot of time to implement, expenses involved in how to develop, and lots of training. It takes time, training, and resources to change an organizational structure, as shown in the Arizona model and some other hybrid models.

Is a shift in organization a high priority for the organization at this time, or are other issues a priority?

Tess’s group model is tweaking the existing organizational structure, and finding efficiencies.

The best outcome would be for faculty to get a report from the administration with a) thanks for your time, b) summation of strong points of each plan, c) the decision, d) a list of reasons why that decision was made, good points and bad. People who worked on these projects deserve an account of their understanding of how the administration perceived the report, what they learned, a list of outcomes and their reasons, whether positive or negative—an adult explanation. Faculty do not have the right to make decisions, but would like to know what is being done with the work we did, an explanation to show that our time was not wasted and that our opinion was respected. We also should see where this will take us, what goals for the organization this project will satisfy. “Because we adopt this, we will be able to do this.”

These reports are heavily redacted. What was in the original reports that we should know? Subgroup 1 removed the rationale for why decisions were made, and the discussion of issues.

Digitization is under description in model 2, which requires both intellectual and technical skills. Special Collections involves both description and discovery.

Creating a group, an ad hoc group, that focuses on assessment would be a good recommendation. This group should focus more on action than reporting, and would be a step down from the administration.

The opposite of autocracy is anarchy, and neither are valuable to an organization. A good model would be the constitutional monarchy, especially one that has “Question Time,” like the British TV show. Perhaps there should be a representative from the Faculty Concerns Committee on the Admin Group who would give feedback.
If there are decisions to be made as a result of the Organizational Restructuring Committee reports, like closing areas such as Periodicals, a group discussion with everyone involved would be warranted, to get all the details about how that decision would affect others. The end goal would be to make decisions carefully, and to be fully informed when making decisions.