The AS&E Library Committee met four times during the 2016 – 2017 academic year and the chair participated in four other meetings on library issues. It was an active year and several of the following major topics will require ongoing attention.

Major Report and Discussion Topics

A “Textbooks on Reserve” program was piloted this year. The high cost of textbooks is a large burden for many students. This experiment focused on a selected set of large lecture classes with expensive textbooks. Purchased and donated textbooks were placed on Tisch Reserve and the preliminary results show moderate to high usage.

Progress has been made at integrating the Clark Library of the SMFA into the Tisch Library system and these efforts will continue into the coming year.

The Library Committee bylaw was revised to specify the number of faculty members on the committee, update the language on faculty membership and correct language on ex officio membership. The proposed bylaw was later passed by the AS&E faculty and is now in effect.

There is an increasing need for improved Tisch Library security that does not discourage appropriate library usage by members of the Tufts community or our local neighbors. The most pressing of these needs is entrance monitoring and control in the front lobby.

Tisch Library has a shortage of space for both current uses and new initiatives. Is it appropriate and feasible to reallocate space from important, but low intensity, uses to high intensity uses?

Tisch Library staffing has declined from 1996 to 2015 and the staff is not able to provide all the services requested and needed by the user community. Next year’s budget will propose several new positions.

Tisch Library classroom spaces are in need of renovation and some members of the committee participated in planning sessions for Summer 2017 (and beyond) renovation proposals.

The new Integrated Library Management System (ILMS) that goes live on June 19, 2017 was the subject of much discussion. Some users of the library are very concerned about changes in the catalog interface and search engine. A number of questions were raised by faculty members on and off the committee about the need for change and the likely performance of the new system. These questions helped the library staff plan transition outreach, configuration of the public catalog and monitoring of vendor performance. Recent library communication with the user community has explained that our current ILMS software is extremely out of data and no longer supported. Since there was only one feasible replacement option, efforts have been focused on
making this switch go smoothly for all users of the system. Communication with users has also stressed that the new system will be configured to function similarly to the current “Tufts Classic Catalog” and that close attention will be paid to ensuring that the vendor meets the high performance standards written into their contract. Additional user feedback is welcomed and can be addressed to Tisch Library staff or the chair of the Library Committee.

Departure of the Director of Tisch Library

On April 27 we learned that Laura Wood will be leaving Tufts on June 23. Laura has spent seven years as an energetic and effective advocate for Tisch Library. Members of the Library Committee have had the special pleasure of working with Laura on matters that we all care deeply about. We will miss her openness to input, her relentless positivity, her vision for Tisch Library, and her skill at leading a complex organization. We wish her well and hope to have future opportunities for collaboration.

On behalf of the committee,

David Garman (Library Committee Chair for 2016 – 2017)