

UBC Library Bulletin

No. 115

December 3, 1974

PROPOSAL FOR AN EXPERIMENT IN STAFF PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

There is a continuing need for staff participation in the planning and management of the library system, so that the organization on the one hand can benefit from the ideas and opinions of those who constitute it, and so that individuals, on the other hand, can have an opportunity to make their views known, to have them discussed and considered for implementation.

The Administrative Resources Committee and the system of committees and task forces which it managed were intended to supplement the formal organization of the Library in providing for the efficient communication and consideration of ideas. Changing conditions have reduced the usefulness of this approach. Some areas of immediate concern can no longer be dealt with by the old committee structure. Specifically, salaries and benefits are now being handled, in the case of supporting staff, by the Association of University and College Employees Local no. 1., and in the case of librarians, by an elected committee working in cooperation with the Faculty Association. Grievances, another subject of concern, are handled by A.U.C.E. on behalf of the supporting staff, while librarians are presently considering alternatives to the Ombudsman Committee. Under the circumstances, A.R.C. has concluded that its usefulness has been so limited that it should cease to exist.

There remain, however, many other issues relating to the overall development of the library and its services and collections with which contractual arrangements do not deal, and with which A.R.C. found it difficult to deal. An experiment for approaching these issues, one which offers every staff member the possibility of direct participation, is proposed here.

The way in which resources, human and material, are allocated is one way in which an organization changes and grows. At U.B.C. there is an opportunity to make fundamental changes to allocations just once a year, when a new budget is introduced on the first day of April. The timetable for the development of the budget is this: in the spring of 1974 budget proposals are submitted by the division and branch heads to the Library administration, which combines them into a single budget proposal for the Library, and sets priorities, usually within limitations established by the University administration. It in turn prepares a budget for the University, and in doing so it may make alterations to the Library's proposal. This budget is submitted to the Universities Council in late summer, which reviews it in the fall and makes recommendations to the government. The government in turn draws up its budget, which is brought down in the legislature in the first week of February. After that date the Universities Council will determine the amounts to be given to U.B.C., and in late February and March there will be discussions between the University and Library administrations which will determine the amount of the increase. Although the Library's earlier submission more or less determines how amounts will be allocated, there is some flexibility at this time, allowing the Library to deal with unexpected developments and changes in priorities. Consideration of matters relating to the budget would be timely now.

Of course, the allocation of resources is just one way of effecting Library change and growth. There is also the general area of procedures and policies, which govern the operations of the Library.

A three stage process is proposed for airing issues related to resource allocation, policies and procedures.

