




M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 7, 2022
TO: Campus Community
FROM: Gayle E. Hutchinson, President 
SUBJECT: Decommission of EM 01-018 – Library Advisory Committee

Upon the recommendation of the Academic Senate and the concurrence of the Provost, Executive Memorandum 01-018, Library Advisory Committee, has been decommissioned effective February 7, 2022.

Proposal: [Suspend EM 01-018: Library Advisory Committee](#)

Rationale for Suspension: The need for a Library Advisory Committee has been questioned for several years. The EM creating the Library Advisory Committee is based on an organizational structure that no longer accurately represents the Meriam Library in its role on campus. Since the creation of the Library Advisory Committee and its guiding EM, the Meriam Library has shifted from a Director leadership model to a Deanship and is internally organized under a faculty chair. We feel the LAC and its guiding EM do not meet the needs of the Library nor the university and that better options exist to ensure streamlined and effective communications between the Library and the academic community of Chico State in a manner that is inclusive and representative of the needs of faculty, staff, and students. Furthermore, the specific responsibilities and functions outlined in the EM for the LAC are responsibilities addressed in their professional roles by the faculty, staff, and Dean of the Meriam Library.

Why now: When the EM was first written in 2001, Meriam Library had a Director of Libraries (rather than a Dean) which reported to Information Resources (which has itself been decommissioned and replaced with a new Division run by a Vice President). Since then, the Library has a Dean who directly reports to the Provost. The Library attained a Dean in 2006 and a Chair in 2007. The Dean of the Library is held accountable for policies and procedures as any Dean on campus is, including by the Provost, President, and Senate. Further, given that librarians are faculty whose work centers around providing information resources and services to faculty, students, staff, and the community, the Library is able to make professional decisions based on the knowledge of the field, the needs of the campus community, and research in the field; while it is appropriate for the Library to request input from faculty and students in order to best meet the information needs of the university and its personnel, oversight of faculty work by a Senate committee does not routinely occur in other academic disciplines. With the suspension of the Library Advisory Committee, the Library will rely on the existing Book Chair Liaison structure as the direct line of communication with the Library and departments.

Recognizing: The library recognizes that it needs input and support from the faculty, staff and students of the university. There is a desire and need to have open lines of communication between the Library and faculty, staff, and students. Utilization of the Library Book Chairs and the development of a Student Advisory Group and/or informal student groups is a more efficient way to build relationships with the Library and address user needs. These systems will allow more regular and collaborative communication for all parties involved.

Reporting: A report to EPPC on Library resource needs, activities, and communication strategies will be presented at the end of each year.

Going forward: The Library Book Chair Liaison program has been an avenue for librarians to stay in communication with department faculty. This program identifies one faculty member from each department to be a liaison with the Library. In this role the Book Chair identifies books and one-time resources which are beneficial to their faculty for purchase. They also serve as a direct line of communication which builds relationships throughout campus. The overall goals are to develop active communication and relationships with faculty to discuss faculty research needs in a collective manner to make equitable decisions about Library resources.

Unlike the LAC, Book Chairs are sought and organized to discuss Library resources and engage in conversations about the resources needed by the departments. The Library Book Chairs represent faculty from all departments and therefore have a better connection to the needs of their faculty and students. This group is the body that the Library should be communicating with regarding the needs of the departments in order to support curriculum. College Deans and the Provost would be informed by the Library Dean of the College resource needs as compiled by the new committee.

Student Feedback: One item that has been clear over the years of the Library Advisory committee is that the student voice has been underrepresented. With one undergraduate and one graduate student on the Committee, a Committee that was not convened by the Senate for many years, the LAC was not focused on student engagement with the Library. Discussions have begun to strengthen the student voice through a Student Advisory Group (SAG) with Associated Students. Last year there were several conversations about how this group would be formed and organized. This year, the AS President and the Interim Dean have emailed to restart this effort. The Dean of the Graduate School has also expressed support for such a group with graduate students. SAGs allow students the opportunity to build relationships with librarians and the Dean and to work together to identify needs and changes the students have. Additionally, a more informal approach is to hold open meetings for students to discuss Library related concerns and issues. Each approach has benefits and a combination would be beneficial.