

To: Library Accessibility Task Force

From: Library Steering Committee (LSC)

Re: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Date: February 14, 2020

Background:

One of the strategic objectives prioritized for AY2019-20 is F4: "Provide universally accessible facilities & technology platforms." The library has a responsibility to actively assess the degree to which the building is accessible and inclusive and to find ways that campus stakeholders could potentially be marginalized by the details of the library's built environment.

Following a recommendation put forth by the Library Strategic Planning Committee (LSPC) the LSC is creating an ad hoc task force to conduct this assessment. The membership of the task force shall be as follows:

John Oliver
Bethany Sewell
Paula Rainey
Larissa Dillon
Linda Dempf
Tabitha Hilliard
Roshni Raji (student representative)*
Neil Trivedi (student representative)*

The Library Accessibility Task Force will elect its own Chair.

Charge:

- The group should begin by examining the degree to which Gitenstein Library can be independently used by people with a variety of disabilities.
- Recognizing that the Gitenstein Library building already complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the task force should identify potential areas of improvement.
- LSC recommends that the group then continue by exploring ways that the library's built environment might fail to be welcoming and inclusive to other persons in marginalized groups (e.g., based on race, gender, etc.). Their work could include any or all of the following approaches:
 - Seek the input of an accessibility consultant
 - Complete formal coursework on the topic
 - Collect and read relevant literature
 - Conduct an environmental scan of the building, possibly including a SWOT analysis

- The task force should actively seek input from a variety of stakeholders on campus (through surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.).
- The task force should conclude by delivering a report that contains the findings of its investigation, which may include recommendations for change.

Timeline:

Recognizing that the task will take considerable time, LSC recommends that after deciding on their approach to the issues outlined in the third bullet above, the task force submit a proposed timeline to LSC.

*It is understood that student representatives will change every year. The Chair should work with the student representatives to maximize whatever continuity of representation may be possible.

TCNJ Library Governance:

The following steps must be followed in preparing recommendations: (1) Identifying and reporting the problem. If necessary, the Library Steering Committee (LSC) will prepare a charge identifying the issue for the appropriate committee. (2) Preparing a preliminary recommendation. (3) Making a final recommendation. The presenting of testimony, prior to both the preliminary and final recommendations, is central to the concept of shared governance. The three-step process ensures that there are opportunities for formal testimony and open comment from affected individuals and all stakeholder groups. Committees are expected to be proactive in inviting stakeholder groups to provide testimony at both steps # 2 and #3 of the process. It is expected that committee members will bring issues back to their stakeholder groups for discussion. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups. Preliminary recommendations for a new policy, procedure, or program must be presented to the stakeholders, either at a regular library general staff meeting or at a scheduled forum. The period for open input and comment must also be communicated to all stakeholder groups. If the committee determines that substantive changes are needed after the preliminary recommendation has been presented at an open forum, then the revised recommendation must be sent to all stakeholders and presented again at an open forum.

Committees shall send final recommendations to the LSC.