

Ad Hoc Committee on Library Mold Issues

Mark Ashbaugh (Mathematics), John Zemke (Romance Languages), Dennis Trout (Classics), Jeanne Mihail (Plant Sciences), Stamatis Dostoglou (Mathematics), Kerby Miller (History), Noah Heringman (English), Dan Hooley (Classics)

Committee has met twice, and once with Jim Cogswell and Asst. Director Ann Riley: March 14

Review of current information:

Estimated remediation cost may be \$2 per volume

Projected number of books to be saved, 400k out of the 600k damaged

*Grant application (grantor anonymous for now) has been made with some confidence of success
Library will remediate and otherwise compensate so that no net information is lost.*

Library will make lists of books, series, journals, etc. available to faculty, and faculty will be able to ensure that anything they want kept will be kept, barring volumes too damaged to be remediated.

Projected calendar appended, along with bid matrices, pie chart of division holdings, priority list for remediation.

Remediation:

- 1) Books are swabbed with a solution which appears to be intended to remove surface fungal structures (hyphae and spores). Ann Riley mentioned ethanol (ethyl alcohol) as one possibility, which is a very standard surface disinfecting agent. Typically it is used as a 70% aqueous solution.
- 2) The second step is exposure of individual books to a penetrating sterilant treatment. Two were mentioned:
 - a. Ethylene oxide which is applied as a liquid and quickly vaporizes. The gas can then insinuate itself through the books. (Propylene oxide is also used for a similar purpose.) I don't know how deeply these gases penetrate. If the fungal hyphae (the thread-like body of the mold) have penetrated through a thick page, I don't know how deeply the gas will penetrate.
 - b. Gamma irradiation. Gamma rays will certainly travel through anything solid and should render it sterile. (this courtesy of Jeanne Mihail)

Process would go on until at least June of 2015

Goal to achieve no net loss of information

Destroy damaged duplicates, saving last copies in Merlin, last 10 in OCLC etc.

Rely on electronic copies where available

Hathi Trust — e-copies printable via Espresso Book machine

Replace essential items too damaged to keep

Books/serials with illustrations, maps, high res. images etc. to be kept.

Certain historical records replaced by other system libraries

Space soon to be identified for intermediate and longer term storage

Will construct "asbestos wall" space with moveable barrier between clean and dirty books

Some concern expressed by Jeanne about the reliability of that; budget will not allow a better arrangement.... (unresolved)

Target Dates:

- 4/1 Mold remediation contractor chosen
- 4/15 Work begins to treat books for mold—continues throughout FY15
- 5/1 New facility rented; construction begins on dividing wall to segregate “clean” from “dirty” spaces
- 5/15 Move to new divided facility begins for both treated and untreated books
- 6/30 Move to new facility completed
- 7/1 Additional funds become available from new sources (?)
- 7/15 Plans made for schedule of remediation for FY15 based on available funds
- 9/1 Lists of monographs having digital copy available (in Hathi Trust, or other) made available for decision concerning permanent withdrawal from collections. Lists are based on MU Libraries’ Collections Steering Committee criteria, including: other copy available in MERLIN or MOBIUS libraries; more than ten holdings in OCLC/WorldCat; not part of any collection already identified for retention, etc.

Issues:

1) Some books are being destroyed now. Riley and Cogswell mentioned that this is not terribly out of the ordinary; books fitting certain criteria are destroyed on an ongoing basis. Those too damaged to remediate, extra copies in certain areas: Law, Historical records... Would recommend faculty begin now to identify things they would like to see kept.

2) "The issue is the utilization of space in a new facility. If there are 2 adjacent rooms ('clean' and 'not clean') with a very small door between them, then I can believe that once materials are treated they will be in good shape on the clean side. However, the notion of a moving wall is really troubling." (Jeanne Mihail)

Action:

The committee sent a letter, copied to the Provost, restating our reservations about the "moving wall" method of storage during remediation. Response from Jim Cogswell: "Regarding the letter, and Jeanne Mihail's specific questions about the "moving wall" idea, we are still determining how best to proceed. It may well be that we do not have to

create a “moving wall” to isolate the “clean” from “dirty” areas of the new storage facility. In any case, we will keep the committee informed about the method for treating the contaminated materials while safeguarding the clean materials.”

Funding Issues: Inadequate funding and planning by campus and system have led to this short term crisis; further issues remain.

1995: decision by President Russell and Chancellor Kiessler not to fund Ellis Library extension on site and build a system storage facility at Lamone instead.

1997: remote storage built at Lamone (U1) provided for expansion when necessary

2002: system proposed remote storage at EdCo (underground), Springfield; not helpful for MU

2006: Steve Graham and UM general officers decided against funding addition, this was a system decision about a system facility; MU was told to find local space, resulting in U2 (i.e., the cave). Other storage spaces underground and downtown were even less desirable.

Recent: Other campuses are vacating book space at the current U1 leaving room for about 150k of MU's collection. Still need space for many more currently in holdings.

Provost Dean has spoken again of putting expansion of U1 on priority list for funding.

Action:

1) The committee has composed a template letter to be sent to either the Chancellor or President (chair's choice) encouraging adequate library funding. Letters from English, History, Mathematics, Classics, and Romance Languages have already been sent.

Sample letter below:

Dear Chancellor Loftin / President Wolfe:

I am writing on behalf of the Department of Classical Studies, whose faculty voted unanimously today to urge you to take immediate measures to address the damage done by mold contamination to the Ellis Library collection. This action should, we feel strongly, make adequate funding available for a safe and secure library book storage in addition to the Lemone Blvd. facility.

As you are probably aware, the library currently is funded at about half the levels of the average AAU institution. Figures from the library for 2012 show our campus allocated \$18,062,926, with the average AAU university allocating more than \$35 million. Institutions ranking higher than MU in library funding, apart from relatively wealthy and prominent institutions, include Minnesota (\$39 m.), Washington (\$38 m.), Iowa (\$29 m.), Arizona (\$29 m.), and Kansas (\$23 m.). Within the state of Missouri alone, Washington University outspends MU on libraries by more than \$7 million dollars.

You will recall that the chief reason the library administration was compelled to send books to the ultimately disastrous U2 location was the 2006 decision by the system administration not to fund the proposal by library director Jim Cogswell for the second above-ground facility at Lamone. That question was historically determined by another system decision of the mid-90s not to build the planned addition to Ellis, replacing it with a remote storage facility (U1) and the promise to expand that facility as necessary. Failing the library addition and adequate space at Lamone (U1), library administration was compelled to seek out the least expensive storage.

Storage may not even be the primary problem affecting the library. MU's library has fallen behind in a number of key indicators, by some estimates about 15 years, of library performance, not to mention personnel cutbacks, serious space issues, and restricted acquisitions. And now the University is in the curious situation of campaigning to promote our AAU indicators while conspicuously showing itself unwilling to fund adequately its

most important research facility, its library. MU's ARL ranking is obviously not unrelated to AAU status. In fact, our library's funding ranks dead last among AAU institutions. Our department, like any program in the humanities, depends entirely on the library's resources for research. Some of "our" books have been damaged by the mold and may be lost. This should never have happened. But we feel that this university can do better beyond ensuring that such damage never again occurs. Enhancing Library funding even to the level of the University of Kansas--an additional 5 million dollars--would bring us nearer the quality library we *need* for our teaching and research. We urge you, then, to make safe and adequate book storage and funding enhancement a major priority.

Sincerely,

The committee plans to send this or a modified sample to campus chairs for their consideration.

2) Hooley met with Matt Gaunt the library's development director and discussed funding for remediation. Challenge grants have been offered by donors but the publicity thus far has been restricted to the library's own website. Hooley discussed with A&S dean O'Brien possible college help and a preliminary offer of development funding, presumably as a challenge was made by the dean. Amount not specified. The current issue with respect to funding is how to get the word out more widely. To be clear: books will be remediated regardless. Additional specific funding for remediation will only affect the degree to which the Library must spend down its insurance fund (already inadequate should another crisis occur). How to help with remediation funding, or to what extent the committee or FC should be involved in this side of things, remains a question.

Outstanding question: how to get this and further information to faculty at large. Would recommend putting information on Library's website, the problem there being a general, perhaps necessary given staffing constraints(?), dilatoriness in getting information out.